



## PHIL\*3450 Ethics in the Life Sciences

Winter 2019

Section(s): C01

Department of Philosophy

Credit Weight: 0.50

Version 3.00 - January 02, 2019

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### 1 Course Details

#### 1.1 Calendar Description

This course is an advanced introduction to the ethical implications of values and practices guiding research in the life sciences. Fields of discussion may include ethics in health care, genetics and human reproduction, environmental sciences, agriculture, animal husbandry, animal welfare, and food technologies. Material covered will be drawn from current books and articles by philosophers in this rapidly expanding area.

**Pre-Requisite(s):** 1.50 credits in Philosophy or 7.50 credits. PHIL\*2120, PHIL\*2180 are recommended.

#### 1.2 Course Description

Course Theme: "Food, Water, and Environmental Ethics and Justice"

This seminar will explore food, water, and environmental ethics and justice. We will examine contemporary works which delve into privatization and commodification of food and water, as well as the political mechanisms that allow for certain distributions of these necessities for life. We will also investigate certain arguments towards the environment regarding its *conservation* and/or *exploitation*. Humanity is faced with a century of severe consequences regarding food, water, and the environment, and we will encounter a variety of philosophies which argue for differing standpoints in how food, water, and the environment ought to be treated. Our reading materials oscillate between practical and abstract - descriptive and normative – while we contemplate how best to approach and overcome these most pressing issues of our times.

#### 1.3 Timetable

Course Meets: ALEX 117, Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:30pm-3:50pm

## 1.4 Final Exam

There is no Midterm or Final Exam. There will be a Final Essay. Due date TBA.

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## 2 Instructional Support

### 2.1 Instructional Support Team

<b>Instructor:</b>	Cameron Fioret
<b>Email:</b>	fioretc@uoguelph.ca
<b>Office:</b>	MacKinnon 328
<b>Office Hours:</b>	Wednesdays 12:00pm-1:00pm, or by appointment

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## 3 Learning Resources

All required course readings are available online on ARES. Some readings are also available at the library. There are no materials to purchase for this course.

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## 4 Learning Outcomes

### 4.1 Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. - engage critically with philosophical literature pertaining to the ethics and justice of food, water, and the environment.
2. - think constructively about these current, relevant, and urgent global and local issues.
3. - defend your ideas before your peers and *put yourself out there*; the classroom is a space to take intellectual risks.
4. - carefully and critically examine a piece of philosophy, parse its intricacies and arguments, construct your own verbal and oral arguments and analyses of said philosophy, and understand the arguments present. To do this takes practice and effort, but you will come to understand complex arguments not only in this seminar, but in your day-to-day life as well.
5. - take the skills you learn in this seminar and apply them to your life. Interrogating yourself is crucial to not only living philosophically, but to *growing* as a human being. Ethics and justice regarding food, water, and the environment shape our world and our lives; moreover, what we will read and learn in this seminar can be reflected upon and lead to more meaningful, fulfilling lives. When entering the classroom, doing your

readings, completing your assignments, or approaching a new day, consider this your motto: Dare to think! Dare to dream! Dare to change the world!

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## 5 Teaching and Learning Activities

### 5.1 Seminar

#### Readings and Activities for Each Week

Topic(s):

Readings:

#### Week 1: Introduction to Environmental Justice

- Jan. 8<sup>th</sup>: Introduction. Mark Sagoff, "Introduction," in *The Economy of the Earth*, pp. 1-16.
- Jan. 10<sup>th</sup>: David Schlosberg, "Theorising Environmental Justice: The Expanding Sphere of a Discourse," pp. 37-55.

#### Week 2: Types of Environmental Justice

- Jan. 15<sup>th</sup>: Simon Caney, "Cosmopolitan Justice, Responsibility, and Climate Change," pp. 747-775.
- Jan. 17<sup>th</sup>: Tim Hayward, "Global Justice and the Distribution of Natural Resources," pp. 349-369.

#### Week 3: Environmental Resources and Rights: Stewardship of the Earth from an Indigenous Perspective

- Jan. 22<sup>nd</sup>: Chris Armstrong, Chapter 1: "Resources and Rights," in *Justice and Natural Resources: An Egalitarian Theory*, pp. 9-28.
- Jan. 24<sup>th</sup>: Taiaiake Alfred, *Peace, Power, Righteousness: An Indigenous Manifesto*, pp. 45-46, 66-86.

