ENVS 345

Environmental Ethics

Instructor: Paul Guernsey
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Office: 240 Columbia
Office Hours: 12-2pm, MW

CRN: 40878
Summer 2013
MTWR 2-3:50 pm
Room: Columbia 142

Course Description:
Are ethical relationships with the non-human natural world formed by a straightforward application of scientific facts to our social practices? How are environmental values developed and sustained? This course will address issues at the core of the human-nature relationship including animal liberation, biodiversity, agriculture, ecological restoration, climate change, and environmental justice.

Course Readings:
All readings will be available on Blackboard. Please show your appreciation for the cost-free nature of this availability by taking the steps necessary for having readings with you in class in whatever form is easiest for you to achieve. If you do not consistently bring the readings with you, this will be reflected in your participation grade. If you want a bound copy of some readings, about half of them are available in the following volume: Pojman & Pojman, *Environmental Ethics*, 5th Edition (Thomson-Wadsworth, 2008)

Course Requirements:
1. Participation/Attendance 10%
2. Reading Responses (4) 40%
3. Midterm Paper 20%
4. Final Paper 30%

➤ Participation/Attendance: You are expected to participate actively in this class, which includes attending class, reading all assigned material prior to class, and participating productively and professionally in class discussions. Missing THREE classes FOR ANY REASON will result in a full grade reduction. An additional full grade reduction will be made for each additional missed class after the third. Three late arrivals for class will count as one absence. Discussion is crucial to this class, and I will do my best to make you feel at ease and welcome to contribute to the class conversation. 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 respectfully and professionally. The quality and quantity of your participation in the class discussion will be evaluated in assigning 10% of your final grade. Obviously, failure to attend class will negatively affect your participation grade.
Weekly Reading Responses: You are expected to submit one and only one response per week on a day of your choosing. Responses must be between one and one and a half pages single-spaced and address one of the readings assigned for the day they are submitted. You may include discussion of more than one reading if you wish but this is not required. If you receive a 7 or lower, you may re-submit a response for the next class meeting only. You should spend at least half of the response summarizing the key arguments of the text. There should also be a critical component where you give reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with the author on specific points.

Midterm and Final Papers: Papers will be due at the end of the 2nd and 4th weeks. The mid-term will be 3-4 pages and the final will be 4-5 pages double-spaced. Make sure you write at least the minimum length but no more than the maximum length. Paper topics will be posted one week before they are due. The mid-term is due on Friday, July 5th, and the final is due on Friday, July 19th.

Fieldtrip: I will make a good-faith effort to arrange a guided tour of Mt. Pisgah to be scheduled in the final week of class. Attendance of this trip will count for 20% of your participation grade. Make-up activities may be proposed if there are documented conflicts.

Course Policies:

Late Work: Any late work will be marked down unless documentation of an emergency is provided. No late reading responses will be accepted.

Electronics: The use of any device for purposes not immediately relevant to the class discussion will result in expulsion from the class meeting and an absence for the day. Unless you are an on-call EMT or surgeon, cell phone volume will be turned off and cell phones will be kept put away. You may check your phone during the break. If you need to have your phone on for some reason, check in with me before class starts.

Plagiarism: There is no point. I will recognize it immediately and you will fail the course. Please read the following if you are unfamiliar with what constitutes plagiarism: http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/

Week 1: Defining the Moral Community

Monday: What is Environmental Ethics?
Aristotle, selection from Politics
Kant, “Rational Beings Alone Have Moral Worth”
Descartes, selections

Tuesday: Animal Rights
Singer, “A Utilitarian Defense of Animal Liberation”
**Wednesday: Biocentrism**
Taylor, “Biocentric Egalitarianism”
Stone, “Should Trees Have Standing?”

**Thursday: Ecocentrism**
Leopold, “The Land Ethic”
Sagoff, “Animal Liberation and Environmental Ethics: Bad Marriage, Quick Divorce”

**Friday: Ecocentrism**
Rolston, “Naturalizing Values”

**Week 2: Biodiversity, Agriculture**

**Monday: Biodiversity**
Maclaurin & Sterelny, *What is Biodiversity?* Chapter 1
Rolston, “Biodiversity”

**Tuesday: Biodiversity**
Griffith, “A Conservation Movement for Microbes”
Cockell and Jones, “Advancing the Case for Microbial Conservation”

**Wednesday: Industrial Agriculture**
Marx, selections from *Capital*
Altieri, “Ecological Impacts of Industrial Agriculture and the Possibilities for Truly Sustainable Farming” from *Hungry for Profit*
Levins and Lewontin, “The Pesticide System” from *The Dialectical Biologist*

**Thursday: NO CLASS.**

**Friday: Sustainable Agriculture, Biotechnology**
Rauch, “Can Frankenfood Save the Planet?”
Pretty, “Can Ecological Agriculture Feed Nine Billion People?”

**MID-TERM PAPERS DUE ON FRIDAY IN LECTURE**

**Week 3: Restoration, Climate Change**

**Monday: Restoration**
Readings TBA

**Tuesday: Restoration**
Readings TBA

**Wednesday: Restoration**
Readings TBA
Thursday: Climate Change
Foster, “James Hansen and the Climate-Change Exit Strategy”

Friday: The Ethics of Climate Change
Shue, “Deadly Delays, Saving Opportunities”
Shue, “Climate Hope: Implementing the Climate Strategy”

Week 4: Environmental Justice

Monday: Environmental Racism and a Revolutionary Approach to Health
Cole and Foster, “Environmental Racism” in From the Ground Up
Levins and Lewontin, “Latin Community Health” and selections

Tuesday: Feminist Perspectives
Carolyn Merchant, “Dominion over Nature”

Wednesday: Feminist Perspectives
Waring, “A Woman’s Reckoning”

Thursday: Native American Perspectives
LaDuke, “Buffalo Nations, Buffalo Peoples”

Friday: Field Trip to Mt. Pisgah