

Environmental Ethics, Syllabus (v.1)

Philosophy 345, 2020 Summer Session, Mountain Campus

8:00-12:00, MTWRF, June 14-27

Office: 236 Eddy

Spring Term Office Hours: Mondays, 12:00-2:00; Wednesdays, 1:00-3:00.

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Course Description:

Environmental ethics is an area of study that examines how humans ought to relate to and interact with their environment as individuals, through organizations, and as a species. This course will provide a distinctively philosophical perspective on humankind's complicated relationship with our natural environment. We will examine the merits of considering our responsibilities to the environment from an entirely human-centered standpoint, possible alternatives to this approach, and various ways these options might be applied to actual environmental problems.

In the mountain campus session of this course, we will spend much of our time in discussion over the central themes of environmental ethics. This discussion will take place as we explore the local environment. Students will be asked to read a substantial portion of the course material; during the two weeks of the course, students should expect to spend at least an hour each day writing, and several hours reading. As this is a course in philosophy, much of our work will be focused on framing discussions, clarifying questions, and evaluating the merits of various arguments. The remarkable environment of the Mountain Campus will provide both inspiration and content as we consider questions about the nature of environmental conservation (what are we conserving and why?), ecological restoration (what are we restoring and why?), the value of wilderness (what is it and why is it so valuable?), and environmental activism (how do we determine which approaches are legitimate?).

The Mountain Campus version of Environmental Ethics will involve several excursions in the local environment (weather permitting). These will serve as points of reflection, and provide the basis for both collaborative discussion and individual writing. Expect to spend a good deal of the course in the outdoors. Expect one or two wonderful long (8+ miles) mountain hikes on trails that may be muddy or snowy. We will have several shorter hikes as well. Don't worry about the strenuousness of the hikes, but be prepared with both suitable footwear and a positive attitude.

A mandatory preliminary meeting will also be held in early May. This meeting will involve discussion of both course content and logistical details; attendance is required.

Required Readings:

A Sand County Almanac, Aldo Leopold (OUP 1989) ISBN-13: 9780195059281 (but any version will do, Ballantine books has a cheaper version)

Reflecting On Nature, Gruen, Jamieson, and Schlotmann (eds) (OUP 2012) **ISBN-13:** 978-0199782437

Course Requirements

Attendance and Participation: Class meetings consist of both lecture and discussion. Attendance is required and active participation in discussion and debate is an essential part of the course. 10% of final grade

Quizzes: There will be three short take home quizzes (10% each). Quizzes will be due before the next class meeting.

Preliminary Quiz: There will be a short quiz (5%) on the preliminary readings. This quiz will be due by our first meeting in mid- May.

Preliminary Writing Assignment: There will be a short writing assignment (10%), assigned during our mid May meeting and due prior to our orientation meeting on June 14th.

Reflections: 35% of the final grade will be based on two short (<600 words, 10% each) and one slightly longer (~ 1000 words, 15%) reflections. These reflections will have three components: (1) reflection on a personal experience or conversation (generally this should be based on our shared experiences at the Mountain Campus) (2) explication and brief analysis of some element of our course material, and (3) connection between that experience or conversation and our course material.

Discussion: 10% of the final grade will be based on contribution to collaborative discussion on these reflections.

Etiquette

Students are to treat one another, as well as the instructor, with respect. To this end,

- Cell phones and other electronics should be turned off, silenced, or disabled during class. Students using electronics in class without permission will be asked to leave. Laptop use will only be allowed with explicit permission.
- Students should arrive on time for class, and refrain from leaving prior to the end of class.
- Students should address one another, as the instructor, respectfully.
- Students who engage in harassment or aggressive behavior toward one another, or the instructor, will be asked to leave. In extreme cases additional measures will be taken.

Mountain environment etiquette: please review Leave No Trace Principles (<https://lnt.org/learn/7-principles/>); see also the details for NR220 for a basic idea of recommended materials and gear required

Grading Scale

Final grades for this course will be a composite of letter grades for written work and numerical grades for quizzes. This composite will be formed according to the distribution noted above. When necessary the following conversion will be used: 98-100 = A+; 93-97.99 = A; 90-92.99 = A-; 87-89.99 = B+; 83-86.99 = B; 80-82.99 = B-; 77-79.99 = C+; 73-76.99 = C; 70-72.99 = C-; 67-69.99 = D+; 60-66.99 = D; 0-59.99 = F

Late Assignments, Extensions and Make-Up

Any paper turned in after its deadline will have its grade discounted by one grade per twenty-four hours (or fraction thereof) that the paper is late (e.g., a paper that would have received a B+ would receive a B if late by 20 hours, and a C+ if late by 70 hours). Late quizzes will be reduced proportionally (that is, the numerical equivalent of one step of 24 hour period that the quiz is late). This requirement will be strictly enforced. Please note that deadlines for essay assignments are final. No extensions will be granted except in the case of major illness with medical documentation, or for comparably serious and well-documented reasons.

