

# ENVIRONMENTAL PHILOSOPHY

INTD 425 (3 hrs), Manchester University, TR 12:30-1:45 p.m. (Science Center 104)

Spring 2016

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**Instructor:** Dr. Steve Naragon, Office: Academic Center, #233 (Phone — *office:* 982-5041; *home:* 982-6033)

**Required Text:** Pojman and Pojman, *Environmental Ethics: Readings in Theory and Application*, 6th ed. (Thomson/Wadsworth, 2012).

**Course Web Syllabus:** <http://users.manchester.edu/Facstaff/SSNaragon/Online/425-S16/Welcome.html>

**Course Overview.** We will explore a number of competing perspectives on how we should distribute benefits (e.g., land, clean air and water, food, healthcare, iPods) and burdens (e.g., polluting factories, incinerators, toxic dump sites) among all those who enjoy moral standing. This will involve examining two fundamental questions: “What determines this distribution?” and “What determines moral standing?” Almost every issue in environmental philosophy turns on these questions of distributive justice and the limits of our moral community. The “schedule of discussion and readings” (reverse side) offers a closer account of the specific topics.

**Some Course Objectives.** My intention for this class is that — through reading, study, and conversation — we increase our knowledge of factual information regarding environmental matters, and that we fine-tune our understanding of the relevant moral principles and their application. More specific goals are that we: (1) Become aware of the implications of environmental problems and investigate various likely causes of these problems. (2) Gain facility in distinguishing empirical claims from moral claims. (3) Search for a moral theory that offers adequate protection to the non-human world. (4) Develop skills for critically evaluating arguments and beliefs. (5) Have the opportunity to reflect on two basic questions confronting each of us: What is my proper relationship to other humans? What is my proper relationship with the rest of nature?

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## Requirements

**Readings.** Work through the assignments *prior* to class, and **always bring the text**. *Class discussions depend upon this.*

**Attendance.** This course is heavily dependent on discussion. “Taking the course” requires more than simply doing the written work. Thus the following policy: Five absences (excused or otherwise) are allowed. After that, each additional absence (of any kind) results in a 1% drop in course grade.

**Groups.** The students in the class will be divided into groups of six or seven. These groups will function primarily for the purpose of in-class and online discussion.

**Discussion Forums.** There are six discussion forums, each of which will involve **one post** and at least **two comments** from you. The posts should be from 500-600 words, and the comments from 100-150 words (see the web syllabus for more information). These will be completed on D2L.

**Quizzes.** About every other class will begin with a brief quiz on the reading or topic for the day. These brief exercises help keep me informed of your comprehension of the material, and should help you keep up with the reading during the semester. The quizzes are worth a significant portion of the course grade, because every student coming to class prepared to discuss the material is a significant part of the course. [**Makeup:** Missed quizzes can be made up in my office before the next class meeting; arrangements for this is your responsibility.]

**Short Research Essay.** You will need to write one six to seven page essay (1800-2100 words), involving at least two drafts, an annotated bibliography (**minimum:** 10 sources, 5 non-internet), and a summary sheet. *Please discuss your topic with me before you begin work.* The last week of the semester will be devoted to everyone presenting their research to the class. Materials will be submitted on D2L as “discussion posts” — that way you can see each other’s work and comment on it. See the web syllabus for due dates and other details. Plan your work schedule and work ahead when you can. The due dates are quite firm.

**Due dates:** (see the web syllabus) Brief description of topic (Thu, Feb 4); Thesis paragraph and preliminary list of sources (Tue, Feb 16); Annotated bibliography (1<sup>st</sup> entries) (Tue, Feb 23, etc.); First draft (Thu, Mar 31); Summary sheet and final draft (Tue, May 3).

**Exams.** Three non-cumulative essay exams on the class discussions, readings, and material presented in class.

**Grading.** Exams (3 x 20% = 60% of the course grade), quizzes (10%), discussion forums (15%), research essay and presentation (15% ; thesis/intro, bibliography, first draft, summary sheet, and presentation [@1%], and final draft [10%]).

Letter grade conversion: A (94-100), A- (90-93), B+ (87-89), B (83-86), B- (80-82), C+ (77-79), C (73-76), C- (70-72), D+ (67-69), D (63-66), D-(60-62), F (0-59).

**Cell Phones.** Please don’t bring these to class. If you bring a cell phone, it needs to be turned off and put away, preferably at the bottom of a very deep pocket or book bag. If you are unable to keep your phone turned off and stowed, then please find another class to attend. Thank you.

**Students with Disabilities.** Please see the web syllabus; but in general: If you believe you need an accommodation due to a disability, please contact Bonnie O’Connell, the director of services for students with disabilities (Success Center, second floor of the JYS Center); please telephone 982-5076 to schedule an appointment.

