



## PHL 322: PHILOSOPHY & ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS SPRING 2014

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Office Hours: T & TH 11:00-12:00 and by appointment

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course will examine philosophical questions and concepts that underlie debates about contemporary environmental problems. These include: What is the appropriate way to view our relationship to the environment? What specific ethical obligations do we have regarding the environment? What sorts of ends or values should we aim to promote regarding the environment (e.g., wilderness preservation, biodiversity, or social justice)? How should we understand concepts that are central to various public policy debates, such as “sustainability”? How do we adjudicate between competing or conflicting interests at stake in environmental issues? What makes us justified in adopting one policy option over another, particularly in cases where there is uncertainty? We will consider these questions in the context of specific local, national, and global environmental problems, including climate change, depletion of wilderness areas, regulations of environmental toxins, overpopulation, genetically modified foods, the privatization of water, and protections for endangered species.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:** Students who successfully complete this course can expect to improve their ability to:

1. Compare and contrast different ethical theories and philosophical frameworks regarding the environment.
2. Understand challenges and objections facing each of these theories.
3. Apply philosophical theories and frameworks to contemporary environmental problems and policy debates.
4. Construct and evaluate arguments in support of your views.
5. Communicate ideas clearly in writing and in oral presentations.
6. Participate in community programs and environmental practices.

**DESIRE 2 LEARN:** The D2L page for this course can be found at: <https://ecat.montana.edu/>. Log in using your NetID and password. You will be able to access course materials, electronic readings, handouts, and your grades.

**REQUIRED READINGS:** All readings will be electronically available on D2L and will be posted under the week for which they are assigned under the “content” link on D2L.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:** You will complete the course requirements for either the writing track or the service-learning track. Service learning will involve a volunteer project with a non-profit organization related to environmental issues and a series of assignments that will integrate experiential learning outside of the classroom with the theories and concepts covered in class. **If you choose the service learning option, you will need to complete a service-learning contract by February 4<sup>th</sup>.**

WRITING TRACK	SERVICE LEARNING TRACK
<p><b>1. Participation (20%):</b> Everyone should come to class and actively participate, demonstrating knowledge of the assigned readings. You can participate by raising questions, participating in discussion, or completing small group activities. Attending class regularly and paying attention are necessary, but not sufficient, for participation points.</p>	
<p><b>2. Short response papers (20% total)</b> Four short (1-2 page) response papers will be assigned. These will require a short summary and evaluation of one of the readings for that week. Writing assignments will be evaluated on: 1) demonstrated understanding of course readings, theories, and concepts, 2) use of critical thinking skills as demonstrated by your ability to synthesize, evaluate, or apply course material, 3) clarity and organization of ideas.</p>	<p><b>2. Critical reflection assignments (25% total)</b> Five short (1-2 pages) writing assignments on topics requiring you to synthesize course readings and theories in relation to your service-learning organization. Writing assignments will be evaluated on: 1) demonstrated understanding of course readings, theories, and concepts, 2) use of critical thinking skills as demonstrated by your ability to synthesize, evaluate, or apply course material, 3) clarity and organization of ideas.</p>
<p><b>3. Longer papers (30% total)</b> Two longer (5-7 page papers) will require you to conduct research and advance a current philosophical debate related to your topic. Guidelines, including a selection of paper topics, will be handed out in class. Papers will be evaluated in terms of how well you clearly develop good arguments in support of your thesis, your ability to accurately explain views or ideas from class or readings, and your ability to anticipate and respond to objections to your view. Detailed guidelines for presentations will be handed out in class.</p>	<p><b>3. Service Learning Project/Presentation (25%)</b> You will be expected to complete a documented <b>minimum of 10 hours of service</b> throughout the semester with a non-profit organization or program that aims to address some environmental issue (broadly construed). Information about some potential organizations and opportunities will be handed out in class, though you may also find one on your own so long as I approve it. Also, you will give a class <b>presentation</b> on the aims and strategies of the organization, your particular project, and how it relates to the course material. Presentations will be evaluated on your demonstrated understanding of your organization, your ability to relate course material to assessing the aims and methods of your organization, and your ability to clearly express your ideas orally. Detailed guidelines for presentations will be handed out in class.</p>
<p><b>4. Final Exam (30%):</b> There will be a take-home final exam based on material covered throughout the semester. The final will consist of a series of shorter and longer essay questions and will approximately 7 pages typed double-spaced in length. The exam will be due by the end of our scheduled <b>final exam, which is Wednesday, April 30<sup>th</sup> at 2pm.</b></p>	