Make-up assignments will only be allowed in extraordinary, well-documented circumstances such as medical emergencies. Do not assume make-up assignments will be allowed.

Citation of Sources

Written work will often require that students rely on a range of sources. These sources must be cited. Any standard form of citation (e.g., APA, MLA, Chicago) is acceptable.

Plagiarism, Cheating, and the CSU Honor Code

Each paper or quiz you turn in must be your own work, and it must have been written specifically for this class. Please note that the presentation of the work of someone else as your own constitutes plagiarism (see <http://writing.colostate.edu/guides/guide.cfm?guideid=17>). This course will adhere to the CSU Academic Integrity Policy as found in the General Catalog - 1.6, pages 7-9, and the Student Conduct Code (<http://www.conflictresolution.colostate.edu/conduct-code>). Any student whose work does not conform to university policies on academic integrity will, at a minimum be subject to a grading penalty (almost always a grade of ‘F’ in the course), and will be reported to the Office of Conflict Resolution and Student Conduct Services.

Special Needs

If you are a student who needs accommodation, please feel free discuss this matter with me. If you do require accommodation, bring this to my attention as soon as possible. A memo from Resources for Disabled Students may be required before the provision of accommodations. For further information, please see rds.colostate.edu

Student Outcomes:

By end of course, students should be able to ...	Method of assessment ...
Identify and critique major theories of environmental value.	Three competency-based quizzes in which students must answer 5 out of 6 questions (80% answered with sufficient detail = outcome achieved)
Identify examples of the practical applicability of theories of environmental value	Three competency-based quizzes in which students must answer 5 out of 6 questions (80% answered with sufficient detail = outcome achieved)
Examine current environmental issues in the news media and use theoretical materials of the course characterize those issues.	Reports connecting current course material to current issues in the news media (theory or problem characterized and applied to non-trivial case = outcome achieved)
Engage in clear discussion of the relation between environmental values, environmental problems, and environmental issues.	Discussion and participation (active participation on three occasions over the term = outcome achieved)
Perform extended independent research into the practical and theoretical challenges involving environmental values.	Reports (must utilize at least one theory or problem addressed in course in independent research to achieved outcome)

Disclaimer: Please note this syllabus constitutes a projection of my expectations of the course. As instructor I reserve the right to revise the syllabus to reflect the reality of progress through the course material, and to reflect other eventualities.

Topics and Tentative Reading Schedule (listed readings are to be read prior to class on the day noted).

Note: Because of the accelerated nature of this course, before the first day of class you will have to read Leopold's *A Sand County Almanac* and sections I and II of the required collection *Reflecting On Nature*. You will have completed a writing assignment on those pieces. Before our preliminary meeting *in May*, you will need to have read selections of Leopold, Moore, and Muir.

Note also: All readings noted as "distributed" will be available on CANVAS prior to the beginning of term. Please download them and have them available prior to arrival at the Mountain Campus

[Arrive before 5pm on Sunday, June 14th]

May, precise date, TBA	<p>Preliminary Meeting</p> <p>Discussion of Leave No Trace principles, Part III of Leopold's <i>Sand County Almanac</i>, selections of Kathleen Dean Moore's work, selections of John Muir</p> <p>Prequiz due.</p>
Sunday, June 14 th	<p>Arrival</p> <p>Orientation and opening discussion in the early evening</p> <p>Initial writing assignment due.</p>
Monday, June 15 th	<p>Introduction to Environmental Ethics</p> <p>Leopold's <i>A Sand County Almanac</i>, focusing on the short "Thinking Like a Mountain" passage in section II, and "The Land Ethic" in section III</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of course material and course requirements • Sample Quiz; Sample Reflective Paper; Very Short Hike
Tuesday, June 16 th	<p>Leopold</p> <p>Leopold's <i>A Sand County Almanac</i>, supplemental distributed pieces on Wilderness and the National Parks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Discussion of Paper Writing • Weather permitting, we will have a longer hike this day.
Wednesday, June 17 th	<p>Deep Ecology</p> <p>Short essays by Muir, Thoreau and Naess in <i>Reflecting on Nature</i>, Devall and Sessions, "Deep Ecology" (distributed), short selections by Jack Turner and Gary Snyder (distributed)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First quiz <i>distributed</i> • Possible short hike
Thursday, June 18 th	<p>Reflections on Nature</p> <p>Short essays by Routley, Williams, Goodpaster, and Elliott in <i>Reflecting On Nature</i>; and Rolston "Values in and Duties to the Natural World" (distributed)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper Writing Workshop

