

University of California, Davis
Department of Philosophy
ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS
PHI 120 - Honors, WINTER 2017
229 Wellman, TR 10:30-11:50 AM

Contact Information

Instructor: Professor Roberta Millstein

Office: 2287 Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH), aka Death Star (corner of 3rd and A)

Office Hours: TR 12:30-1:30 PM, and by appointment

E-mail: RLMillstein@UCDavis.edu (*the best way to reach me; please include Phi 120 in Subject*)

Phone: 530-554-1398 (Skype voicemail)

Philosophy Dept. Office, my mailbox: 1240 SSH **Philosophy Dept. Phone:** 530-752-0703

Required Texts

All required readings will be available on the course website on Canvas, <https://canvas.ucdavis.edu/>

Course Description

Many people are concerned about a variety of environmental issues, from pollution to global warming to the extinction of species. They say that we “should” do something about those issues. But what ethical assumptions underlie that “should”? Is it a concern for human well-being? For animals? For all life? For species? Or, even more broadly, for ecosystems? In other words, which things count morally? The answers matter not only because we need to justify our actions, but because different answers may imply different courses of action. In this class, we will *explore* the various answers that can and have been given to this question, and see how well these answers hold up when applied to contemporary environmental case studies.

The goals of this course are: 1) to introduce you to some of the major issues within environmental ethics; 2) to encourage you to critically examine your own beliefs as well as the beliefs of others; 3) to provide the opportunity to discuss, both in class and in a more sustained written form, your ideas and arguments concerning important issues in environmental ethics.

Class Policies

- If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please email me or come *to my office* (during office hours, or make an appointment) to discuss as soon as possible.
- You are responsible for *all* material covered in class, including announcements, discussions, etc. – whether you are in class or not. *Take notes on discussions as well as lecture.* Be aware that the topics in this class build on one another, so you will need to keep up.
- Since we will be discussing the readings in class, you should bring the reading for the day to each class.
- Announcements are usually made at the beginning of class, so *please be on time.* Comings and goings are disruptive and distracting, so please keep them to an absolute minimum.
- Do not use laptops, tablets, or cell/smart phones in class for activities unrelated to the class (texting, Twitter, Facebook, etc). A [recent study](#) shows that it hinders learning both for the user and those nearby. You might [learn more taking notes by hand](#) in any case.
- *Silence* your cell/smart phone or anything else that might make noise.
- Please do not bring guests (friends, children, etc.) without my permission.
- Eating in class is ok if it is done quietly and unobtrusively.

Class Requirements

Your grade will be based on the following (all dates subject to change):

- 10%** - Comments/questions on each day's readings, **posted to Discussions on Canvas before class**. Each on-time posting is graded CR/NC; Late=NC; *no exceptions*.
- 30%** - Two 2-page analytical essays submitted on Canvas by **10 AM Mon Jan 30** and **Mon Feb 20**
- 5%** - Group work - two in-class discussion assignments, **Jan 31** and **Feb 31**, plus peer review of term papers. Draft of term papers due by **10 AM Fri Mar 10**; peer reviews due by **10 AM Sat Mar 11**. (CR/NC; Late=NC; *no exceptions*).
- 35%** - 5-7 page term paper submitted on Canvas by **11 PM Fri, Mar 17**.
- 20%** - Take-home final exam submitted on Canvas by **10 AM, Wed, Mar 22**.

You must complete the two analytical essays, the term paper, and the final exam in order to pass the class. In the case of a borderline grade, **class participation** will be given serious consideration.

Important note on plagiarism/cheating:

It is a violation of the Code of Academic Conduct to turn in work that is not your own. This includes: turning in the work of another student with your name on it, buying/copying a paper off the Internet, using the words *or* ideas of others without proper quotation and citation. In accordance with Regulation 550 of the Davis Division of the Academic Senate, **a grade of "0" will be assigned to examinations or assignments on which cheating, plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty is admitted or determined to have occurred by proper adjudication.** If you have trouble with the class material or have personal issues that prevent you from doing your work, come talk to me.

Tentative Reading Schedule - All dates and readings are subject to change. All readings will be available on the course website on Canvas, <https://canvas.ucdavis.edu/>

Date	Topic	Reading (by author)
Jan 10	Introduction	Syllabus
Jan 12	Anthropocentric ethics	Phil: Hinman (excerpt), Case: Olster
Jan 17	Anthropocentric ethics	Phil: Dillon (excerpt), Case: Peppard
Jan 19	Individualism: Animals	Phil: Singer, Case: Case 3
Jan 24	Individualism: Animals	Phil: Regan, Case: Case 19
Jan 26	Individualism: Animals	Phil: Warren, Case: Case 2
Jan 31	Group work	<i>no reading</i>
Feb 2	Individualism: All life	Phil: Taylor, Case: Jackson
Feb 7	Individualism: All life	Phil: Varner, Case: FresnoBee
Feb 9	Species/biodiversity	Phil: Russow, Case: Science Daily
Feb 14	Species/biodiversity	Phil: Bradley, Case: Science Daily
Feb 16	Species/biodiversity	Phil: Wright, Case: Science Daily
Feb 21	Group work	<i>no reading</i>
Feb 23	Ecocentrism	Phil: Leopold, Case: Case 23
Feb 28	Ecocentrism	Phil: Westra, Case: Perlman
Mar 2	Video: <i>Green Fire</i>	<i>no reading</i>
Mar 7	Ecocentrism	Phil: Hettinger & Throop, Case: Case 5
Mar 9	Ecocentrism v. Individualism	Phil: Sagoff, Case: Case 25
Mar 14	All encompassing: Deep Ecology	Phil: Devall & Sessions, Case: Case 10
Mar 16	All encompassing: 3rd World Critique	Phil: Guha, Case: Case 4