**GRADING:** Your final grade will be determined by the percentage of points you earn out of the total points possible for the course. I will use the scale below in assigning final grades. I may adjust an individual's grade for improvement.

94-100% = A	89-86% = B+	75-72% = C	68-66 = D+	59-under = F
93-90% =A-	85-82= B	78-76% = C+	65-63 = D	
	81-79% = B-	71-69 = C-	62-60 = D-	

**ABSENCES, LATE/MAKE-UP WORK:** Make-up exams or presentations will only be granted under exceptional circumstances. Absences for illness, or the serious illness or death of an immediate family member may be excused with the appropriate documentation, e.g. a doctor's note, or with my advance approval. Please talk to me as soon as possible if you know that you will be missing a class.

**Unexcused late papers will be penalized.**

**ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:** Work for this course must be completed by the person submitting it. This includes papers, assignments, presentations, and any other work submitted for credit. Anyone found guilty of plagiarism, cheating, forgery, falsification, or other forms of academic dishonesty will **fail the course**. In addition, the incident will be reported to the Office of Student Affairs. You are expected to be familiar with the University's academic misconduct policy, which can be found at [http://www2.montana.edu/policy/student\\_conduct](http://www2.montana.edu/policy/student_conduct). Read the policy as well as examples including:

- **Collaboration:** University policy states that, unless otherwise specified, students may not collaborate on graded material. Any exceptions to this policy will be stated explicitly for individual assignments. If you have any questions about the limits of collaboration, you are expected to ask for clarification.
- **Plagiarism:** Paraphrasing or quoting another's work without citing the source is a form of academic misconduct. Even inadvertent or unintentional misuse or appropriation of another's work (such as relying heavily on source material that is not expressly acknowledged) is considered plagiarism. If you have any questions about using and citing sources, you are expected to ask for clarification

**ACADEMIC ACCOMODATIONS:** Any student eligible for and needing academic accommodations because of a disability is requested to speak to me and provide documentation as soon as possible. If you suspect that you have a disability, contact Disabled Student Services at: (406) 994-2824 (voice), (406) 994-6701 (TTY), or on the web at: <http://www.montana.edu/wwwres/disability/index.shtml>

<b>DATE</b>	<b>TOPIC, READINGS, ASSIGNMENTS</b>
<b>WEEK 1</b>	<b>Introduction to Environmental Ethics</b>
Jan. 9	Introductions, Course Syllabus
<b>WEEK 2</b>	<b>Do only humans matter?</b>
Jan. 14	Introduction to environmental ethics Kant, “Rational Beings Alone Have Moral Worth”
Jan. 16	Baxter, “People or Penguins: The Case for Optimal Pollution”
<b>WEEK 3</b>	<b>How should we treat non-human animals?</b>
Jan. 21	Singer, “A Utilitarian Defense of Animal Liberation”
Jan. 23	Steinbock, “Speciesism and the Ideal of Equality”
<b>WEEK 4</b>	<b>Individuals or species? Does biodiversity matter?</b>
Jan. 28	Russow, “Do Species Matter?”
Jan. 30	The case of the gray wolf in Yellowstone
<b>WEEK 5</b>	<b>Do non-sentient living things matter? Do ecosystems matter?</b>
Feb. 4	Taylor, “Biocentric Egalitarianism” <b>Service learning contracts due for service track students</b>
Feb. 6	Leopold, “The Land Ethic” Callicott, “The Conceptual Foundation of the Land Ethic”
<b>WEEK 6</b>	<b>Understanding Deep Ecology: Does wilderness matter?</b>
Feb. 11	Naess, “The Deep Ecological Movement: Some Philosophical Aspects”
Feb. 13	Watson, “A Critique of Anti-Anthropocentric Ethics” Guha, “Radical Environmentalism and Wilderness Preservation: A Third World Critique,”

