PHIL320

STUDENT WARNING: This course syllabus is from a previous semester archive and serves only as a preparatory reference. Please use this syllabus as a reference only until the professor opens the classroom and you have access to the updated course syllabus. Please do NOT purchase any books or start any work based on this syllabus; this syllabus may NOT be the one that your individual instructor uses for a course that has not yet started. If you need to verify course textbooks, please refer to the online course description through your student portal. This syllabus is proprietary material of APUS.

Course Summary

Course: PHIL320  Title: Environmental Ethics  
Length of Course: 8  
Prerequisites: N/A  Credit Hours: 3

Description

Course Description: This course is a study of environmental issues from a moral and philosophical approach. Issues raised in the course include the moral obligation, or lack thereof, to preserve and protect the environment, the ethical presumptions that underlie environmental policy, the traditional theories of moral philosophy applicable to contemporary environmental problems, and the potential for a new conception of the relationship between humanity and nature.

Course Scope:

This course deals with both theoretical and practical concerns of environmental ethics. We will begin by discussing general theories, principles, and concepts of ethics, and the role that philosophy has to play in environmental debates. In the second part of the course we will consider the advantages and disadvantages of approaching environmental ethics as a problem of applied ethics. We will conclude by examining more recent developments in environmental ethics that move beyond applied ethics to articulate an environmental philosophy. Throughout the course we will be analyzing and discussing actual cases in environmental ethics.

Objectives

After successfully completing this course, you will be able to:
CO-1 – Identify the various theories and philosophers in the field of environmental ethics.
CO-2 – “Compare and Contrast” traditional and more radical approaches to environmental ethics.
CO-3 – Analyze key issues and areas of disagreement raised in environmental case studies.
CO-4 - Evaluate the claims made by various groups and individuals regarding the ethical status of plants, animals, ecosystems and our relationship and responsibility to them
CO-5 – Assess a particular case study or environmental topic in view of one or more of the ethical theories we have studied in this course.
CO-6 - Critique the current and future status of the global environment.

Outline
Week 1:

Topic & CO

CO = course objective (see above)
CO 1, 5
Identify the concepts of ethics and an examination of the relevance of philosophy for environmental concerns.
This week we examine Aldo Leopold’s Land Ethic.

Learning Objectives

Identify traditional theories and concepts of ethics.
Assess the usefulness of these theories for environmental issues.
Examine the political and economic issues and perceptions surrounding Aldo Leopold’s Land Ethic.
Assess Leopold’s criticism of preservationist and conservationist approaches to land management.
Critique the theory of ecological holism.
Evaluate the criticisms of the land ethic.

Readings

Rolston, Environmental Ethics (16p); attached as pdf at bottom of Week 1 Forum A description

Sustainability: A Comprehensive Foundation, Chapters 1 - 3 (Foreward > Introduction to Sustainability.
http://cnx.org/contents/F0Hv_Zza@43.5:HdWd2hN5@2/Foreword

Assignment

Due Thursday
Introductory Post
Forum 1A, 1B- Initial Posts
Due: Sunday
4 Peer Responses (two responses in 1A and two responses in 1B)

Week 2:

Topic & CO

CO 1, 5
This week we begin an examination of environmental ethics as a branch of applied ethics. We will consider
an economic approach to environmental problems that seeks to find solutions through economic theory and
free market forces. We will also consider the question of what our responsibility to future generations may be.

Learning Objectives

Assess the advantages and disadvantages of using economic theory to solve environmental problems.
Compare and contrast conservationists and preservationist approaches to management of our air, water and
land resources.
Critically, examination the arguments for and against our responsibility to future generations.

