



ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS SYLLABUS

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Dr. Mark Smillie, Professor of Philosophy

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COMMUNICATIONS AND AVAILABILITY

Spring 2016 Office Hours: MW, 3:30-5:00; TTh, 10:00-11:30; Th, 2:30-4:30; Fri 2:00-3:30;
and by appointment

For issues about this course, students can contact me before/after class, at my office hours (posted above), by phone or email (either Carroll email or through moodle email). I will respond to email and phone inquiries within one business day (Saturdays and Sundays are not business days). I will post notifications about the course in the Moodle News Forum. Students should also be aware of the Moodle Calendar that announces assignment deadlines.

COURSE INFORMATION

Environmental Ethics, PHIL206

Carroll College, Spring 2016

Meeting time and place: 8:00-9:15 am, Tues & Thurs; 101 O'Connell
3 credit hours

READING MATERIALS

Please obtain copies of these texts for class

Environmental Ethics: the Big Questions. Edited by David R. Keller. Wiley-Blackwell, 2010. ISBN: 978-1-4051-7638-5. Required text. \$78.00 (new; \$58.50 used; can be rented as well, \$66/\$46.47) at Saints Shoppe. *Environmental Ethics texts are getting more expensive! This was chosen because of its lower price and its selection of readings. Many of the readings are "standard" readings for our subject.*

The Ethics of Climate Change: Right and Wrong in a Warming World. James Garvey. Continuum Books, 2008. Required Text, \$21.95. (new; \$16.50 used; \$15.27 to rent). *Chosen because it was a short but concise ethical analysis of a contemporary problem; it's also a controversial problem!*

Other assigned readings will be available on the moodle course page.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Environmental Ethics examines how we *ought* to value the environment and the non-human inhabitants of the earth, examining the moral relationship between human beings and non-human beings (including the environment itself). We will consider the implications of this examination for an ethical life. The course includes both practical reflections (identifying specific moral obligations to our pets, plants, etc.) and more theoretical ones (identifying the source of value, the nature of value, etc.).

Initially, we will look at the question of the moral value of the environment—how we actually may value it and how we *should* value it. Second we will explore positions about the environment's value

that work toward establishing larger conclusions about how we should live. Finally we shall examine more practical proposals for environmentalism, such as recycling, simplifying, and mindful eating.

This course fulfills the philosophy department's aim to help students explore ethics and investigate core beliefs about themselves and their place in this world. Environmental Ethics fulfills an Applied Ethics requirement of the Ethics and Values Major and it fulfills a philosophy CORE Requirement. It makes an excellent philosophy course for biology and other science majors and is highly recommended for Environmental Studies majors, and for students who are looking for a less traditional ethics course.

COURSE PROCEDURE

This course starts with identifying relevant philosophical questions, examining and defending answers to the questions, and identifying the ones with the best arguments for them. Ethical thinking involves reasoning about moral obligations and includes identifying relevant moral principles. As the course proceeds, students will formulate and clarify their own conclusions about the moral questions we raise.

COURSE PREREQUISITES

There are no prerequisites for this course. A previous ethics course brings the advantage of experience in thinking in ethical categories, but the lack of this would not seriously impede success in this course.

COURSE ELEMENTS AND OBJECTIVES

1. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

As a result of reading course texts, and participating in lecture presentations and class discussions, students will identify and apply relevant ethical principles to moral questions about the environment, analyze ethical positions taken about this topic, and formulate their own moral positions, by completing course activities, writing analyses, and sitting for exams.

Readings

After purchasing the required course texts or accessing them online, students will identify and summarize ethical discussion about environmental ethics, through mindful reading of assigned material prior to class.

Activities

After studying assigned readings and attending class meetings, students will analyze and critically reflect on ethical thinking relevant to a moral, environment-focused life and actions, by participating in class discussions, completing class activities, and diverse on-line activities.

Written analyses

Having mastered techniques of ethical argumentation and reviewed scenarios and question prompts assigned by the instructor, students will present alternative positions on assigned questions, and defend one of these positions as the strongest argument, in written argumentative essays

Tests

After participating in class discussions, reading assigned texts and completing course activities and written analyses, students will synthesize and express their understanding of ethical principles and practices of argumentation by completing tests consisting of matching, true/false, and essay questions.

