

Philosophy 307
Environmental Philosophy and Ethics
Pfeiffer University
Fall 2007

Instructor: Dr. Laura Stivers
Office: Jane Freeman 227
Phone: 704 463-3131
E-mail: Laura.Stivers@pfeiffer.edu

Office Hours: Mon 11-12
Tues 8-9
Wed 11-12, 2-3
Thurs 8-9

Course Description and Objectives

The purpose of this course is to introduce the field of environmental philosophy and ethics, to encourage philosophical and ethical reflection on environmental issues, and to stimulate healthy attitudes and action in regards to our natural environment. To do this, we will examine various environmental ethics and ecophilosophies and how they apply to various environmental issues. We will also undertake a group service-learning project in which will put theory into practice (and vice-versa), while also contributing towards making our environment and community a healthier place to live.

The objectives of this course are:

1. To acquire a good understanding of the principal philosophical and ethical perspectives that have been developed in response to environmental issues.
2. To show a facility to use the language and concepts of philosophy and ethics with respect to specific environmental issues.
3. To do an environmental service project that makes for a healthier community and world.
4. To develop one's own environmental philosophy and ethic.
5. To develop one's own personal integrity by incorporating ecological sensitivity in one's own life.

Texts

DesJardins, Joseph. *Environmental Ethics: Concepts, Policy, Theory*, 1999.

McPhee, John. *Encounters with the Archdruid*, 1971.

Shiva, Vandana. *Water Wars: Privatization, Pollution, and Profit*, 2002.

Assorted handouts

Course Requirements

1. Environmental Journal (25% of grade, 12 Font Times New Roman, double-spaced)
This journal will include individual assignments to be turned in throughout the semester, with the complete journal turned in at the end of the semester. I will give comments on the individual assignments, but will not assign a grade to the journal until the end. Two or more late assignments will penalize the journal as a whole by one letter grade.

1. Mid-term exam (20% of grade) Take-home essay exam. You may use your books and notes, but no outside sources allowed and you must do your own work. Late exams will receive a penalty of one letter grade.

2. Service-learning project (15% of grade) You will work in groups to design a presentation on one area of living a more environmentally sensitive life (e.g. energy use, food, consumption of material goods, recycling, etc.). I expect your group to do in depth research on the topic and to design a creative presentation (no lectures). The presentation should be geared to high school students as you will give your presentation to students at Graystone High School. You will have a chance to get feedback from our class before presenting to the high school. You will have some class time to work together.

3. Two case briefs (3-4 pages, each 15% of grade, 12 Font Times New Roman, double-spaced) One case brief is due before fall break and the other is due after fall break (pick one of the days listed). To receive an "A" briefs must be well written, reflect assigned readings, and develop the normative dimension. To receive a "B" briefs must at least develop the normative dimension. Late case briefs will receive a penalty of one letter grade.

4. Class participation (10% of grade) This course will rely heavily on discussion and dialogue. It is a courtesy to the instructor and to your fellow students as well as a responsibility to yourself to finish the assigned readings and be prepared to participate in discussions. I encourage you to ask questions about parts of the readings that you do not understand. Such questions will help everyone to understand the material better. Absences from class will matter: 0-2 = A, 3 = B, 4 = C, 5 = D, and more than 5 = F (grade could be raised slightly higher if you participate a lot). Two times late to the class (more than 4 minutes) constitutes an absence for my attendance policy. Students who are absent for any reason from more than ¼ of the class meetings cannot receive a passing grade from the instructor.

Final Grade Policy (A = 3.75-4.00; A- = 3.50-3.74; B+ = 3.21-3.49; B = 2.85-3.20; B- = 2.50-2.84; C+ = 2.21-2.49; C = 1.85-2.20; C- = 1.50-1.84; D = 1.00-1.49; F = <1.00)

Honor Code

The Honor Code is in effect in this course. This means that all take-home exams are to be taken without the assistance of other people or outside sources (books and notes are allowed). All papers and exams must be your own writing and you must give citations for any ideas that are not your own. Plagiarism is a violation of the Honor Code and the fundamental principles of academic integrity. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's ideas as if they were your own, without giving the originator of the idea the appropriate credit. You may use whatever format for citations as long as you are consistent. While the internet provides a wealth of information, you must avoid simply cutting and pasting materials from sources to create a paper. One of the key goals in writing a paper is to synthesize and integrate the material that you have read and to put the synthesis in your own words. An acceptable paper is NOT simply a mosaic of quotations, even if the sources for the quotation are shown. If you have *any* questions, please ask.