Readings

Rachel Carson, Silent Spring, Chapter 3: Elixirs of Death

Sustainability, Chapters 4 & 7

- 4 The Evolution of Environmental Policy in the United States
4.1 The Evolution of Environmental Policy in the United States – Chapter Introduction
4.2 The American Conservation Movement
4.3 Environmental Risk Management
4.4 Sustainability and Public Policy
4.5 Public Health and Sustainability

7 Physical Resources: Water, Pollution, and Minerals
7.1 Physical Resources: Water, Pollution, and Minerals - Chapter Introduction
7.2 Water Cycle and Fresh Water Supply
7.3 Case Study: The Aral Sea - Going, Going, Gone
7.4 Water Pollution
7.5 Case Study: The Love Canal Disaster
7.6 Mineral Resources: Formation, Mining, Environmental Impact
7.7 Case Study: Gold: Worth its Weight?

Assignment
Due Thursday
Forum 2A, 2B—Initial Posts
Due: Sunday
4 Peer Responses (two responses in 2A and two responses in 2B)

Week 3:

Topic & CO
CO 1,2,4, 5
This week we examine the Deep Ecology movement, environmental justice, and social ecology.

Learning Objectives
Assess the principles of the Deep Ecology platform.
Compare and contrast biocentric and Deep Ecology ethics.
Evaluate the criticisms of Deep Ecology.
Evaluate the theory of Social Ecology and its critics.

Readings
Arne Naess, The Ecology of Wisdom, Sections 2 & 5.

Sustainability > your choice of topics or case study. Survey our Sustainability textbook. Select one of the case studies or topics from our Sustainability textbook and discuss/apply what we have learned in the course so far, including the concept of Deep Ecology. Suggestions >>>>>

http://5.1 Climate and Global Change – Chapter Introduction 5.2 Climate Processes: External and Internal
Controls 5.3 Milankovitch Cycles and the Climate of the Quaternary 5.4 Modern Climate Change 5.5 Climate Projections

Assignment

Due Thursday
Forum 3A, 3B– Initial Posts
Due: Sunday
4 Peer Responses (two responses in 3A and two in 3B)

Week 4:

Topic & CO

CO 3,5
This week we begin our examination of theories of environmental ethics that move beyond traditional ethical theory in order to develop a comprehensive environmental philosophy.

Learning Objectives

Evaluate the philosophical shift from an environmental ethics based on the problem of morals to one centered on value.

Readings

http://cnx.org/contents/F0Hv_Zza@43.5:HdWd2hN5@2/Foreword

Sustainability, etc.
Select a topic or a case study, from the text or propose one of your own for Week 5.

Assignment

Forum Discussion

Week 5:

Topic & CO

CO 3,5
This week we will consider an eco-centric approach to environmental ethics.

Learning Objectives

Compare and contrast the theories of biocentric and ecocentric ethics.
Evaluate the “wilderness ideal” and “wilderness myth”.
Assess the concept and claims of metaphysical holism.

Readings

Sustainability, etc.

http://cnx.org/contents/F0Hv_Zza@43.5:HdWd2hN5@2/Foreword

Assignment

Due Thursday: Forum 5; paper proposal & short instructional video.
Due: Sunday
2 Peer Responses
Due Sunday in Assignments section: Final Paper/Project Proposal
Please submit a 300 – 500 word proposal of your topic for approval in the Assignment section of our classroom website.

**Week 6:**

**Topic & CO**

**CO 1, 2, 3, 4**

This week we examine Peter Singer and Animal Liberation.

**Learning Objectives**

Evaluate the relationship between humans and the natural environment.
Assess the argument for and against the claim that non-humans have moral standing.
Evaluate the arguments for and criticisms of the animal rights advocates.

**Readings**

Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation*, Chapter 1: All Animals Are Equal

Select a case study or topic dealing with animals from our text *Sustainability* (e.g.,

[http://cnx.org/contents/F0Hv_Zza@43.5:HdWd2hN5@2/Foreword](http://cnx.org/contents/F0Hv_Zza@43.5:HdWd2hN5@2/Foreword))

or some other text or resource from our Course Guide. You may also find a case study or topic on your own.

Write 250+ words, applying and critiquing Singer's view of animal liberation to a particular topic or case study, as your initial post.