- **First Critical Reading Assignment due.**

Week 4: Environmental Justice and Stewardship of the Earth

- Jan. 29<sup>th</sup>: Avery Kolers, *Land, Conflict, and Justice: A Political Theory*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009. pp. 1-31 and 106-107.
- Jan. 31<sup>st</sup>: David Schlosberg, "Reconceiving Environmental Justice: Global Movements and Political Theories," pp. 517-540.

Week 5: Introduction to Food Injustice

- Feb. 5<sup>th</sup>: Beth A. Dixon, "Learning to see food injustice," pp. 175-184.
- Feb. 7<sup>th</sup>: J. Michael Scoville, "Framing Food Justice," pp. 3-20, Chapter 1 from the book *Just Food: Philosophy, Justice and Food*, ed. Jill Marie Dieterle.

Week 6: Food Justice, the Right to Food, and the Financialization of Food

- Feb. 12<sup>th</sup>: Ian Werkheiser and Samantha Noll, "From Food Justice to a Tool of the Status Quo: Three Submovements within Local Food," pp. 201-210.
- Feb. 14<sup>th</sup>: Jennifer Clapp, Chapter 5: "Financialization of Food," in *Food* (2nd edn.), Cambridge: Polity Press.
  - **Second Critical Reading Assignment due.**

**WINTER BREAK (Feb. 18<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup>), NO CLASSES!!**

### Week 7: The Right to Water

- Feb. 26<sup>th</sup>: Mathias Risse, “The Human Right to Water and Common Ownership of the Earth” pp. 178-203. Arash Abizadeh, “A Critique of the ‘Common Ownership of the Earth’ Thesis,” pp. 33-40.
- Feb. 28<sup>th</sup>: Radha D’Souza, “Liberal Theory, Human Rights and Water-Justice: Back to Square One?” pp. 1-15.

### Week 8: Rights to Water, and Water Justice and Injustice

- Mar. 5<sup>th</sup>: Tim Hayward, “A Global Right of Water,” pp. 217-233.
- Mar. 7<sup>th</sup>: Karen Bakker, Rosie Simms, Nadia Joe, and Leila Harris, “Indigenous Peoples and Water Governance in Canada: Regulatory Injustice and Prospects for Reform,” in *Water Justice* (eds. Rutgerd Boelens, Tom Perreault, and Jeroen Vos), pp. 193-209.

### Week 9: The Financialization of Water and Public Struggles for Water

- Mar. 12<sup>th</sup>: Kate Bayliss, “The Financialization of Water,” pp. 292-307.
- Mar. 14<sup>th</sup>: Belen Balanya, *Reclaiming Public Water: Achievements, Struggles, and Visions from Around the World*, pp. 247-275.
  - **Third Critical Reading Assignment due.**

### Week 10: The Common Use of Water and the Issue of the Tragedy of the Commons

- Mar. 19<sup>th</sup>: Karen Bakker, “The ‘Commons’ Versus the ‘Commodity’: Alter-globalization, Anti-privatization and the Human Right to Water in the Global South,” pp. 430-455.
- Mar. 21<sup>st</sup>: Baylor L. Johnson, “Ethical Obligations in a Tragedy of the Commons,” pp. 271-287; Elizabeth Kahn, “The Tragedy of the Commons as an Essentially Aggregative Harm,” pp. 223-236.

Week 11: Consumption and Distribution of Natural Resources

- Mar. 26<sup>th</sup>: Chris Armstrong, Chapter 2: “Equality and Its Critics,” in *Justice and Natural Resources: An Egalitarian Theory*, pp. 29-61.
- Mar. 28<sup>th</sup>: Tim Hayward, “Human Rights Versus Emissions Rights: Climate Justice and the Equitable Distribution of Ecological Space,” pp. 431-450.
  - **Essay Proposal and Bibliography due March 28.**

Week 12: Consumption and Distribution of Natural Resources cont’d; Looking Towards the Future of Environmentalism

- Apr. 2<sup>nd</sup>: Mark Sagoff, “Values and Preferences,” pp. 67-77; and “Can We Put a Price on Nature’s Services?” pp. 87-109, in *The Economy of the Earth*.
- Apr. 4<sup>th</sup>: Mark Sagoff, “Environmentalism: Death and Resurrection,” pp. 194-208, in *The Economy of the Earth*.
  - **Fourth Critical Reading Assignment due.**

**We will also review and discuss the Final Essay,**

**due date TBA**

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## **6 Assessments**

### **6.1 Assessment Details**

#### **Class Participation (15%)**

- You must attend all seminars. Class participation involves attending seminars *and* participating in discussions. You must contribute to the classroom dialogue throughout the semester in order to earn marks for class participation. Come to class prepared with thoughtful, reasoned commentary relevant to the seminar's readings for the day.
  - *Note:* If you feel participating in class will be a problem please come and see me at the beginning of the seminar to arrange an alternative evaluation.
  
