

University of California, Davis
Department of Philosophy
ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS
PHI 220, Winter 2021
Online via Canvas and Zoom, Thurs 3:10-6 PM

Contact information

Instructor: Professor Roberta Millstein
Office Hours: On Zoom, by appointment. Afternoons tend to be best.
E-mail: RLMillstein@UCDavis.edu (*the best way to reach me*)
Phone: 530-754-0715 (*not a good way to reach me*)

Required readings

Required (and optional) readings available on course website on Canvas, <https://canvas.ucdavis.edu/>

Course description

It is widely believed that Aldo Leopold's influential land ethic (influential not only in philosophy but also in conservation biology, ecology, and related fields) bears some resemblance to North American indigenous views about the environment. But how far do those similarities go? This philosophy graduate seminar begins with an exploration of that question, with some authors arguing for a closer connection than others. Regardless of the degree of connection, however, it is clear that Leopold's views are not identical to indigenous views, and indigenous environmental ethics are worthy of consideration in their own right (not just in the context of Leopold). So, we will subsequently turn to some prominent published positions in environmental ethics from indigenous authors (particularly women authors), first examining theoretical approaches and then segueing to indigenous views that have a more political/activist aspect – note that the distinction here is a bit blurry – including issues of environmental racism/justice. We will not, of course, be able to cover any of these topics completely (by a long shot), so the goal is to come away with a greater understanding and appreciation of the issues.

Course requirements

Your grade will be based on the following:

10% - In-class participation

10% - Online participation

20% - Coordination of seminars

60% - Term paper - Sketch due by **11 PM Sat, March 6**, Final version due by **11 PM on Sat, March 20**

In-class participation - You are expected to come to all classes via Zoom (see the Zoom area on the Canvas site) having done the readings and you are expected to participate regularly in class discussions. That being said, I recognize that (even more than usual) personal circumstances may prevent you from participating, so please just keep me in the loop so that I know what is going on with you if you have to miss class. *I plan to record our discussions.* Do not share the Zoom links or Zoom recordings with anyone outside of the class.

Online participation - Post to the Canvas Discussion area **by 2 PM before every seminar** concerning the readings for the day – ask questions, raise objections, give reflections, etc.

Coordination of seminars: You will coordinate at least one seminar using a visual aid such as handout or PowerPoint-type slides distributed before class. Your job as coordinator is to stimulate and lead discussion; *this is not a presentation*. So, you should **1)** Give enough of a summary of the readings to stimulate discussion, but don't attempt a point-by-point summary (we can always turn to the article during discussion if necessary). **2)** Be sure to provide an overview of the overall argument, showing its structure. **3)** Seek out additional references if necessary. And, **4)** raise issues for discussion (not simply, "what did you think about that?"), on the assumption that discussion (including clarifications) will be interspersed throughout. As coordinator, it is OK if there are parts of the articles that you didn't understand; ask those questions for group discussion.




You will also present an overview of your term paper for class discussion in week 10 (see schedule below).











Term paper sketch: This is meant to be *informal*; the point is to give me enough of an idea of what you plan to write on so that I can approve, redirect, make suggestions, etc., before you spend a lot of time in a possibly unproductive direction. This can be done with an outline, talking to me on Zoom, etc.





Term paper: Your paper may analyze any of the readings discussed in class, any of the optional readings, or offshoots of those readings (follow the citations of class readings or look for papers that cite the class readings). Be sure to follow "General guidelines for writing and discussion" (see Files area of Canvas). Prepare your paper (more or less) in the style of a *Philosophy of Science* article. Your paper should be approximately 5000 words (the length of a Philosophy of Science Association conference paper). Contact me if you wish to do something other than the above; I am happy to discuss possible alternatives.

Important note on plagiarism/cheating: It is a violation of the [UC Davis 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. The Code states "**if academic misconduct is admitted or is determined by adjudication to have occurred, instructors may assign a grade penalty no greater than 'F' for the course in question**"; *I will follow this, and all other policies outlined in the Code*. If you have trouble with the class material or have personal issues that prevent you from doing your work, come talk to me.

Tentative Schedule - All dates and readings are subject to change.

Date	Topic		Article	Coor
Jan 7	Introduction		Leopold, Aldo (1949) The land ethic. In <i>A Sand County almanac and sketches here and there</i> , 201–226. New York: Oxford University Press.	RLM
Jan 14	Leopold & Indigenous views?		Leopold, Aldo (1949) Three more essays from <i>A Sand County almanac</i> : "Thinking Like a Mountain," "Escudilla," "Song of the Gavilan."	
			Leopold, Aldo (1934), The Arboretum and the University. <i>The Aldo Leopold Archives</i>	

Date	Topic		Article	Coor
Jan 21	Leopold & Indigenous views?		Two excerpts from Callicott, J. Baird (1994). <i>Earth's insights: a multicultural survey of ecological ethics from the Mediterranean Basin to the Australian Outback</i> . Univ of California Press.	
			Shilling, Dan. (2009). Aldo Leopold listens to the Southwest. <i>Journal of the Southwest</i> , 51(3), 317-350.	
Jan 28	Leopold & Indigenous views?		Hester, Lee, McPherson, Dennis, Booth, Annie, & Cheney, Jim (2002). <i>Callicott's Last Stand. Land, Value, Community: Callicott and Environmental Philosophy</i> , 253-278.	
			Whyte, Kyle (2015). How Similar Are Indigenous North American and Leopoldian Environmental Ethics? Available at SSRN 2022038.	
Feb 4	Indigenous environmental ethics		McGregor, Deborah. (2009). Honouring our relations: An Anishnaabe perspective. <i>Speaking for ourselves: Environmental justice in Canada</i> , 27, 27-41.	
			Schweninger, Lee (2013). "The Truth Hangs over Your Head": <i>Toward an Indigenous Land Ethic. ELOHI. Peuples indigènes et environnement</i> , (3), 79-94.	
Feb 11	Indigenous environmental ethics		Hogan, Linda (1994). A different yield. <i>Religion & Literature</i> , 71-80.	
			Selections from Kimmerer, Robin. W. (2013). <i>Braiding sweetgrass: Indigenous wisdom, scientific knowledge and the teachings of plants</i> . Milkweed Editions.	
Feb 18	Indigenous environmental politics		LaDuke, Winona (1994). <i>Traditional ecological knowledge and enviromental futures</i> . <i>Colo. J. Int'l Env'tl. L. & Pol'y</i> , 5, 127.	
			Waziyatawin (2012). The paradox of Indigenous resurgence at the end of empire. <i>Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education, and Society</i> , 1(1), 69.	

Date	Topic		Article	Coor
Feb 25	Indigenous environmental politics		Bohaker, Heidi (2006). "Nindoodemag": The Significance of Algonquian Kinship Networks in the Eastern Great Lakes Region, 1600-1701. <i>The William and Mary Quarterly</i> , 63(1), 23-52.	
			Whyte, Kyle (2018). Settler colonialism, ecology, and environmental injustice. <i>Environment and Society</i> , 9(1), 125-144.	
Mar 4	Indigenous environmental politics		Estes, Nick (2019). A Red Deal. <i>Jacobin</i> .	
Mar 4			Sherwood, Yvonne 2019. "The Political Binds of Oil versus Tribes," <i>Open Rivers: Rethinking Water, Place, & Community</i> , no. 13.	
Jun 3			<i>Present overview of term paper</i>	