

January 2016
Natural Resources 4330
Applied Environmental Philosophy

Spring Semester 2016 (3 credit hours)
Tuesday Thursday 10:10-11:25 am
Fernow G-01

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A. OVERVIEW OF THE COURSE

The overall focus of this seminar is on environmental philosophy considered as an academic field. The major themes in the first half of the semester will include environmental ethics, anthropocentrism versus non-anthropocentrism, intrinsic value, monism versus pluralism, animal rights versus environmental ethics, environmental aesthetics, and various approaches to environmental philosophy, including deep ecology, eco-feminism, and pragmatism.

During the second half of the semester, we can be more flexible and can tailor the course readings a bit more closely to students' individual interests. I have taught this seminar for ten years, and I have focused the second half material in different years on aesthetics, animal rights, logic, environmental justice, future generations, and/or additional applied environmental ethics topics. I have also spent quite a bit of time in the past several years looking at the climate change issue, which might be another possibility.

Therefore I have sketched out a reading schedule below for a provisional course of readings that includes the topics of future generations and environmental aesthetics; but depending on your interests, we can either stick with that plan or take an alternate approach. In either case, I usually will distribute an updated syllabus sometime around spring break.

The course presupposes a familiarity with some basic elements of ethical theory, e.g., deontology and consequentialism, realism and relativism, egoism, virtue ethics, etc.

Students lacking any background in ethics may still take the course but are encouraged to consult a good introductory text in ethics for review of basic concepts. Helpful online resources include the Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy at <http://www.iep.utm.edu/>, the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy at <http://plato.stanford.edu/>, Robert Cavalier's "Online Guide to Ethics and Moral Philosophy" at <http://www.phil.cmu.edu/Cavalier/80130/>, and Lawrence Hinman's "Ethics Updates" site at <http://ethics.sandiego.edu/>.

Open to graduate students and upper division undergraduates. Meets twice a week, Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 10:10 to 11:25, 3 credit hours, may be taken S/U.

B. EXAMS, PAPERS, AND PARTICIPATION

Course requirements: regular attendance and reading/discussion of the materials. Occasional reading quizzes *if needed*. Each student will complete a seminar paper on a topic of the student's choosing with instructor's approval. A final exam of some kind will be held either as a take-home exam or in the regularly scheduled exam period.

This is primarily a reading and discussion seminar. Each student in the seminar will assist with leading discussion of a small number of the readings throughout the semester. In advance, students agree to carefully read the assigned article and provide summary notes and/or overview of the argument being presented by the author. Please email those outlines/notes to me at least one hour before the class meeting time; I will then copy and distribute those notes to the entire class for our use in the seminar. With roughly 50 readings, this means each student will be directly responsible for assisting with the discussion of 3-4 readings over the course of the semester.

C. GRADING

- (1) Seminar discussion, participation, preparation, and quizzes: 50%
- (2) Seminar paper: 25%
- (3) Final exam: 25%

Attendance is crucial: you must attend at least 2/3 of the class sessions to pass and at least 90% of the class sessions to qualify for an "A"-level grade.

Please use *The Chicago Manual of Style* for your seminar paper.

D. COURSE MATERIALS

Required Books to Buy:

The following book has been ordered at the campus store. You are required to buy the text and bring it to class for discussion:

Light, Andrew, and Holmes Rolston, III, eds. 2003. *Environmental Ethics: An Anthology*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Xeroxed Materials and Electronic Reserve:

All other assigned short readings, book excerpts, articles, etc. will be placed on electronic reserve via Blackboard at <http://blackboard.cornell.edu/>. Please print a copy of each reading for your own use and bring the appropriate readings to seminar for discussion.

E. PROPOSED SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

Readings are from Light and Rolston unless otherwise noted as available on Blackboard.

WEEK ONE Introduction

Jan. 28 Introductory meeting

WEEK TWO Overview of Environmental Ethics

Feb. 2 Light and Rolston, "Introduction: Ethics and Environmental Ethics," pp. 1-11.
Watson, Richard A. "The Identity Crisis in Environmental Philosophy," in
Environmental Philosophy and Environmental Activism, edited by Don E.
Marietta, Jr., and Lester Embree (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield,
1995) pp. 203-214. (Blackboard)

Feb. 4 Palmer, Chap. 1, "An Overview of Environmental Ethics," pp. 15-37.
Leopold Chap. 2, "The Land Ethic," pp. 38-46.
Routley, Chap. 3, "Is There a Need for a New, an Environmental, Ethic?"
pp. 47-52.

