

Professor Huff
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240 Copley, x7216
office hours: Mon-Th. 3-4pm
or by appointment

Philosophy 313: Environmental Ethics Spring 2008

This course addresses basic issues of environmental ethics: the value of ecosystems (both inherent and instrumental), human beings' treatment of animals and non-animal nature, the meaning and justification of moral obligations to species and to the environment, and the complex and profound ways in which our actions with regard to the environment affect our fellow human beings. We will apply moral theory to environmental problems in the enterprise of formulating an adequate ethical approach to our environment.

Assignments and grading

Your grade in this course will be based on class participation, essays, news submissions, a midterm exam and a final exam.

Discussion is an extremely important part of a philosophy class. In order to participate fully in discussion, be sure to read the assigned text carefully before coming to class. Then be ready to ask good questions and actively participate in the discussion as it unfolds. The readings are not long, but they are dense. I encourage you to read them more than once. *You should come to class each day with at least one question based on your thoughtful reading of the assigned text.* I will often ask some of you to pose your question(s).

I will distribute at least five regular essay assignments, of which you must complete at least four. Your four best essay grades will count toward your course grade. I strongly encourage you to write the first essay; philosophical writing is different from other writing, and you may not be satisfied with your first attempt. Essays will require you to engage critically with the course texts and their topics.

The essay assignments I distribute will be fairly specific; follow them carefully. I do encourage students to develop their own thoughts in writing. If you would like to write on a topic of your own choosing, you may describe the topic in a paragraph and submit it in writing for my approval before writing your paper.

News submissions will help us to maintain a strong sense of the concrete context in which environmental issues arise and develop. It is important for us to be aware of the scientific, economic, and political dimensions of these problems. So we will look at two or three news articles in connection with the reading for each class meeting. You will each contribute three of these, as assigned according to our schedule. News submissions should:

- provide *facts* about a relevant environmental event or condition.
- provide either *analysis* or the *basis for analysis*: causes, moral dimensions, and/or policy dimensions of the events or conditions described.
- be *brief* (1-2pp when printed in a normal-size font) and *not redundant*.
- be submitted to me *by 2pm on the day before* the class when we will discuss them, either by email (link or attachment) or hard copy.

Exams will include both short answer and essay questions. They will test both comprehension of the course texts and your ability to think critically about the texts and their themes. I will distribute a study sheet including sample exam questions in advance, to help you study. However, the best way to prepare for the exam will be to read carefully, participate actively in class, and re-read the texts in light of the discussion. *You must attend the final exam to pass the course; plan accordingly.*

As in other classes at Randolph-Macon College, I will use the full range of letter grades.

<i>Area</i>	<i>Percentage of grade</i>
Class participation	10%
4 regular essays (about 4 pages each)	54% (13% each)
News Submissions	6%
Midterm exam	10%
Final exam (cumulative)	20%

Readings and course goals

Lecture and discussion in class is designed to help you digest the material in the texts, and to develop your own thoughts on the themes they discuss. Essays, exercises, and tests will be based mainly on the texts themselves, not on what I say in class, so please read carefully for each class meeting.

Communicating with me

I will hold office hours Monday through Thursday from 3-4pm. You are welcome to come and talk with me about the course material and assignments at these times, or make an appointment with me for another time. I am happy to read drafts of papers or other assignments if you bring a copy so we can discuss it in person.

Email is a wonderful technology, but it has limitations. You are welcome to email me with questions that can be answered simply. I will usually respond within 24 hours, not counting weekends. For more complex matters, however, it will usually be more effective to speak in person. These may include questions about the ideas in the course, about the meaning of particular passages, or ideas you have for your papers. You may email me about these, but do not be surprised if I give only a limited response by email, and invite you to come to my office for more.

I will occasionally send information about the class by email. Please do check your email regularly.

Course texts

- Louis Pojman, *Environmental Ethics: Readings in Theory and Application*, 4th ed. (Wadsworth, 2005)
- additional readings to be distributed, including news submissions.

Please bring with you the relevant texts for each day's class.

Reading Schedule
(subject to change)

Feb	T	12	Introduction
	H	14	Intro., I.1: Genesis, White, Dobel
	T	19	I.5: Dwivedi, De Silva, Deen
	H	21	I.1: Moncrief, Mathews
	T	26	I.2: Kant, Singer; I.3: Rolston
	H	28	I.3: Hettinger, Mill, Schweitzer, Taylor
Mar	T	4	I.3: Goodpaster, Leopold, Callicott
	H	6	I.3: Hettinger & Throop, Nelson
	T	11	I.3: Paden, Naess, Naess,
	H	13	I.3: Deval & Sessions, Watson
	T	18	<i>Midterm Exam</i>
	H	20	“March of the Penguins” or another film TBA
<i>Spring Break</i>			
April	T	8	I.3: Bookchin, Sterba; I.4: Meadows
	H	10	I.4: Russow; II.7: Intro., McKibben
	T	15	II.7: Hardin, Kasun
	H	17	II.7: Gardner/Assadourian & Sarin; II.8: Coffin
	T	22	II.11: Intro., Pew Center, Gardiner parts IV-IX
	H	24	II.9: Bradford; II.8: Rauch, Mae Ho
	T	29	II.12: Mill, Daly, Schmitz
May	H	1	II.5: Ogungbemi, Guha; II.13: Mies
	T	6	II.13: Wenz, Westra
	H	8	II.14: Gore, Durning
	T	13	II.14: Saunders, Pojman "Challenge " & "Pedaling Power"
	H	15	II.14: Brown/Flavin & Postel

Final Exam — 8:30am Friday, May 23