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Instructor email: oloup001@umn.edu
Course Meetings: *Tuesdays & Thursdays 11:15-12:55*
Office hours: Fridays (9-12) & by appt.
Credits: 3

PHIL 3301: Environmental Ethics

University of Minnesota



What Duties do Humans Have to the Environment, and Why? Is it morally permissible to “manage” the “natural” world? Perhaps morally obligatory? What kinds of moral status ought we respect when it comes to trees, rivers and animals? How ought tribal sovereignty, food sovereignty, feminism, and intergenerational justice impact our moral evaluations and prescriptions on topics in Environmental Ethics? What is the most effective way to think about the climate crisis? Is the most effective also the most moral? How do I best navigate the relations I have with self, friends, community, the “other” and the earth?

Course Description

This course introduces students to topics in Environmental Ethics as they engage with questions of ecology, the anthropocene, Indigenous Environmental Justice, Indigenous Sovereignty, ecofeminisms, food justice, as well as the economy and technology. More particularly, this course emphasizes the role of the philosophy student as a meaning-maker in the field of Environmental Ethics, and provides an opportunity for students to craft connections between normative ethical theory to practical environmental solutions through lan-based service learning.

Philosophical inquiry will be explored by reading texts by philosophers from the 1960s to today, weekly discussion, lecture, formal paper writing, a service learning opportunity at Winona LaDukes’s Agricultural Institute on the White Earth Reservation, as well as a student-group designed service learning project proposal. The course will include various global perspectives, including those considered canonical to the anglo-american Environmental Philosophical tradition in the 1960s and 1970s, yet the majority of assigned readings are from Indigenous Perspectives in Environmental Ethics, as the text selections in this course seek to honor both the foundational role, as well as the contemporary leadership of Indigenous thought to Environmental Philosophy.

Learning Outcomes	Required Textbooks and Materials
<p>By the end of the course, students can...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Summarize a history of the field of Environmental Ethics in Philosophy• Connect Indigenous conceptions of Kinship to Indigenous Environmental Justice• Synthesize multiple philosophical texts• Write formal philosophy papers which contribute significantly to Environmental Ethics• Develop enduring questions• Cite relevant text to support claims and reasoning• Contribute to a class discussion which advances the field of Environmental Ethics• Design experiential learning opportunities which connect ethical theory to practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Required textbook: <i>Ways of Being in the World: An Introduction to Indigenous Philosophies of Turtle Island</i> (Andrea Sullivan-Clarke)• All other reading materials will be uploaded in Canvas as a pdf or URL link• Small (grow) groups may purchase a book for their final reading and presentation <p><i>*Books are available in UMN bookstore, online, as well as local bookstores such as Birchbark Books, Magers and Quinn, & Moon Palace books</i></p>

Working Assumptions for the Course

1. We will respect one another. Our beliefs, values, and ideas often differ from one another because we draw from different life experiences. In this class, we will discuss, question, and challenge ideas, but will be careful not to attack individuals.
2. We will challenge our own beliefs, values, and ideas. We need to be open to challenging our own prejudices, assumptions, and interpretations. We also need to expect to discuss things we often do not discuss in public but still feel strongly about. It is okay to feel uncomfortable when we do so.
3. The world is run by those who show up. Participation is required each week. If you miss more than three classes, please let me know. I'm here to support you and your learning. Without communication and an agreed upon strategy to get on track, your grade will drop by a letter grade (e.g: B → C).
4. We are here for a positive and collaborative educational experience. Please carefully read weekly text and prepare notes and questions to bring to our class discussions. Ask questions, share your thoughts and feelings, and make this a meaningful experience for you and your classmates.

Reading Schedule - Spring, 2023

Week 1: Grounding in the Course	
1/17 *27	Beginning where we are (the University of Minnesota and the legacy of "land-grab" institutions) (No assigned reading beforehand)
1/19 *11 (or 32)	Kyle Whyte (Citizen Potawatomi) - Indigenous Environmental Justice, and, Ashlee Cunsolo Willox - Climate Change as the Work of Mourning

Further Reading: Rachel Carson - *Silent Spring*; Lynn White - *The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis*, Catriona McKinnon: *Against Despair in Climate change*

Week 2: Consequentialism, Deontology, and Virtue in Environmental Ethics	
1/24 *34	Onora O'Neil - Kant on Duties Regarding Nonrational Nature, and, Ronald Sandler - Environmental Virtue Ethics: Value, Normativity, and Right Action
1/26 *23	Avram Hiller - Individual Responsibility...