WEEK THREE Animal Rights "versus" Environmental Ethics

Feb. 9 Singer, Chap. 4, "Not for Humans Only: The Place of Nonhumans in
Environmental Issues," pp. 55-64.

Regan, Chap. 5, "Animal Rights? What's in a Name? With a brief extract
from *The Case for Animal Rights*," pp. 65-73.

Taylor, Chap. 6, "The Ethics of Respect for Nature," pp.74-84.

Feb. 11 Katz, Chap. 7, "Is There a Place for Animals in the Moral Consideration of
Nature?" pp. 85-94.

Varner, Chap. 8, "Can Animal Rights Activists Be Environmentalists?" pp. 95-
113.

Cahen, Chap. 9, "Against the Moral Considerability of Ecosystems," pp. 114-128.

Cornell February Break February 13 through February 16

WEEK FOUR Intrinsic Value

Feb. 18 O'Neill, Chap. 10, "The Varieties of Intrinsic Value," pp. 131-142.

Rolston, Chap. 11, "Value in Nature and the Nature of Value," pp. 143-153.

WEEK FIVE Intrinsic Value (continued)

- Feb. 23 Lee, Chap. 12, "The Source and Locus of Intrinsic Value: A Reexamination," pp. 154-162.
Norton, Chap. 13, "Environmental Ethics and Weak Anthropocentrism," pp. 163-174.
Hargrove, Chap. 14, "Weak Anthropocentric Intrinsic Value," pp. 175-190.

Feb. 25 **Monism vs. Pluralism**

- Stone, Chap. 15, "Moral Pluralism and the Course of Environmental Ethics," pp. 193-202.
Callicott, Chap. 16, "The Case Against Moral Pluralism," pp. 203-219.
Wenz, Chap. 17, "Minimal, Moderate, and Extreme Moral Pluralism," pp. 220-228.

WEEK SIX Pluralism, Deep Ecology, and Ecofeminism

- March 1 Light, Chap. 18, "The Case for a Practical Pluralism," pp. 229-247.
Fox, Chap. 19, "Deep Ecology: A New Philosophy for Our Time?" pp. 252-261.
Naess, Chap. 20, "The Deep Ecological Movement: Some Philosophical Aspects," pp. 262-263.
- March 3 Gaard and Gruen, Chap. 21, "Ecofeminism: Toward Global Justice and Planetary Health," pp. 276-293.
Warren and Cheney, Chap. 22, "Ecological Feminism and Ecosystem Ecology," pp. 294-305.
Plumwood, Val, 1991. "Nature, Self, and Gender: Feminism, Environmental Philosophy, and the Critique of Rationalism." *Hypatia* 6 (1, Spring): 3-27. (Blackboard)

WEEK SEVEN Pragmatism and Anti-Foundationalism

March 8 **Pragmatism**

- Weston, Chap. 23, "Beyond Intrinsic Value: Pragmatism in Environmental Ethics," pp. 307-318.
Minteer and Manning, Chap. 24, "Pragmatism in Environmental Ethics: Democracy, Pluralism, and the Management of Nature," pp. 319-330.

March 10 **Anti-Foundationalism**

- Minteer, Ben A. 1998. "No Experience Necessary? Foundationalism and the Retreat from Culture in Environmental Ethics." *Environmental Values* 7: 333-348. (Blackboard)
Callicott, J. Baird. 1999. "Silencing Philosophers: Minteer and the Foundations of Anti-foundationalism," *Environmental Values* 8 (1999): 499-516. (Blackboard)

WEEK EIGHT Consumption, Economics, and Climate Change

March 15 Sagoff, Mark. "Do We Consume Too Much?" in *The Economy of the Earth: Philosophy, Law, and the Environment*, 2d edition, revised. NY: Cambridge U Press, 2008. (Blackboard)
Sagoff, Mark. "Carrying Capacity and Ecological Economics," pp. 154 - 176 in *Price, Principle, and the Environment*. NY: Cambridge U Press, 2004. (Blackboard)

March 17 **Climate Change**

Jamieson, Dale, Chap. 27, "Ethics, Public Policy, and Global Warming," pp. 371-379 in Light and Rolston book.
Beckerman, Wilfred. "Global Warming and the Precautionary Principle." Pp. 88-103 in *Small is Stupid: Blowing the Whistle on the Greens*. London: Duckworth, 1995.
(Possibly one other paper TBA)

WEEK NINE Wilderness Preservation and Restoration

March 22 Eliot, in Light and Rolston, Chap. 28, "Faking Nature," pp. 381-389.
Katz, Chap. 29, "The Big Lie: Human Restoration of Nature," 390-397.
Light, Chap. 30, "Ecological Restoration and the Culture of Nature: A Pragmatic Perspective," pp. 398-411.