Disclaimer:

- Students may vary in their competency levels on these abilities.
- Students can expect to acquire these abilities only if they honor all course policies, attend class regularly, complete all assigned work on time and in good faith, and meet all other course requirements and expectations.

Environmental Ethics Syllabus Spring 2016

2. COURSE GRADING AND ASSESSMENT

► Class Activities: 20%

Students will receive credit for these activities based on their responses to particular questions and assignments. These will include reading summaries and reflective questions/quizzes due prior to class meetings. At the end of semester, the lowest score on two assignments will be dropped.

► Papers: 45%

Students will receive a grade using rubrics that will be made available in advance of the assignment. For peer reviews, students will receive a grade based on the proximity of their assigned grade (using the paper rubric) to its actual (professor-assigned) grade.

► Tests and Exams: 35%

There are three inter-semester tests and a final exam scheduled for this course; the final is worth 15%, while the three inter-semester tests, combined, are worth 20% of the final grade. Students will receive credit for correct answers on “objective” questions (questions with predetermined answers; typically employ matching questions and T/F questions); on written (essay) questions, students will receive a grade based on a rubric made available in advance of the test. The final exam is scheduled for this course by the College registrar.

Final grade calculation: Letter grades for the course will be assigned as follows.

(Check your grade throughout the semester on moodle.)

<u>Percentage points</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Percentage points</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Percentage points</u>	<u>Grade</u>
93-100.....	A	80-82.....	B-	60-69.....	D
90-92	A-	77-79.....	C+	Below 60.....	F
87-89.....	B+	73-76.....	C	P/F Grade.....	D (60)
83-86.....	B	70-72.....	C-		

3. COURSE ROUTINE AND PARTICIPANT EXPECTATIONS

This class works on a four-week cycle. There are four iterations of this cycle, but the final iteration is shorter than the three previous (with no paper assignment). Deadlines for completion of course elements are listed below:

W	Day	TOPIC
1	T	Complete Reading and Activities by 1:00am Tuesday Attend Class.
	Th	Complete Reading and Activities by 1:00am Thursday Attend Class.
2	T	Complete Reading and Activities by 1:00am Tuesday Attend Class. View writing assignment and rubric by 11:59 Tuesday night.
	Th	Complete Reading and Activities by 1:00am Thursday Attend Class.
3	T	Complete Reading and Activities by 1:00am Tuesday Attend Class.
	Th	Complete Reading and Activities by 1:00am Thursday Attend Class. Written analysis due on Moodle by Thursday night, 11:55pm Peer Review process opens Friday, 5:00pm
4	T	Complete Reading and Activities by 1:00am Tuesday Attend Class. Peer Review process of closes, Wednesday, 5:00pm
	Th	Sit for Test during Class Period

Environmental Ethics Syllabus Spring 2016

4. COURSE SCHEDULE (OVERVIEW)

This schedule does not include all writing assignments; they will be assigned as the situation dictates. (Note: See appendix for graphic display of course organization.)