**Suggestion:** Sustainability, Sec 6.3

[http://6.3 Biodiversity, Species Loss, and Ecosystem Function](http://6.3 Biodiversity, Species Loss, and Ecosystem Function)

**Assignment**

Due Thursday
Forum 6A, 6B– Initial Posts
Due: Sunday
4 Peer Responses (two responses in 6A and two responses in 6B)

**Week 7:**

**Topic & CO**

**CO 1, 2, 3, 4**

This week we take a look at Paul Taylor and biocentrism

**Learning Objectives**

Compare and contrast the theories of biocentric and eco-centric ethics.
Evaluate the “wilderness ideal” and “wilderness myth”.
Assess the concept and claims of metaphysical holism.

**Readings**


Biocentrism and Paul Taylor are not mentioned in our Sustainability textbook. However, you may choose to
do your A post on the Garry Deweese video or . . .

Sustainability, your choice of topic or case study.

http://cnx.org/contents/F0Hv_Zza@43.5:HdWd2hN5@2/Foreword

Assignment

Due Thursday
Forum 7A, 7B– Initial Posts
Due: Sunday
4 Peer Responses (two responses in 7A and two responses in 7B)

Week 8:

Topic & CO

CO 1,3,5,6
We conclude this course with an examination of Ecofeminism, pluralist and pragmatic approaches, and the goal of sustainability.

Learning Objectives

Evaluate the feminist approach to environmental concerns.

Assess the appropriateness and usefulness of moral pluralism and environmental pragmatism.

Readings

Greta Gaard, Ecofeminism, Chapter 2: Linking Theory and Practice

Assignment

Due Thursday
Forum 8A, 8B– Initial Posts
Due: Sunday
4 Peer Responses (two to either of the 8A topics and two to either of the 8B topics).
Due Sunday
Journal of Primary Readings
Final Paper/Project

Evaluation

1. **Proposal**: You must first submit a project proposal and have it approved before writing your paper. Topic proposals should be submitted by the end of Week 5, along with a short educational video (most students find something on youtube). The proposal should be 300 – 500 words and be pasted into the submission window in the Assignment section. The proposals are graded and the instructor will work with the students to design the topic for the final paper/project.

2. **Final Paper/Project**: Papers should be between 1250-1500 words, 12 point font, double-spaced, and formatted in the MLA Style. This is about 6.5 pages. For your paper, you may use your previously written material (from this class) from your Forums A and B. You may use a case study from our textbook *Sustainability*, or other case studies from our Course Guide or other online resources. If you choose an established case study, you can summarize it with proper reference. You do not have to write your own case study, but you can focus on a particular event or topic or area of research, and write your own case study if you wish. You should apply one of the environmental ethical theories we have studied in this course to the topic. Papers can address either theoretical issues or practical
concerns. The paper will be evaluated on form as well as content. It should be clearly written, well
organized, and free of spelling and grammatical errors. Sources used in research must be included in
the bibliography. References must be supplied for all quotations and also for any idea, insights, or
viewpoints you incorporate from reading the work of others. *In-text citations require the page number
of the text or paragraph number of the website. The reader must be able to look up the exact place in
the text or website cited!* The paper is due at the end of Week 8.

Most students usually do a traditional paper for their final paper/project, but you can do your final project in a
different format if you wish... you could make a video or a PowerPoint presentation, which could include
audio narration and/or short video clips.

If you would like to do a PowerPoint presentation, your presentation should be approximately 20 - 30 minutes
long (if you were delivering it to a live audience), and it should include at least 12 - 15 slides, and it can be
longer. You should incorporate good speaker’s notes for each slide. If you are considering doing a
PowerPoint presentation, please keep in mind the "best practices" for PowerPoint presentations, and review
the 9 minute video below!

https://www.slidegenius.com/blog/top-10-best-powerpoint-design-practices/

Life After Death by Powerpoint 2010 by Don McMillan

http://youtu.be/KbSPPFYxx3o

*Please Note: I have added a Power Point presentation called Best Practices to the Supporting Materials of
the Assignment instructions so that you can see how to put together a good Power Point presentation!
Please check it out if you want to do a presentation!*

1. Journal of Primary Readings

See the section Journal of Primary Readings above. There should be 6 journal entries from the forums of the
course’s primary readings of about 200 words each. The final journal entry should be 300 - 500 words, so the
entire journal submitted to the Assignment section should be about 1500 - 1800 words (7.5 pages, double
spaced). This should be in MLA format, with a title page and double-spaced and 12 point font. However, it is
not a research paper so we can be flexible with the rest of the format. The following paragraph is repeated
from above.

