

Course Outline for: PHIL 1140 Environmental Ethics**A. Course Description:**

1. Number of credits: 3
2. Lecture hours per week: 3
3. Prerequisites: None
4. Corequisites: None
5. MnTC Goals: Goal 9 Ethical and Civic Responsibility
 Goal 10 People and the Environment

Do animals have rights? Do we have moral obligations to preserve endangered species? What is sustainable development and do we have an ethical obligation to promote it? Do people, including future generations, have a right to environmental protection? What is environmental racism? Do we have a duty to preserve biodiversity? Does nature have value, and if so, what kind of value? These are just a few of the questions addressed in environmental ethics. Environmental ethics is the study of the moral relationship between humans and the rest of nature. In this course, we will examine various efforts to understand the nature and extent of our duties to the nonhuman world. After a general introduction to a few major ethical theories and concepts in moral philosophy, we will investigate a variety of environmental issues through the lens of these theories and concepts. At the same time, we will critically reflect on the shortcomings of traditional moral theories and investigate new concepts, theories, and perspectives as ways of understanding the moral relationship between humans and nature.

B. Date last reviewed/updated: March 2023**C. Outline of Major Content Areas:**

1. Ethical Theory (may include utilitarianism, Kantianism, virtue ethics)
2. Contemporary alternatives to traditional ethical theory (may include Deep Ecology, Biocentrism, Eco-Feminism, Ecocentrism, and others)
3. Economic, religious, and cultural understandings of nature
4. Applications of ethical theory or alternative ethical approaches to specific environmental issues (may include climate change, the moral status of animals, environmental racism and justice, agriculture and sustainability, population and consumption, food ethics, and others)

D. Course Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of the course, the student will be able to:

1. Explain several traditional ethical theories and their associated concepts and apply them to environmental issues. (Goals 9b, 2b)
2. Analyze the ethical aspects involved in the diverse approaches to the environment taken by religious, economic, legal, and cultural perspectives. (Goals 9c, 9d)

3. Analyze environmental ethical issues to arrive at individual reasoned responses to environmental problems. (Goals 2b, 9a)
4. Use diverse theories/understandings of the value of the natural world imaginatively to generate alternative solutions to environmental problems. (Goals 2b, 10e)
5. Explain the ways in which the emergence of environmental understanding is intertwined with and influenced by religious, cultural, and socio-economic factors. (Goals 10b, 10c)
6. Articulate and defend one's own view regarding what actions to take on environmental problems. (Goals 2c, 10f)
7. Apply understanding of the basic facts about ecology to make well-reasoned judgments about solutions to environmental problems. (Goals 2a, 10d)

E. Methods for Assessing Student Learning:

Assessments may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Essays and Papers
2. Exams and Quizzes
3. Service learning
4. Homework Assignments
5. Discussion Projects and Participation

F. Special Information:

None