- Out of consideration for your fellow students, please observe the following rules:
  - No cell phone use, including text messaging.
  - No personal conversations.
  - Laptops should be used for note taking purposes only.
  - No taping or recording of any type in the class without the expressed permission of the instructor.

#### **4 Critical Reading Assignments (40%)**

- Four critical reading assignments due during certain weeks of the semester. Each assignment is worth 10% of your final grade (4x10%=40%). The reading assignment must be explicative and pertain to the week's readings. Carefully read the philosophical piece of your choosing and 1. Explain the presented argument; 2. Articulate the philosophical importance of the piece to a current world issue; 3. State one question that you came away with from the piece that you read. This question – this identification of a possible tension in the essay or difficulty that arose – may be used to spur class discussion.

#### **Essay Proposal and Bibliography (10%)**

**Date:** Week 11 on March 28th

- The essay proposal will include a thesis statement, as well as a plan for how your argument will develop throughout your final essay. You must include a bibliography of relevant sources that you will draw from. We will discuss this outline in more detail in class. **Due Week 11, on March 28<sup>th</sup>.**

### **Final Essay (35%)**

- Your final essay will be more than an explicative piece about a specific reading assignment from the seminar. You will formulate your *own* argument, with your *own* reasons supported by texts from the seminar. This final essay is to have more “original” content than the four critical reading assignments, as you will argue for a stance of your choosing that you have a *passion* for. **Final Essay due date (TBA).**

## **7 Course Statements**

### **7.1 Late Policy**

Assignments submitted after their published due date will be penalized 10% per day up to seven days. After one week, late assignments will not be accepted. **If you foresee having trouble submitting an assignment on time due to extenuating circumstances or based on compassionate grounds you must contact me in advance.** Any necessary documentation should also be submitted.

### **7.2 Contact Policy**

I will advise the student, if s/he cannot be given a short reply to an email, to visit me during my office hour. Lengthy, substantial philosophical discussion will not be had over email.

## **8 University Statements**

### **8.1 Email Communication**

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

### **8.2 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 e-mail contact. The grounds for Academic Consideration are detailed in the Undergraduate and Graduate Calendars.

Undergraduate Calendar - Academic Consideration and Appeals

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-ac.shtml>

Graduate Calendar - Grounds for Academic Consideration

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/index.shtml>

### **8.3 Drop Date**

Courses that are one semester long must be dropped by the end of the fortieth class day; two-semester courses must be dropped by the last day of the add period in the second semester. The regulations and procedures for course registration are available in the Undergraduate and Graduate Calendars.

Undergraduate Calendar - Dropping Courses

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-drop.shtml>

Graduate Calendar - Registration Changes

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/genreg-reg-regchg.shtml>

### **8.4 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.

### **8.5 Accessibility**

The University promotes the full participation of students who experience disabilities in their academic programs. To that end, the provision of academic accommodation is a shared responsibility between the University and the student.

When accommodations are needed, the student is required to first register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Documentation to substantiate the existence of a disability is required; however, interim accommodations may be possible while that process is underway.

Accommodations are available for both permanent and temporary disabilities. It should be noted that common illnesses such as a cold or the flu do not constitute a disability.

Use of the SAS Exam Centre requires students to book their exams at least 7 days in advance and not later than the 40th Class Day.

More information can be found on the SAS website

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/sas>

### **8.6 Academic Integrity**

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity, and it is the responsibility of 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. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff, and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that encourages academic integrity. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

Undergraduate Calendar - Academic Misconduct

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-amisconduct.shtml>

Graduate Calendar - Academic Misconduct

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/index.shtml>

## 8.7 Recording of Materials

Presentations that are made in relation to course work - including lectures - cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a student, or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

## 8.8 Resources

The Academic Calendars are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies, and regulations that apply to undergraduate, graduate, and diploma programs.

Academic Calendars

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/academics/calendars>

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