

Environmental Ethics (ENVS 345)  
TR 8:30 - 9:50, 110 Willamette

Fall 2014  
CRN: 12297

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### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Intended for an interdisciplinary audience, this course introduces key concepts and methods in environmental ethics with an eye toward their application in environmental conservation and management as well as in daily life. Topics covered include the conceptual foundations of environmental ethics, the ethical value of nature and non-human species, the relation between economic and ethical evaluations, and problems of resource distribution and environmental justice. These perspectives are applied in the second half of the course to issues of food production and climate change. The course counts toward major requirements in Environmental Studies, Environmental Science, and Philosophy, and fulfills a General Education requirement in the Arts and Letters Group.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students who successfully complete this course are expected to have gained the ability to:

- Articulate an understanding of key concepts and methods in environmental ethics;
- Compare, contrast, and critique representative theoretical perspectives in environmental ethics;
- Present and assess views that differ from one's own, including perspectives relative to gender, ethnicity, class, and culture, as these bear on the framing and interpretation of environmental values and justice;
- Apply critical thinking, value clarification, and ethical reasoning to real-world contexts that require analysis and interpretation.

### REQUIRED TEXTS

- Pojman & Pojman, *Environmental Ethics*, 6th Edition (Wadsworth, 2012)
- Articles available as PDF files on the Blackboard site for the course

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

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| 1. participation in class discussion and discussion sections | 10% |
| 2. weekly reading quizzes (best 5 at 2% each)                | 10% |
| 3. two take-home essays (20% each)                           | 40% |
| 4. midterm and final exam (20% each)                         | 40% |

- **Class participation:** You are expected to participate actively in this class, which includes attending the lectures, reading all assigned material prior to class, and participating productively and respectfully in class discussions. Discussion is crucial to this class, and your GTF and I will do our best to make you feel at ease and welcome to contribute to the conversation. The best way to understand these sometimes difficult and controversial topics is to talk about them with each other, so please feel free to contribute any question, objection, or other thought about the topic at hand when such occurs to you. Although no relevant remark is out of bounds in this class, you will be expected to treat all members of the class with courtesy and respect. The quality and quantity of your participation in discussions will be evaluated in assigning 10% of your final course grade. Absences from class will negatively affect your participation grade.
- **Weekly reading quizzes:** Each discussion section will include a brief quiz drawn from the assigned readings for the week. The best way to prepare for these quizzes is to read all assigned materials carefully. Since some quizzes may be "open text," you are encouraged to bring copies of the assigned readings to class. Only the best five quiz grades will be counted in calculating your final grade; the lowest quiz grades will be dropped. No makeup quizzes will be given for any reason. If a quiz is missed due to absence, late arrival, or early departure, this missed quiz will be treated as one of the grades to be dropped. Your best five quiz grades will be worth 10% of your final grade.

- **Take-home essays:** Two essays of 900 - 1200 words each (about 3-4 pages) will be required in response to essay questions posted on Blackboard. Essays must be submitted through Blackboard's SafeAssign, and will be accepted only through the dates noted on the syllabus. SafeAssign is a software tool designed to help students avoid plagiarism and improper citation. It encourages original writing and proper citation by cross-referencing submitted materials with an archived database of websites, essays, journal articles, and other published work (including all past and current essay submissions). I may in some cases also submit your work to SafeAssign or some other plagiarism analysis and detection program. By enrolling in this course you grant me permission to do so. Each essay will be worth 20% of your final grade.

Grading rubric for essays:

A = Excellent. No mistakes, well-written, and distinctive in some way or other.

B = Good. No significant mistakes, well-written, but not distinctive in any way.

C = Okay. Some errors, but a basic grasp of the material.

D = Poor. Significant errors. A tenuous grasp of the material.

F = Failing. Problematic on all fronts indicating either no real grasp of the material or a complete lack of effort.

- **Midterm and final exam:** Exams will draw from all material assigned as readings or discussed in class. A list of review terms and concepts will be posted on Blackboard at least one week prior to the exam date. Exams will include a mix of true/false, fill-in-the-blank, and short answer questions. The final will include only material covered after the midterm. Each exam will be worth 20% of the final course grade.

#### POLICIES

- **Incompletes and extensions** will be given only in the event of documented emergencies.
- **Retaining copies of all returned work:** Please retain the original copy of all work returned to you during the term until the final course grade has been posted. In the event of any question concerning whether grades have been accurately recorded, it is your responsibility to provide these original copies as documentation.
- **Computers and other electronic equipment:** Use of electronic equipment, including cell phones and laptop computers, is prohibited during this class. Exceptions to the prohibition of laptops may be requested from the instructor and will be granted only for legitimate academic reasons. Use of laptops for academic reasons will be monitored throughout the term, and failure to restrict their use to this function will result in the revocation of any laptop privileges.
- **Academic Misconduct:** The University Student Conduct Code (available at [conduct.uoregon.edu](http://conduct.uoregon.edu)) defines academic misconduct. Students are prohibited from committing or attempting to commit any act that constitutes academic misconduct. By way of example, students should not give or receive (or attempt to give or receive) unauthorized help on assignments or examinations without express permission from the instructor. Students should properly acknowledge and document all sources of information (e.g. quotations, paraphrases, ideas) and use only the sources and resources authorized by the instructor. If there is any question about whether an act constitutes academic misconduct, it is the students' obligation to clarify the question with the instructor before committing or attempting to commit the act. Additional information about a common form of academic misconduct, plagiarism, is available at <http://library.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/index.html>. Academic misconduct will be reported to the Director of Student Conduct and Community Standards and met with disciplinary action (the usual punishment is an "F" for the course).
- **Inclement Weather:** It is generally expected that class will meet unless the University is officially closed for inclement weather. If, however, it becomes necessary to cancel class while the University remains open, this will be announced on Blackboard and through the Blackboard email system.
- **Sexual Violence:** The UO is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence and gender-based stalking. If you

