

**Syllabus, PHIL 2070
Philosophy of the Environment
Winter 2013**

Instructor

Natalie Evans
Office: MACK 339
Hours: Monday, 4:15-5:15 pm
Email: natevans@uoguelph.ca

Lecture

Monday & Wednesday
5:30-6:20 pm
MACN Room 105

Teaching Assistants

Brent Ables
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Sections

1 & 2
3
5 & 6
7 & 8
9 & 10

Office hour

Course Description:

In this course we will critically examine different views on the moral relationship between humans, other animals and the environment. We will begin by examining some of the main ethical theories that help to guide our actions, and our consideration of what is right or wrong. Then we will investigate what can be considered to have 'moral standing'. In doing so, we will become familiar with some of the main positions in environmental ethics, including ecocentrism, biocentrism and deep ecology. We will also consider some important challenges to these views, including those raised in economics, by ecofeminists and in aesthetics. Finally, current environmental issues such as climate change and global warming, biodiversity, population and consumption will be analyzed from a moral perspective.

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- Develop critical thinking and analysis skills
- Improve close reading and clear, argumentative writing skills
- Learn and analyze the main views and arguments found in environmental philosophy

Reading

All of the readings for the course are found in the required textbook:
Williston, Byron. (Ed.) 2012. *Environmental Ethics for Canadians*. Don Mills: Oxford University Press.

Assessment

Assignments due in tutorials	30%
Participation in tutorials	10%
Midterm examination	25%
Final examination(Thurs., April 11, 2013 from 7-9 pm)	35%

General Information and Expectations

Readings

It is expected that students will read the assigned sections of the textbook before attending class. Lectures will focus on explanations and analyses of the main concepts and arguments of the assigned readings for that week. As such, it is important for students to be familiar with the material before attending class.

Assignments

Assignments for the course will focus on the development of critical thinking skills and how they apply to environmental philosophy. Each assignment will be submitted into the appropriate website dropbox online on the assigned due date. Assignments will also be graded and returned online. Assignments will vary in weight, and instructions will be provided in the course website. Each assignment should be clearly labeled with your own full name, your ID number, your tutorial section number and the name of your teaching assistant. Your file should be submitted in either rtf or word format. Your assignment will be *due at the beginning of your tutorial section* online.

Participation

Participation marks will be assigned by your teaching assistant according to your performance in the tutorials. It is expected that students will participate in tutorials by asking questions, commenting on the materials, and entering into philosophical discussion.

Midterm and final exam

Both examinations in this course will be written and will focus on the main concepts and arguments/views of the authors in the textbook. A review class will be held before each examination.

Lateness policy

All written assignments will be due on the assigned day as outlined in the schedule, into the appropriate dropbox in the course website. Late assignments will not be accepted after the due date without legitimate documentation.

Plagiarism

Any and all cases of academic misconduct will be reported to the Assistant Dean of the Arts. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with University policies on academic misconduct, and if in doubt, as your teaching assistant or instructor for guidance or a referral to academic resources on referencing.

Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability and you require accommodations, please follow CSD procedures. If you require more specific accommodations beyond exams, please contact the instructor with the details as early in the semester as possible.

Course Outline and Schedule

Week 1 – Introduction to environmental philosophy and ethics

Jan. 7 Introduction to course and expectations

Jan. 9 Read: Introduction

Tutorial: Introduction

Week 2 – Moral Standing: Animals

Jan. 14 Read: Chapter 1, A, B and C

Jan. 16 Read: Chapter 1, D and E

Tutorial: Discuss arguments in animal ethics

Submit: Assignment One by time of tutorial Thurs. or Fri. (3%)

Week 3 – Moral Standing: Biocentrism

Jan. 21 Read: Chapter 2, A and B

Jan. 23 Read: Chapter 2, C, D and E

Tutorial: Discuss and analyze arguments for biocentrism

Submit: Assignment Two by time of tutorial (3%)

Week 4 – Moral Standing: Ecocentrism and Deep Ecology

Jan. 28 Read: Chapter 3, A and B

Jan. 30 Read: Chapter 3, C, D and E

Tutorial: Discuss and analyze arguments and objections to the Land Ethic and Deep Ecology

Submit: Assignment Three by time of tutorial (3%)

Week 5 – Environmental Aesthetics

Feb. 4 Read: Chapter 7, A and B

Feb. 6 Read: Chapter 7, C, D and E

Tutorial: Discuss strengths and weaknesses of environmental aesthetics

Submit: Assignment Four by time of tutorial (6%)

Week 6 – Review and Midterm

Feb. 11 Review in class

Feb. 13 Midterm in class (25%)

No tutorials this week.

READING WEEK: FEB. 18-22 (NO CLASSES OR TUTORIALS)

Week 7 – Challenges: Economics and Ecology

Feb. 25 Read: Chapter 4, A and B

Feb. 27 Read: Chapter 4, C, D and E

Tutorial: Discuss strengths and weaknesses of cost-benefit analysis from a moral perspective.

Submit: Assignment Five by time of tutorial (3%)

Week 8 – Challenges: Ecofeminism

Mar. 4 Read: Chapter 6, A, B and C

Mar. 6 Read: Chapter 6, D, E and F

Tutorial: Discuss ecofeminist arguments

Week 9 – Environmental Issues: Climate Change

Mar. 11 Read: Chapter 10, A, B and C

Mar. 13 Read: Chapter 10, D and E

Tutorial: Discuss moral aspects of climate change

Submit: Assignment Six by time of tutorial (6%)

Week 10 – Environmental Issue: Population and Consumption

Mar. 18 Read: Chapter 11, A and B

Mar. 20 Read: Chapter 11, C, D and E

Tutorial: Discuss relationship between population and resource consumption

Week 11 – Environmental Issue: The Biodiversity Crisis

Mar. 25 Read: Chapter 12, A, B and C

Mar. 27 Read: Chapter 12, D, E and F

Tutorial: Discuss issues and ethics related to biodiversity

Submit: Assignment Seven by time of tutorial (6%)

Week 12 – Review for final exam

Apr. 1 Read: Review readings and notes from course

Apr. 3 Review in class

Tutorial: Review, questions, discussion and preparation for final exam

Final Exam: Thursday, April 11, 2013 from 7-9 pm. Location TBA. (35%)

College of Arts Policy Statements

E-mail communication

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <uoguelph.ca> email account regularly: email is the official route of communication between the university and its students.

When you cannot meet a course requirement

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, id#, and email contact. [See the Undergraduate Calendar](#) for information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration.

Drop date

The last date to drop one-semester Winter 2013 courses, without academic penalty, is *Friday, March 8, 2013*. For regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses, [see the Undergraduate Calendar](#).

Copies of out-of-class assignments

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

Each student at the University of Guelph has rights which carry commensurate responsibilities which, broadly, being a civil and respectful member of the University community. The Rights and Responsibilities are [detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar](#).

Academic misconduct

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and enjoins all members of the University community—faculty, staff, and students—to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. The Academic Misconduct Policy is [detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar](#).

Recording of materials

Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded in any electronic media without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer.

Resources

The [Undergraduate Calendar](#) is the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate programs. If you find yourself in difficulty, contact the undergraduate advisor in your program, or [the BA Counseling Office](#).