**Cheating and Plagiarism.** Plagiarism consists of submitting the statements, ideas, opinions, or findings of another *as if they were your own*. It is *not* plagiarism to copy from or paraphrase a source as long as this is acknowledged and the source is cited. Cheating and deliberate plagiarism will result in automatically failing the class. For more information, see the college *Catalog*.

## SCHEDULE OF DISCUSSION AND READING

### Thu, Jan 28

(1) Introduction to the course.

### Private Property and the Public Good

#### Tue, Feb 2

(2) Where does private property come from? **Read:** Locke, "Of Property" (pdf); Chief Seattle, "If we sell you our land..." (pdf).

#### Thu, Feb 4

(3) Is the privatization of common resources the best way to preserve them? **Read:** Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons" (#45).

#### Tue, Feb 9

(4) Overview of Distributive Justice. **Read:** Nozick, "Distributive Justice" (pdf).

### Population, Consumption, and Food Ethics

#### Thu, Feb 11

(5) Are we living on a lifeboat? **Read:** Hardin, "Lifeboat Ethics" (#30 [49]); Murdoch/Oaten, "Critique of Lifeboat Ethics" (#31 [50]).

#### Tue, Feb 16

(6) Patterns of consumption. **Read:** McKibben, "A Special Moment in History: The Challenge of Overpopulation and Overconsumption" (#27 [44]).

#### Thu, Feb 18

(7) Population and vegetarianism. **Read:** Fox, "Vegetarianism and Treading Lightly" (#38 [55]).

#### Tue, Feb 23

(8) When our neighbors starve. **Read:** Engel, "Hunger, Duty, and Ecology" (#36 [51]); Amartya Sen, "Property and Hunger" (pdf).

#### Thu, Feb 25

**Exam #1**

### On The Moral Standing of Non-Human Animals

#### Tue, Mar 1

(9) Animal welfare. **Read:** Singer, "Animal Liberation" (#6 [9]).

#### Thu, Mar 3

(10) Animal rights. **Read:** Regan, "The Radical Egalitarian Case" (#7 [10]); Warren, "A Critique of Regan" (#8 [11]).

#### Tue, Mar 8

(11) How wide is our moral community? **Read:** Goodpaster, "On Being Morally Considerable" (pdf).

### Species, Biodiversity, and Valuing Nature

#### Thu, Mar 10

(12) What is the source of value? **Read:** Meadow, "Biodiversity" (#20 [30]); Russow, "Why do species matter?" (#21 [31]).

#### Tue, Mar 15

(13) Extending legal rights. **Read:** Stone, "Should trees have standing?" (#26 [34]).

### Economics and the Environment

#### Thu, Mar 17

(14) Optimal Pollution. **Read:** Baxter, "People or Penguins" (#34 [58]).

--- Spring Break ---

#### Tue, Mar 29

(15) Citizens and consumers. **Read:** Sagoff, "At the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima" (#67 [68]).

#### Thu, Mar 31

(16) Can we value anything? **Read:** Krieger, "What's wrong with plastic trees?" (pdf).

#### Tue, Apr 5

**Exam #2**

### The Land Ethic and Beyond

#### Thu, Apr 7

(17) Leopold's land ethic. **Read:** Leopold, "The Land Ethic" (#24 [19]); Callicott, "Conceptual Foundations" (#25 [20]).

#### Tue, Apr 12

(18) Deep ecology. **Read:** Naess, "Shallow and Deep Ecology" (#13 [24]); Naess, "Ecosophy T" (#14 [25]), Devall/Sessions (#15 [26]).

#### Thu, Apr 14

(19) Social ecology. **Read:** Bookchin, "Social Ecology vs Deep Ecology" (#18 [28]).

### Environmental Justice

#### Tue, Apr 19

(20) Environmental racism. **Read:** Bullard, "Overcoming Racism" (#50 [70]); Wenz, "Just Garbage" (#51 [72]).

#### Thu, Apr 21

(21) Third world critiques. **Read:** Guha, "Radical Environmentalism" (#19 [39]); Mies, "Deceiving the Third World" (#52 [73]).

#### Tue, Apr 26

(22) The current approach isn't working... **Read:** Fred Madgoff and John Bellamy Foster, "What Every Environmentalist Needs to Know About Capitalism" (#69 [pdf])

### Getting There

#### Thu, Apr 28

(23) Getting in the way. **Read:** Foreman, "Strategic Monkeywrenching" (#73 [81]); Martin, "Ecosabotage" (#74 [80]).

#### Tue, May 8 — Thu, May 10

Student Research Presentations

#### Finals Week

**Exam #3**