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First quiz <i>due</i> before class
Friday, June 19 th	<p>Value in the Environment, Day 1</p> <p>Short essays by White, Aristotle, Locke, Darwin, Mill, Botkin, Shiva, Gould, Plumwood, and Carson in <i>Reflecting on Nature</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Reflective Paper <i>due</i> (before class)
Monday, June 22 nd	<p>Value in the Environment, Day 2</p> <p>Short essays by Sandler, Taylor, and Callicott in <i>Reflecting on Nature</i>; (once again we will look at) Leopold's "Thinking Like a Mountain" and "The Land Ethic," in <i>A Sand County Almanac</i>; Varner's "Biocentric Individualism" (distributed)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second Quiz <i>distributed</i>
Tuesday, June 23 rd	<p>The Wild and Wilderness, Conservation and Preservation, Ecological Restoration</p> <p>Short essays by Turner, Cronon, and Guha in <i>Reflecting on Nature</i>;</p> <p>John Muir, selections; Schmidt, "When Preservationism Doesn't Preserve"; Holmes Rolston, III, "Feeding People versus Saving Nature?" (distributed)</p> <p>Robert Elliot, "Faking Nature"; Eric Katz, "The Big Lie"; Andrew Light, "Ecological Restoration and the Culture of Nature" (distributed)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weather permitting, we will have a longer hike this day • Second Quiz <i>due</i> before class
Wednesday, June 24 th	<p>Ecofeminism and Environmental Justice</p> <p>Short essays by Singer, Barry, and Foster and Cole in <i>Reflecting on Nature</i>; Warren's "The Power and Promise of Ecological Feminism" and Sen's "Women, Poverty, and Population: Issues for the Concerned Environmentalist" (distributed)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One on One Meetings (Paper Writing Advisements)
Thursday, June 25 th	<p>Biodiversity and Aesthetics</p> <p>Short essays by Sober, Sarkar, Rolston, Fisher, Carlson, and Hettinger in <i>Reflecting on Nature</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second Reflective Paper <i>due</i> before class • Weather permitting, we will have a longer hike this day
Friday, June 26 th	<p>Activism, and course review</p> <p>Callicott, "Environmental Philosophy is Environmental Activism: The Most Radical and Effective Kind"; Norton, "The Environmentalists' Dilemma: Dollars and Sand Dollars" and "Fragile Freedoms" (distributed)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third quiz <i>distributed</i> • Be ready to check out of rooms right after lunch

Saturday, June 27 th	Third Quiz <i>Due, 9 am</i>
Monday, June 29 th	Third and Final reflective paper <i>due, 9 am</i>

Writing process for our reflective papers:

- Reflect on something seen, thought, shared, discussed or recalled: describe it richly
- Meaning of that *to me*: how it ties to what I care about
- How that meaning ties to your understanding of public perception or typical culture or some other broader concern (legal, political, social, cultural, scientific)
- How that tie connects to our readings (articulate the feature of our readings as carefully as you articulate the initial experience)

General:

Reports should connect the material we are covering in class with some issue in the news or our daily experience.

They should be carefully written (i.e. edited like you would edit any serious submitted work), and demonstrate both that you have thought about the news and that you have understood the course readings.

There are three purposes in writing these short assignments:

First, become familiar with current environmental issues, with an eye to their ethical features.

Second, make connection between the theoretical and academic material of this course and either personal experience or current issues of public interest.

Third develop your critical writing skills.

What should be Included?

1. Description of issue or the experience
2. Your analysis or reaction
3. Reference to course material (some explicit connection to the particular material we are covering in this course).
4. Citations as necessary