March 24 Nelson, Chap. 31, "An Amalgamation of Wilderness Preservation Arguments," pp. 413-436.
Callicott, Chap. 32, "A Critique of and an Alternative to the Wilderness Idea," pp. 437-443.
Noss, Chap. 33, "Wilderness—Now More Than Ever: A Response to Callicott," pp. 444-447.

(spring break March 26 – April 3)

WEEK TEN Sustainability and Future Generations

April 5 **Sustainability**
Scherer, Chap. 25, "The Ethics of Sustainable Resources," Light and Rolston, pp. 334-358.
Dobson, Andrew, 2003. "Social Justice and Environmental Sustainability: Ne'er the Twain Shall Meet?" pp. 83-95 in Agyeman, Julian, Robert D. Bullard, and Bob Evans, eds. *Just Sustainabilities: Development in an Unequal World*, MIT Press. (Blackboard)
Beckerman, Wilfred, "The 'Sustainable Development' Alternative," pp. 125-140 in *Small is Stupid: Blowing the Whistle on the Greens*. London: Duckworth, 1995. (Blackboard)

April 7

Derek Parfit and the Non-Identity Problem

Parfit, Chap. 16, "The Non-Identity Problem," from *Reasons and Persons*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984. (Blackboard)

WEEK ELEVEN Parfit and Population, conclusion

April 12

Parfit, Chap. 17 "The Repugnant Conclusion" and Parfit, Chap 18 "The Absurd Conclusion" (Blackboard)

Suggested:

Ryberg, Jesper et al. "The Repugnant Conclusion" from the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy at <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/repugnant-conclusion/> (Blackboard)

April 14

Parfit, Chap. 19, "The Mere Addition Paradox" (Blackboard)

Harsanyi, John C. 1975. "Can the Maximin Principle Serve as a Basis for Morality? A Critique of John Rawls's Theory." *The American Political Science Review* 69 (2, June): 594-606. (Blackboard)

Sagoff, Mark "The Allocation and Distribution of Resources," in *The Economy of the Earth*, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1988, pp. 50-73, plus notes. (Blackboard)

WEEK TWELVE

Aesthetics

April 19

Sagoff, Mark. 2008 "Is an Environmental Ethic Compatible with Biological Science?" pp. 137-156 plus notes, in *The Economy of the Earth*, 2d ed, rev. NY: Cambridge U. Press. (Blackboard)

Hepburn, Ronald. "Contemporary Aesthetics and the Neglect of Natural Beauty." In *The Aesthetics of Natural Environments*, edited by Allen Carlson and Arnold Berleant, 43-62. Orchard Park, NY: Broadview Press, 2004 (1966). (Blackboard)

April 21

Carlson, Allen. 1984. "Nature and Positive Aesthetics." *Environmental Ethics* 6 (1): 5-34. (Blackboard)

Brady, Emily. "Imagination and the Aesthetic Appreciation of Nature." In *The Aesthetics of Natural Environments*, edited by Allen Carlson and Arnold Berleant, pp. 156-69. Orchard Park, NY: Broadview Press, 2004. (Blackboard)

Carroll, Noël. "On Being Moved by Nature: Between Religion and Natural History," In *The Aesthetics of Natural Environments*, eds. Allen Carlson and Arnold Berleant, pp. 89-107. Orchard Park, NY: Broadview, 2004. (Blackboard)

WEEK THIRTEEN Toward an Aesthetic Metaethic

April 26 Hargrove, Eugene. "An Ontological Argument for Environmental Ethics."
 Chapter 6 in *Foundations of Environmental Ethics*. Denton, TX:
 Environmental Ethics Books, 1989. (Blackboard)
 Miller, Richard W. Miller. "Three Versions of Objectivity: Aesthetic, Moral, and
 Scientific," pp. 26 - 58 in *Aesthetics and Ethics: Essays at the Intersection*, ed.
 Jerrold Levinson. New York, Cambridge University Press, 1998. (Blackboard)

April 28 **open**, readings TBA

WEEK FOURTEEN Conclusions

May 3 **open**, readings TBA

May 5 **Feeding People versus Saving Nature**

Rolston, Chap. 34, "Feeding People versus Saving Nature?" pp. 451-462.
Attfield, Chap. 35, "Saving Nature, Feeding People, and Ethics," pp. 463-471.

WEEK FIFTEEN Conclusions

May 10 **open Seminar papers due last day of class**