<b>WEEK 7</b>	<b>Indigenous Rights; Ecofeminism</b>
Feb. 18	Laduke, "All Our Relations: Native Struggles for Land and Rights" Shiva, "Earth Democracy" <b>Writing track first longer paper due</b>
Feb. 20	Warren, "The Power and Promise of Ecofeminism"
<b>WEEK 8</b>	<b>Environmental Problems &amp; Solutions: Overpopulation and Consumption</b>
Feb. 25	McKibben, "A Special Moment in History: The Challenge of Overpopulation and Overconsumption" ( <a href="http://www.theatlantic.com/past/issues/98may/special1.htm">http://www.theatlantic.com/past/issues/98may/special1.htm</a> ) Singer, "Famine, Affluence, and Morality"
Feb. 27	Hardin, "Life Boat Ethics"
<b>WEEK 9</b>	<b>Environmental Problems &amp; Solutions: GMOs</b>
Mar. 4	Rauch, "Can Franken Food Save the Planet?" <a href="http://www.theatlantic.com/past/docs/issues/2003/10/rauch.htm">http://www.theatlantic.com/past/docs/issues/2003/10/rauch.htm</a> Ho, "The Unholy Alliance"
Mar. 6	<i>Case Study:</i> Improving on Natural Variation? Genetically Modified Foods
<b>WEEK 10</b>	<b>NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK March 10-14<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>WEEK 11</b>	<b>Climate Change: Evidence, Causes, Consensus and Confusion</b>
Mar. 18	Oreskes, "The Scientific Consensus on Climate Change: How do we know we are not wrong? Monbiot, "The Denial Industry," <a href="http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2006/sep/19/ethicalliving.g2">http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2006/sep/19/ethicalliving.g2</a>
Mar. 20	Intemann, "Who Needs Consensus Anyway?" (podcast)
<b>WEEK 12</b>	<b>Climate Change: Ethics, Policies and Fairness</b>
Mar. 25	Gardiner, "Ethics and Climate Change"
Mar. 27	Wright and Pojman, "Sustainability and Technology Solutions in the Climate Policy Debate: The Case of Geologic Carbon Sequestration" Shrader-Frechette, "Five Myths About Nuclear Energy" <a href="http://americanmagazine.org/node/148783">http://americanmagazine.org/node/148783</a>

<b>WEEK 13</b>	<b>Activism: Ethics of Direct Action: Monkey Wrenching &amp; Eco-Sabotage</b>
Apr. 1	Foreman, "Strategic Monkey Wrenching" Case Study: Sea Shepherds & Whale Wars
Apr. 3	Martin, "Ecosabotage and Civil Disobedience," Film, <i>If A Tree Falls</i>
<b>WEEK 14</b>	<b>Activism in Montana &amp; The Gallatin Valley: Service Learning Presentations</b>
Apr. 8	Student Presentations
Apr. 10	Student Presentations <b>Writing-track second longer paper due</b>
<b>WEEK 15</b>	<b>Activism in Montana &amp; The Gallatin Valley: Service Learning Presentations</b>
Apr. 15	Student Presentations
Apr. 17	Student Presentations
<b>WEEK 16</b>	<b>Conclusions and Review</b>
Apr. 22	Student Presentations
Apr. 24	Conclusions & Review
<b>FINAL</b>	<b>Take-home final exam is due by 2pm on Wednesday, April 30<sup>th</sup></b>

**NOTE:** Reading assignments & due dates may change. Any changes will be announced in class.