Any cell phone interruptions in the class will be grounds for a lower grade.

Course Outline

Aug 21	Introduce syllabus
Aug 23	Environmental Crisis DesJardins p. 59-91
Aug 28	Overview of Ethics DesJardins p. 1-24
Aug 30	Western Attitudes Towards the Natural World DesJardins p. 25-58 Journal Assignment #1 due
Sept 4	Economics and Environmental Policy DesJardins p. 95-136
Sept 6	Conservation Perspective McPhee Part I
Sept 11	Preservation Perspective McPhee Part II Journal Assignment #2 due
Sept 13	Class Time for Service-Learning Project McPhee Part III
Sept 18	Aesthetic and Spiritual Values DesJardins p. 137-144 and 156-178
Sept 20	Extensionism and Anthropocentrism DesJardins p. 179-216
Sept 25	Holism: Ecology and Ethics DesJardins p. 217-257 Journal Assignment #3 due
Sept 27	Deep Ecology and Social Ecology DesJardins p. 523-540 “Introduction to Deep Ecology” George Sessions (handout) “The Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate and Its Parallels” Warwick Fox (handout)
Oct 2	Ecofeminism DesJardins p. 541-554 “The Death of Nature” Carolyn Merchant (handout) “Gender and the Environment” Mary Mellor (handout)

Oct 4	Environmental Justice DesJardins p. 437-474 “One World Under God” Deane Curtin (handout)
Oct 9	A Sense of Place “The Place, the Region, and the Commons” Gary Snyder (handout) Journal Assignment #4 due – share with class Mid-term Exam handout out
Oct 11	Time to work on exam and/or service-learning project
Fall Break	
Oct 23	Case Study Role Play (Must dress in costume) “Skull Valley” (handout) Mid-term Exam due
Oct 25	Ethics and Animals DesJardins p. 287-324
Oct 30	Raising Animals – Factory versus Organic Farming Guest Speaker – Susan Wolfe “Supporting Community Farming” Rebecca Todd Peters (handout) Case Brief due on “Skull Valley”
Nov 1	Pollution DesJardins p. 261-286 Shiva p. 1-37
Nov 6	Privatization of Water Shiva p. 38-105
Nov 8	International Relations and the Environment Shiva p. 106-140
Nov 13	Service-Learning Project Presentations in class (energy and food)
Nov 15	Ethics and Land DesJardins p. 325-328 and 337-364 Journal Assignment #5 due Service-Learning Project Presentations in class (waste)
Nov 20	No Class – professor at conference
Nov 22	No class – Thanksgiving

- Nov 27 Wilderness Preservation
 DesJardins p. 365-393
 “Martin Mountain Takeover” (handout)
- Nov 29 **Service-Learning Project Presentations at Graystone School**
- Dec 4 Growth and Development
 DesJardins p. 394-436
 Case Brief due on Privatization of Water or “Martin Mountain Takeover”
- Dec 8 Environmental Action
 <http://www.centerfortheenvironment.org/>
 Field Trip to Center for the Environment, Catawba College
 Final Journal due

For Further Reading

- Holmes III, Rolston. *Environmental Ethics: Duties and Values in the Natural World*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989.
- Nash, Roderick Frazier. *The Rights of Nature: A History of Environmental Ethics*. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1989.
- Leopold, Aldo. *A Sand County Almanac*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, Inc., 1949.
- Taylor, Paul W. *Respect for Nature: A Theory of Environmental Ethics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986.
- Rasmussen, Larry L. *Earth Community Earth Ethics*. Maryknoll NY: Orbis Books 1996.
- Zimmerman, Michael E. et. al. *Environmental Philosophy: From Animal Rights to Radical Ecology*. Fourth Edition. Upper Saddle River: Prentice-Hall Inc., 2005.
- Martin-Schramm, James B. and Stivers, Robert L. *Christian Environmental Ethics: Case Study Approach*. Maryknoll NY: Orbis Books: 2003.
- Light, Andrew and Rolston III, Holmes, editors. *Environmental Ethics: An Anthology*. Malden MA: Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 2003.
- Kaufman, Frederik A. *Foundations of Environmental Philosophy: A Text with Readings*. Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2003.
- Armstrong, Susan J. and Botzler, Richard G. *Environmental Ethics: Divergence and Convergence*. Third Edition. Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2004.