Further Reading: Katie McShane - *Truth and Goodness: Metaethics in Environmental Ethics*, Jason Kawall - *The Epistemic Demands of Environmental Virtue*

Week 3: History of Environmental Ethics in Philosophy	
1/31 *22	Jason Kawall - History of Environmental Ethics, and, Ramachandra Guha - Radical American Environmentalism and Wilderness Preservation: A Third World Critique *no class meeting
2/2 *7	Murray Bookchin - Social Ecology Versus Deep Ecology

Further Reading: Bookchin 1990. *The Philosophy of Social Ecology*, Montreal: Black Rose Books.

Week 4: Land	
2/7 *30	David Truer (Leech Lake Ojibwe) - Return the National Parks to the Tribes https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2021/05/return-the-national-parks-to-the-tribes/618395/ , and, Kyle Whyte - How Similar Are Indigenous North American and Leopoldian Environmental Ethics?
2/9 *27	Y.S. Lo 2001. The Land Ethic and Callicott's Ethical System (1980–2001): An Overview and Critique

Further Reading: Callicott JB 2013. *Thinking Like a Planet: The Land Ethic and Earth Ethic*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, Leopold, A., 1949. *A Sand County Almanac*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

Week 5: Relation to Land	
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2/14 *46	Brian Burkhardt (Cherokee Nation) - Indigenizing Philosophy Through the Land: Lessons in Ethics
2/16 *40	Leanne Betasamoskae Simpson (Mississauga Nishnaabeg)- As We Have Always Done: Ch 9 Land As Pedagogy, and, *Sullivan-Clarke edited volume chapter 3.4: Leanne Betasomasake Simpson

Week 6: Kinship

2/21 *12	*Sullivan-Clarke (Muscogee) edited volume Preface and Introduction, and, *Sullivan-Clarke edited volume chapter 3.1: Viola Cordova (Jicarilla Apache) - How it Is, "Coda: Living in a sacred universe"
2/23 *8	*Sullivan-Clarke edited volume chapter 3.2: Robin Wall Kimmerer (Citizen Potawatomi Nation) - Skywoman falling from <i>Braiding Sweetgrass</i>

Further Reading: Cordova - Ethics of We and I; Daniel Heath Justice (Cherokee Nation) - Why Indigenous Literatures Matter: Introduction & Ch. 1

Week 7: Kinship Ethics

2/28 *57	*Sullivan-Clarke edited volume chapter 5.1: Joseph Len Miller (Muscogee) What do we need to Know to Live in Harmony with our Surroundings?, and, *Sullivan-Clarke edited volume chapter 5.3: Peter Irniq, Piita Taqtu Irniq (Inuit) - Healthy Community
3/2 *6+	Arne Naess - The Shallow and the Deep: long range ecology movement & The Call of the Mountain documentary https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x8meah OR script excerpt http://www.naturearteducation.org/R/Interviews/Naess3.htm

Further Reading: Arne Naess - *The Deep Ecological Movement: Some Philosophical Aspects* & Clare Palmer - *Living Individuals: Biocentrism in Environmental Ethics* Clare Palmer

→ Paper 1 DUE

Week 8: Spring Break

Week 9: Ecofeminism and Corporalities

3/14 *51	Karen Warren - Ecofeminist Philosophy (1-41) , and, Chris Cuomo - Sexual Politics in Environmental Ethics: Impacts, Causes, Alternatives
3/16 *33	Kyle Whyte and Kristie Dotson - Environmental Justice, and, *Sullivan-Clarke edited volume chapter 4.1: Kyle Whyte - On the role of Traditional Ecological Knowledge...

Further Reading: Warren, K.J., 1987. "Feminism and Ecology: Making Connections", Environmental Ethics; King, Y., 1989a. "The Ecology of Feminism and the Feminism of Ecology", in J. Plant (ed.), Healing the Wounds, Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 18–28; Plumwood, V., 1993. Feminism and the Mastery of Nature, London: Routledge; Collins, S., 1974. A Different Heaven and Earth, Valley Forge: Judson Press; Sylvia Wynter, Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom.