At the end of the course, the student is to compile all of his/her journal entries into one MS Word document as
a complete Journal of Primary Readings for the course in this will be submitted under the Assignments
section. Therefore, it is recommended that students write their journal entries in MS Word as the course
proceeds, and copy and paste them into the weekly forums. At the end of the course, each student will review
their journal entries, add to and/or edit them as appropriate. Each student will also add one final journal entry
regarding the entire selection of primary readings and the course as a whole (300 - 500) words, and submit
their Journal of Primary Readings under the Assignments section as stated above. This last entry and final
revision of the Journal will be between each student and the Instructor (as it is an assignment) and students
are encouraged to be reflective and creative in their final journal entry.

Grading:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Grade %</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forums</td>
<td>67.00 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>4.47 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>Forum 1A</td>
<td>4.47 %</td>
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<td>Forum 1B</td>
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 Forum 4  4.47 %  
Forum 5  4.47 %  
Forum 6A  4.47 %  
Forum 6B  4.47 %  
Forum 7A  4.47 %  
Forum 7B  4.47 %  
Forum 8A  4.47 %  
Forum 8B  4.47 %  
Journal of Primary Readings  15.00 %  
Final Journal of Primary Readings  15.00 %  
Final Paper/Project Proposal  3.00 %  
Paper Proposal - Week 5  3.00 %  
Final Paper/Project  15.00 %  
Final Paper/Project  15.00 %  
Extra Credit  4.00 %  
NASA Quiz 1  1.00 %  
NASA Quiz 2  1.00 %  
NASA Quiz 3  1.00 %  
NASA Quiz 4  1.00 %  

Materials

**Book Title:** Respect for Nature: A Theory of Environmental Ethics - e-book available in the APUS Online Library  
**Author:** Paul Taylor  
**Publication Info:** Princeton University Press  
**ISBN:** 9780691150246

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**Book Title:** Ecofeminism - e-book available in the APUS Online Library  
**Author:** Greta Gaard  
**Publication Info:** Temple University Press  
**ISBN:** 9780877229896

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**Book Title:** The Ecology of Wisdom - e-book available in the APUS Online Library; hard copy not available from the APUS Bookstore, please try other sources.  
**Author:** Arne Naess  
**Publication Info:** ReadHowYouWant  
**ISBN:** 9781582435923
Primary Readings

Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac* – Chapter “The Land Ethic.”


Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation*; Chapter 1: All Animals Are Equal.


Greta Gaard, Chapter 2: *Ecofeminism*, Linking Theory & Practice

The following Chapter for Week 1 is available as a pdf file attached to the bottom of the Week 1 Forum A description.

Rolston, Environmental Ethics, Blackwell Publishing (16 pages).

Also, the following textbook is available online, as well as through the Course Guide in the online library.

*Sustainability: A Comprehensive Foundation*, edited by Theis and Thomkin,

http://cnx.org/contents/1741effd-9cda-4b2b-a91e-003e6f587263@43.4

There is a new online edition of the textbook but if you download the book, you will still get the older addition and the contents and section numbers are actually different. So, if you see some discrepancies when you’re trying to formulate your citations, that’s the reason for it! You can use either edition… The new online edition or the one that you download to your own computer. They will have different section numbers but don’t worry about the discrepancies.

You can click on the green Get This Book button on the upper right-hand side of the web page and
download the entire textbook to your computer!