W	Date	Topic
1	Jan 19	First class day. Introduction to the course
	Jan 21	Anthropocentrism. Read "Introduction" pages 1-23. Part II, Introduction; "Humans as Moral Ends" by Thomas Aquinas; "The Amoral Status of Nature" by John Stuart Mill; "Nature as Economic Resource" by John Locke; "In Defense of Anthropocentrism" by Wilfred Beckerman and Joanna Pasek.
2	Jan 26	(Last day to add a course or select audit status) Nonanthropocentrism. Read Part III, "Introduction," "Walking" by Thoreau, "The Wild Parks and Forest Reservations of the West and Hetch Hetchy Valley" by John Muir, and "Attitudes to Nature" by John Passmore.
	Jan 28	Sentientism (Psychocentrism)/ Animal Rights and Animal Welfare. Read "Animals as Subjects-of-a-Life" by Tom Regan and "All Animals are Equal" by Peter Singer and "Indirect Duties to Nonhumans" by Immanuel Kant.
3	Feb 2	Thinking about Sentientism—what is permissible treatment of animals and what isn't? Read: Jamieson, "Against Zoos," (provided on Moodle)
	Feb 4	Biocentrism. Read: Schweitzer, "Reverence for Life," (moodle) and Taylor, "The Ethics of Respect for Nature"
4	Feb 9	Holism (Ecocentrism). "The Land Ethic" by Aldo Leopold, "The Conceptual Foundations of the Land Ethic" by J. Baird Callicott. "Against the Moral Considerability of Ecosystems," Harley Cahan (on moodle)
	Feb 11	TEST #1
5	Feb 16	Beyond Axiology: Conservationism Read: Baxter, "People or Penguins: The Case for Optimal Pollution" (on moodle) and Environmental Virtue Ethics" by Ronald Saudler and "Green Living is not about doing the right thing for the Wrong Reason, by James Garvey (on moodle)
	Feb 18	Deep Ecology Read: "The Shallow and the Deep Ecology Movement" by Arne Naess; "The Heart of Deep Ecology" by Andrew McLaughlin; "The Deep Ecological Movement: Some Philosophical Aspects" by Arne Naess;
6	Feb 23	Deep Ecology Read Watson, "A Critique of Anti-Anthropocentric Ethics," (on moodle)
	Feb 25	Ecofeminism Read: Warren, "The Power and the Promise of Ecological Feminism," "Feminism and the Philosophy of Nature" by Carolyn Merchant
7	Mar 1	Ecofeminism Read TBA.
	Mar 3	Environmental Pragmatism. "Beyond Intrinsic Value: Pragmatism in Environmental Ethics" by Anthony Weston; "Methodological Pragmatism, Pluralism, and Environmental Ethics" by Andrew Light
8	M 8/10	<i>Spring Break. Midterm Grades posted on MYCARROLL March 15</i>
9	Mar 15	Environmental Pragmatism
	Mar 17	TEST #2

Environmental Ethics Syllabus Spring 2016

1 0	Mar 22	Practical Responses (Direct action): How Green are you? Read TBA
	Mar 24	Practical Responses: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle—Does it really matter? Recycling Readings (on Moodle)
1 1	Mar 29	Practical Responses: Simply Living—Can we do it? Reading: Jim Merkel, selections from <i>Radical Simplicity</i>
	Mar 31	Practical Responses: Ethical Eating? Read: Read Singer and Mason, "What Should we Eat?" (on moodle)
1 2	Apr 5	Keep it Wild debate. "How To Construe Nature: Environmental Ethics and the Interpretation of Nature" Roger J H. King; "The Trouble With Wilderness" William Cronon; "Virtually Hunting Reality in the Forests of Simulacra" Paul Shepard
	Apr 7	Practical Responses: Ecoterrorism? A justifiable alternative? "Earth First!" Dave Foreman; "The Ethics of Ecological Sabotage: An Exchange" (Ecological Sabotage: Pranks or Terrorism?" Eugene Hargrove, "Earth First! and The Monkey Wrench Gang" Edward Abbey, "More on Earth First! and The Monkey Wrench Gang" Dave Foreman, and Editor's Response" Eugene Hargrove
1 3	Apr 12	The Population/Poverty Debate. "An Essay on the Principle of Population" Thomas Robert Malthus; "Impact of Population Growth" Paul R. Ehrlich and John P. Holdren; "The Ecological Necessity of Confronting the Problem of Human Overpopulation" Garrett Hardin. "How Poverty Breeds Overpopulation" Barry Commoner; "More People, Greater Wealth, More Resources, Healthier Environment" Julian L. Simon
	Apr 14	TEST #3
1 4	Apr 19	The Ethics of Climate Change
	Apr 21	The Ethics of Climate Change
1 5	Apr 26	Laudato Si
	Apr 28	Laudato Si
	May 3	Last Day of Class
1 7	May 9	Final Exam (8:00-9:45) (Monday)

COURSE POLICIES

BASIC ETIQUETTE

Please be on time for class! All students should practice good manners in class and show civility to all. A positive attitude is appreciated and a professional demeanor is expected. This includes such things as remaining alert (and awake!) in class, respecting and never interrupting others, limiting private conversations, turning cell phones off, and controlling your urges to text and use the electronic devices.

Please, no eating or using tobacco products in class (a small beverage is allowed).

In team or group situations, students should cooperate with their team members and obtain their input when working on group exercises and projects. Most group work involves a required peer assessment of each individual's contribution to the group.