Week 10: Intergenerational Justice	
3/21 *27	Haudenosaunee Confederacy - 7 Principles value William MacAskill - What We Owe the Future, Intro & Chapter 1
3/23 *10	Val Plumwood - Tasteless: Toward a Food-Based Approach to Death

Further reading: John Nolt - Future Generations in Environmental Ethics

Week 11: Animal Ethics	
3/28 *34	Peter Singer - Animal Liberation, Preface to the 40th edition & Chapter 1
3/30 *9	Lori Gruen - Conscious Animals and the Value of Experience

Week 12: Food Sovereignty	
4/4 *23	Tatiana Abatemarco - Women's sense of farming: ecofeminism, and, Winona LaDuke (White Earth Ojibwe) - The Ethics of Wild Rice
4/6 *11	Kristen Reynolds et al. - Envisioning Radical Food Geographies

→ Paper 2 Due

Week 13: Moral Status of "Natural Objects"	
4/11 *14 (but law)	James DK Morris and Jacinta Ruru (<i>Māori</i>) - Giving Voice to Rivers: Legal Personality as a Vehicle for Recognising Indigenous Peoples' Relationship to Water
4/13 *21	Andrew Brennan - "The Moral Standing of Natural Objects"

Further reading: Lo, Y. S., 1999. "Natural and Artifactual: Restored Nature as Subject", Environmental Ethics, 21: 247–66, Water Ethics: Toward Ecological Cooperation- Angela Kallhoff, Narratives of Food, Agriculture, and the Environment - David M. Kaplan & Brennan, A., 1984. "The Moral Standing of Natural Objects", Environmental Ethics, 6: 35–56, Mathews, F., 2003. For Love of Matter, Albany: State University of New York Press Christopher Stone - Should Trees Have [moral] Standing?", Southern California Law Review (skim).

→ Project Model: Service Learning Opportunity - TBA

Week 14: Technology & Economy (choose 1 per class)

4/18	Stephen Gardiner - Geoengineering: Ethical Questions for Deliberate Climate Manipulators (philosopher writing about geoengineering) OR Janet Lorenzen - Gree Consumption and Social Change (sociology)
4/20	Kallis - Radical dematerialization and degrowth (econ) OR Andersson et al - Reconnecting cities to the biosphere: stewardship of green infrastructure and urban ecosystem services (urban planning)

Further Reading: Naomi Klein, This Changes Everything; Naomi Klein, 2019. On Fire: The Burning Case for a Green New Deal, Harmondsworth: Penguin; What is green labor? A Planet to Win, "Strike for Sunshine"; Roach, "The Climate Case for Working Less"; Vasingtjan, "Degrowth vs. The Green New Deal"

Week 15: Finals/ Group Presentations	
4/25	Readings TBA (per group assignment)
4/27	Readings TBA (per group assignment) → Group Project Proposals Due

Assignment Details & Descriptions

1) Class Prep (1-Page Questions)

1-Page Questions¹

Before each class session, I ask you to submit a *reading-informed question* to our online classroom discussion forum. In addition, it is required to read classmates' posts before coming to class.

The content of the approximately 1-page question:

Folks are encouraged to read and sometimes re-read the philosophy text we will be working with each class period and then post a discussion question that clarifies, challenges, connects and/or synthesizes the weekly reading with what we are learning in the course as a whole, as well as to your own lives. For the first post, I suggest the following format:

1. The Question

3. Sub-Questions that are a part of the larger question

¹ This weekly 1-page question assignment is adapted from a weekly question that I was assigned in Jos Uffink's course on Philosophy of Quantum Mechanics at the University of Minnesota

4. Relevant quotations from the text (with page numbers) that inform this question
5. Personal Connections/Motivation for your question
6. Sources from other literature that may be useful in our thinking about this question.
7. Possible Answers to the question

After the first week, I encourage you to play with the formatting, style of writing. You are welcome to include diagrams or drawings, perhaps even submit a video for your weekly question instead. As you get creative and find some inquiry styles that feel best for you, just remember to a) keep asking questions, and b) include portions of the text we are reading to bring your inquiry to bear on our philosophical work.

The logistics of the approximately 1-page question:

There will be 26 total 1-page questions. These posts should be between 250-500 words each. 1-page questions are worth 40% of your total grade.

Discussion posts are due each **Monday by 11:59 p.m** and **Wednesday evening by 11:59 pm**.

2) Papers

Paper 1

Prompt: What is Environmental Ethics? Who are Environmental Ethicists? And What do they care about?

Length: Pay attention to length requirements (2-4 pgs)

Paper 2

Paper 2 is written on a subject of your choice from course readings and discussions that you would like to “get smarter at.” Please use between 4-10 quotes from our assigned readings to develop your philosophical thinking.

Length: Pay attention to length requirements (5-7 pgs)

All Papers will be graded on:

- Clarity of position or question
- Use of assigned text to support one's claims and questions
- Critical and Philosophical Thinking
- Formal Composition

Paper Formatting

Double-spaced typed pages, size 12 Times New Roman font, with 1-inch margins. Page parameters are intended to give you an idea of the length. Please note, if your paper does not

meet the minimum page requirement you will be marked down one letter grade. Include page numbers and a title.

