

ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS AND JUSTICE

Course Description

In this course we will explore the moral and political dimensions of our relationship with and treatment of the natural world, by investigating such topics as climate change, vegetarianism, preserving biodiversity, and restoring wilderness. In doing so we will encounter both classic problems of environmental ethics (e.g. Can and do we have moral duties to non-human animals? What about other living things, and non-living things? What kind of value does the environment have?) as well as the ways in which environmental issues intersect with other (e.g. racial, gender, class, colonial) injustices.

Course Requirements

Midterm Exam	20%
First Paper	20%
Second Paper	25%
Blogs	10%
Final Exam	20%
Participation	5%

Blogs

Blogging is a chance for you to express your ideas in writing outside the constraints of a formal academic paper, engage in further dialogue with your classmates and instructor, and explore the issues beyond the classroom. You should think of yourself as writing a mini-editorial, one that you would be willing to publish and defend publicly. Though blogging may not be “academic” writing, it is still analytical and argumentative writing. In addition to being good preparation for class discussion and writing papers, the skills you develop in so learning to write clearly—to *think* clearly!—will remain important for the rest of your professional and personal life.

You must submit **one blog post every two weeks** on the material covered in that time. For each post, you have two different options: you can either 1) Respond one of the lecture or texts, or 2) Respond to a post by one of your classmates. **You must submit your post by the end of the day on Friday. I will not award credit for blogs submitted after these deadlines.** Your blog posts can draw on anything in the lecture, the texts, or relevant outside materials (news, books, films, videos, etc). You can ask questions, criticize views you don't agree with, or give supporting arguments for those you do agree with. Do not simply summarize the material; what I want is your critical *response* to the material. At the very minimum, you can quote a particular passage or claim that struck you and explain why you think it is significant. 5% of the blogging grade will be for completion. The other 5% will be for the quality of your submissions. I will not grade each post individually, but I encourage you to put thought and effort into each of them so that you can demonstrate the skills and knowledge you are gaining throughout the course. You will be asked to turn one of your blog posts into a short essay, which will be given a grade, but only as feedback to guide you in writing your first paper.

Week	Topic	Readings	Optional
1	Introduction to (Environmental) Ethics	Katie McShane, "Environmental Ethics: An Overview" Peter Singer, "All Animals are Equal" Tom Regan, "Animal Rights"	Lewis Vaughn, <i>Philosophy Here and Now</i> * Perry, Bratman, & Fischer, "Logical Toolkit"*
2	Vegetarianism	Evelyn Pluhar, "Meat and Morality: Alternatives to Factory Farming" William O. Stephens, "Five Arguments for Vegetarianism"	Michael Martin, "A Critique of Moral Vegetarianism"
3	Animals and the Environment	Jessica Everett, "Environmental Ethics, Animal Welfarism, and the Problem of Predation" Elizabeth Anderson, "Animal Rights and the Value of Nonhuman Life"	
4	Biodiversity and Biocentrism	Lilly-Marlene Russow, "Why Do Species Matter?" Paul Taylor, "The Ethics of Respect for Nature" Holmes Ralston III, "Saving Nature vs. Feeding People?"	Ben Bradley, "The Value of Endangered Species" Gary Varner, "Biocentric Individualism"
5	Environmental Holism	Aldo Leopold, "The Land Ethic" Deborah Bird Rose, "Val Plumwood's Philosophical Animism"	Val Plumwood, "On Being Prey"
6	Preserving and Restoring Wilderness	Ramachandra Guha, "Radical American Environmentalism and Wilderness Preservation: A Third-World Critique" Robert Elliott, "Faking Nature" Yeuk Sze Lo, "Natural and Artifactual: Restored Nature as Subject"	Michael Krieger, "What's Wrong With Plastic Trees?"
7	Value, Moral and Economic	Bryan Norton, "The Environmentalist's Dilemma" Mark Sagoff, "Do We Consume Too Much?"	
8		Stephen Kelman, "Cost-Benefit Analysis: An Ethical Critique" and Replies Katie McShane, "Anthropocentrism vs. Nonanthropocentrism"	
9	Climate Change	Garrett Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons"* Baylor Johnson, "Ethical Obligations in a Tragedy of the Commons" Marion Hourdequin, "Climate, Collective Action, and Individual Ethical Obligations"	
10		Kyle Powys Whyte, "Indigenous Women, Climate Change Impacts, and Collective Action" Christine Cuomo, "Climate Change, Vulnerability, and Responsibility"	

11	Environmental Racism	Maria Ramirez Fisher, "On the Road from Environmental Racism to Environmental Justice" Bill E. Lawson, "The Value of Environmental Justice"	Robert Bullard, "Overcoming Racism in Environmental Decision-Making"
12	Ecofeminism	Karen Warren, "Nature Is A Feminist Issue" Bina Agarwal, "The Gender and Environment Debate: Lessons from India"	
13	From Theory to Action	Kate Rawles, "The Missing Shade of Green" Ned Hettinger, "Environmental Disobedience" Lisa Kretz, "Climate Change: Bridging the Theory-Action Gap"	
14	Unfinished Business	Val Plumwood, <i>Feminism and the Mastery of Nature</i> * Chouane Mallory, "Ecofeminist Political Philosophy"	