Absolutely no electronic devices are allowed during exams, and this includes cell phones, laptops, and mp3 players/devices. Laptops are allowed at other times during class, with the expectation that you are using them to participate in the class and not as a distraction.

ATTENDANCE AND TARDINESS

"Eighty percent of success is showing up." Attributed to Woody Allen

Regular attendance is a college policy (see College Catalogue). I keep attendance regularly and expect to be informed if some legitimate excuse keeps you from attending class. Students missing more than nine class sessions may be asked to drop the class. Tardiness is disruptive to other members of the class, but I would rather you can to class late than not at all; so please slip into class quietly if you are late!

Late exams/assignments: All assignments are submitted electronically and have a deadline for submission. Sometimes moodle will accept them late, and at other times, it will not; it depends on the assignment. I do accept late assignments (turn them in by email or hand) if you cannot submit them on moodle; late assignments will generally be penalized one letter grade, more if they are egregiously late (now there's a new word for you!) Missed exams may be retaken at the ARC **within one week** of the exam date. Students must make their own arrangements with the director of the ARC, and then inform me of their scheduled makeup date.

Students having good reasons for missing a deadline or test should contact me in advance of the deadline. Good reasons include documented medical reasons, documented court obligations, and athletic team commitments, family emergencies. Deadlines will be reset to mutually agreed times in these situations.

INSTITUTIONAL AND COURSE POLICIES ON ACADEMIC HONESTY

Carroll College's policy on Academic Integrity is stated in both the CC Catalogue and in the Student Handbook. The policy reads: "Students at Carroll College are expected to have high standards of integrity. Any student who cheats or plagiarizes on examinations or assignments, falsifies college records, or fails to give requested academic information on admission documents is subject to dismissal or other appropriate disciplinary action by the College." Students violating the policy will be referred to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Please see these publications for the correct procedures to follow if you have questions concerning the conduct of this class or the grading procedures (other than a final grade).

I expect all my students to have the high standards of integrity expected by the college. A college classroom is a social environment and honesty, responsibility, respect, and even honor are key components for its success. Our ability to enjoy and profit from a class is undermined by cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, deception, and complicity.

Plagiarism is a particular act of fraud that merits more attention. Plagiarism is both *stealing* someone else's work and *lying* about it. It includes the following

Environmental Ethics Syllabus Spring 2016

- Turning anyone else's work (including other students') as your own
- Copying without giving credit (including copying from the internet)
- Not putting quotations in quotation marks
- Incorrectly identifying the source of a quotation

Plagiarism also includes copying the sentence structure of a source, even if you changed words, and copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not.

Page | 7

All suspected cases of plagiarism will be investigated, and where verified, will be penalized; *the penalty can be as severe as immediate failure in the course*. If you are unsure about whether some actions constitute plagiarism, please ask me.

CAMPUS SUPPORT SERVICES

If you believe that you may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability, please contact Kevin Hadduck, in order to discuss your specific needs and to determine a reasonable accommodation plan. You may contact Kevin Hadduck in the Academic Success and Disability Services Office, Borromeo Hall, Room 118 (phone: x4504; email: khadduck@carroll.edu).

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ABOUT YOUR PROFESSOR

I am a full professor in the Philosophy Department. I received a B.A. from Thomas Aquinas College (CA) in 1983; a Ph.D. in 1992, from the University of Notre Dame, where I studied Medieval Philosophy and the Philosophy of Human Being. I have taught at over a half-dozen institutions before I came to Carroll College in 1995.

I teach many philosophy courses here at Carroll, and I regularly teach Philosophy of Human Nature, Business Ethics, Bioethics, Environmental Ethics, and Medieval Philosophy. My research interests are in Medieval Philosophy, especially the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas, and applied ethics. I have given papers/presentations on: Thomas Aquinas, Catholic Identity, God's Omnipotence, End of Life Decision-Making, using technology in the classroom.

I've been married 30 years and have eight kids (including a Carroll grad, class of 2008!). I am involved in various community organizations in Helena and enjoy visiting historical sites, hiking, photography, building things from time to time (and even house remodeling).

CONCLUDING DISCLAIMER

The above schedule, policies, and assignments in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances or by mutual agreement between the instructor and the students.

Environmental Ethics Syllabus Spring 2016

Graphic Syllabus

A visual of the basic course organization and sequencing