(or someone you know) has experienced or experiences gender-based violence (intimate partner violence, attempted or completed sexual assault, harassment, coercion, stalking, etc.), know that you are not alone. UO has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more. Please be aware that all UO employees are required reporters. This means that if you tell me or your GTF about a situation, we may have to report the information to our supervisor or the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity. Although we have to report the situation, you will still have options about how your case will be handled, including whether or not you wish to pursue a formal complaint. Our goal is to make sure you are aware of the range of options available to you and have access to the resources you need. If you wish to speak to someone confidentially, you can call 541-346-SAFE, UO's 24-hour hotline, to be connected to a confidential counselor to discuss your options. You can also visit the SAFE website at [safe.uoregon.edu](http://safe.uoregon.edu).

**Individual Differences:** If you experience difficulty in this course for any reason, please don't hesitate to consult with us. If you have an issue of accessibility that may prevent you from fully demonstrating your abilities, you should contact us personally as soon as possible so we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure your full participation and facilitate your education process. The university offers a wide range of services to support you in your efforts to meet the course requirements, including the following:

- **University Teaching and Learning Center (TLC):** TLC provides numerous resources (including courses, workshops, and tutoring) to help UO students succeed. They work with a diverse student body with a wide range of needs. If you are unsure which resources would work best, they are happy to answer questions and share suggestions. Web: <http://tlc.uoregon.edu/> – Phone: 541-346-3226
- **University Counseling and Testing Center (UCTC):** The UCTC provides comprehensive mental health care and testing services to the University of Oregon campus. The primary mission of the UCTC is to provide quality clinical/therapeutic services, psychological testing and assessment, psychoeducational workshops, and outreach as well as emergency services. Web: <http://counseling.uoregon.edu/dnn/> – Phone: 541-346-3227
- **Accessible Education Center (AEC):** The AEC is dedicated to facilitating and supporting accessible education through active collaboration with students, faculty, staff, and the community. The AEC works to create and sustain physical, curricular, and informational environments that are informed by and responsive to the diverse characteristics and experiences of students with disabilities and variations of ability. Web: <http://aec.uoregon.edu/> – Phone: 541-346-1155

#### TENTATIVE ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

*Subject to revision as we proceed. Specific assignments announced in class.*

Week 1: 9/30, 10/1	Introduction to course <b>Historical Foundations</b> Mill, "Nature" Schweitzer, "Reverence for Life" Leopold, "Ecocentrism: The Land Ethic"
Week 2: 10/7, 10/9	<b>Non-Human Animals</b> Singer, "A Utilitarian Defense of Animal Liberation" Regan, "The Radical Egalitarian Case for Animal Rights" Adams, <i>The Sexual Politics of Meat</i> , Chpt. 1 (BB) Jamieson, "Against Zoos" <b>First Essay Due, 10/10</b>

Week 3: 10/14, 10/16	<b>Biocentrism &amp; Ecocentrism</b> Taylor, “Biocentric Egalitarianism” Rolston, “Naturalizing Values: Organisms and Species” Naess, “The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecological Movement” Stone, “Should Trees have Standing? Toward Legal Rights for Natural Objects” Sagoff, “Animal Liberation and Environmental Ethics: Bad Marriage, Quick Divorce” (BB)
Week 4: 10/21, 10/23	<b>Economics and Ethics</b> Hawken, “A Declaration of Sustainability” (BB) Sagoff, “At the Shrine of Our Lady of Fátima” Magdoff and Foster, “What Every Environmentalist Needs to Know About Capitalism” Waring, “A Woman’s Reckoning” (BB) York, “Do alternative energy sources displace fossil fuels?” (BB)
Week 5: 10/28, 10/30	<b>Environmental Justice</b> Bullard, “Overcoming Racism in Environmental Decision-Making” Wenz, “Just Garbage: The Problem of Environmental Racism” Shue, “Global Environment and International Inequality” Corburn, “Street Science: Characterizing Local Knowledge” (BB)
Week 6: 11/4, 11/6	LaDuke, “White Earth” (BB) Robyn, “Indigenous Knowledge and Technology” <b>MIDTERM EXAM, 11/6</b>
Week 7: 11/11, 11/13	<b>Food Democracy, Sovereignty, and Justice</b> Berry, “The Whole Horse,” “The Pleasures of Eating” (BB) Bittman, “Farmer’s Market Values” (BB) Williams, “Preserving the Culture in Urban Agriculture” (BB) Carney, “Memory Dishes of the African Diaspora” (BB) Clifton, “Cutting Greens” (BB) FILM: <i>The Garden</i>
Week 8: 11/18, 11/20	Holmes, <i>Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies</i> , Introduction & Chapter 2 (BB) Berger, “Long Days in the Fields” (BB) Shiva, “Hunger By Design” (BB) Patel, “The Value of Nothing,” “Food Sovereignty” (BB videos) ETC Report, “The Poor Can Feed Themselves” <b>Second Essay Due, 11/21</b>
Week 9: 11/25 (11/27: Thanksgiving)	<b>Climate Change and the Future</b> Jamieson, “Ethics, Public Policy and Global Warming” (BB) Singer, “One Atmosphere” (BB) Broome, “The Ethics of Climate Change” (BB)
Week 10: 12/2, 12/4	Gardiner, “A Perfect Moral Storm” (BB) Thompson, “Radical Hope for Living Well in a Warmer World” (BB) Solnit, <i>A Paradise Built in Hell</i> , Ch. 5 & Epilogue (BB)
Final Exam	Monday, December 8th, 8:00 - 10:00