Citation: All papers should be referenced properly, and a reference page included at the end of the paper. If you cite a source or use a quotation, document the source (e.g., with a parenthetical citation). Choose either MLA, APA, or Chicago style for references, but then stick with that style.

Grammar/Spelling/Punctuation: Be sure to proofread your papers and strive to avoid any grammar, spelling and punctuation errors.

3) Projects

Project Proposal (Group Assignment)

In your “grow groups”, you will design a proposal for a service learning opportunity in Environmental Ethics driven by one of the topics we engage/read in this course. Groups will present proposals in-class during the last week of the semester.

Project Proposals will be graded on:

- Connection to text
- Accessibility
- Clarity

Model Project Proposal (Service Learning Opportunity)

After week 13 of the course, students will have an opportunity to join an experiential learning opportunity at Winona LaDuke’s Agricultural Institute on the White Earth Reservation in Northern Minnesota. This service opportunity will look like volunteering to work the land in preparation for spring planting. We will stay two nights (Friday and Saturday) for a full day of work on Saturday. This project is an engaged example of taking seriously the texts we read for our week on “Food Sovereignty.” This service learning opportunity serves as an example project for the Project Proposals that grow groups present in the final week of the course.

Course Notes, Grades & Access

Evaluation of Student Performance

Student performance will be evaluated based on participation in class sessions, completion of the class assignments, and the quality of the class assignments submitted.

Weekly 1-page Questions 40

Paper 1 20

Paper 2 25

Project Proposal Presentation 15

Total: 100

Final grades will be determined by the cumulative performance on each of the above components of the class.

Copy of the UMN School of Public Health Land Acknowledgment from day 1:

<https://www.sph.umn.edu/about/diversity-inclusion/resources/land-acknowledgement/>

UMN Disability Resources

UMN values diversity and inclusion, and so do I. We recognize that disability is an aspect of diversity. My goal as your instructor is to create a learning environment that is effective, equitable, inclusive and welcoming. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your inclusion or to accurate assessment of achievement related to your disability, please notify me as soon as possible.

Students with documented physical, emotional and/or learning disabilities who need an accommodation in this class are encouraged to contact UMN Disability Resource Center

<https://disability.umn.edu/>

UMN Academic Integrity Policy

Using someone else's words or ideas without giving them credit is a type of lying called plagiarism. Plagiarism will result in failing the assignment or the course. Please don't plagiarize--it hurts others, breaks trust and there are pretty severe consequences. The college policy on plagiarism can be found here: <https://communitystandards.umn.edu/plagiarism>

P.S. You are a human and we are in the middle of a pandemic and an uprising--let me know when you need an extension on an assignment!

UMN against Sexual Harassment

You have a right to education free from harassment or discrimination. We all do. There are resources set up on campus to support all of us as if we have to navigate harassment and/or discrimination. As your professor and as a human, I care about you and your safety in this class. Please know you can let me know at any time if you are navigating behavior that may be harassment or discrimination in or out of the classroom. You also are by no means obligated to tell me and can contact our college resources found here: <https://aurora.umn.edu/>

UMN University Statement of Nondiscrimination

<https://policy.umn.edu/hr/discrimination#:~:text=All%20University%20members%20are%20prohibited,in%20the%20Definitions%20section%20below.>

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

<https://asr.umn.edu/training-and-support/ferpa-resources>

UMN Student Parent Resources

<https://sphc.umn.edu/>

Tips for Reading Philosophy

Reading Philosophical text is both hard and rewarding.

I highly recommend:

1. Creating space and time to read your assigned weekly reading twice if needed.
2. Mark up the text!--Underline important quotations, write questions and clarifications in the margins.
3. Get in the right headspace--what are you about to read? Who is it written by? When? About what? Have you heard anything or read anything about the author or time period before?
4. Write! After you read, take 5 minutes to jot down notes on what you just read and the questions you have--it will help you remember and build on this knowledge later on.

Check out these other great tips on reading philosophy here:

<https://www.bbvaopenmind.com/en/humanities/beliefs/ten-easy-tips-for-reading-philosophy-texts/>

Notes on Covid and College If you have any covid-related symptoms, have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for covid, or, if you test positive for COVID-19, please stay home. We wish you a speedy and smooth recovery. Email me and we will come up with a plan together that keeps you and your classmates healthy, well and on track. Remember, you are not alone and together we will navigate these extraordinary and challenging times.