PHIL320 E-BOOK INFORMATION

You have the following viewing options for the following course textbooks:

Greta Gaard, Ecofeminism

Arne Naess, The Ecology of Wisdom

Paul Taylor, Respect for Nature: A Theory of Environmental Ethics

For example:

1. You can use the URL link(s)* below;
2. Or, select the URL link(s)* from the Web Resources module in the navigation menu of your classroom, if available.
3. Or, use the links in the library’s online catalog. To find the book from the catalog:
   1. Select the ‘Books and e-Books’ link
   2. If you have not utilized Library e-books, please take a moment to read about the different formats and vendors of our e-books.
   3. When ready, select the ‘Online Book Catalog’ link
   4. Click Continue to advance to the Catalog search page
   5. Search by the book’s title and/or author information to find your e-book most effectively.
   6. Once you bring up the appropriate record, the links to each vendor e-book copy are displayed.
   7. Depending on your needs and the availability of the e-book, you may want to click between all of them to find the copy most suitable for you. Printing and downloading options will vary depending on vendor allowances.

*Each of the URLs gives you different ways to look at the book.

- **E-brary**—This approach helps maintain your own bookshelf, take notes, and highlight. You can download by chapter (60 pages max per visit) and some titles may be downloaded to adobe digital editions for 7-14 days.

   The Ecology of Wisdom:


   Respect for Nature: A Theory of Environmental Ethics:


- **Download or Online Reading: EBL**—You can read online, check-out the book to your computer for 1 or 3 days at a time and also print roughly 20% of the content.

   Ecofeminism:


If you encounter difficulties viewing the e-book, please visit the HELP/FAQs section of the Online Library. If you still have questions, please contact librarian@apus.edu for assistance.

**Please Note:** Stateside students will not be sent the hard copy version of this text. If you wish to purchase the text, you may do so through our recommended bookstore MBS Direct or the bookseller of your choice.

E-book Links for Leopold, Carson, and Singer!

Adobe Reader is required to view these files. If you do not have this software, please log onto [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com) to download the free reader.
You will need to log-in to each link with your student/faculty ID and password. You must be logged in to your campus page before you can access the links. Troubleshooting tips are available in the Online Library in the Course Materials & Bookstore section, and also in the HELP/FAQs section.


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Remember: you may need to right click and "open in a new window" in order to access the links to these course materials.


Course Guidelines

Citation and Reference Style

- Students will follow MLA format as the sole citation and reference style used in written assignments submitted as part of coursework to the Humanities Department. If you are not a Philosophy major and would prefer to use APA style, please communicate this with your instructor using the "messages" area in the course prior to submitting work.
- Please note that no formal citation style is graded on forum assignments in the School of Arts & Humanities—only attribution of sources (please see details regarding forum communication below).

Tutoring

- Tutor.com offers online homework help and learning resources by connecting students to certified tutors for one-on-one help. AMU and APU students are eligible for 10 free hours of tutoring provided by APUS. Tutors are available 24/7 unless otherwise noted. Tutor.com also has a SkillCenter Resource Library offering educational resources, worksheets, videos, websites and career help. Accessing these resources does not count against tutoring hours and is also available 24/7. Please visit the APUS Library and search for "Tutor" to create an account.

Late Assignments

School of Arts & Humanities Late Policy

Students are expected to submit classroom assignments by the posted due date and to complete the
course according to the published class schedule. As adults, students, and working professionals, I understand you must manage competing demands on your time. Should you need additional time to complete an assignment, please contact me before the due date so we can discuss the situation and determine an acceptable resolution.

Work posted or submitted after the assignment due date will be reduced by 10% of the potential total score possible for each day late up to a total of five days, including forum posts/replies, quizzes, and assignments. **Beginning on the sixth day late through the end of the course, late work, including forum posts/replies, quizzes, and assignments, will be accepted with a grade reduction of 50% of the potential total score earned.**

**Turn It In**

Assignments are automatically submitted to Turnitin.com within the course. Turnitin.com will analyze an assignment submission and report a similarity score. Your assignment submission is automatically processed through the assignments area of the course when you submit your work.

**Academic Dishonesty**

- Academic Dishonesty incorporates more than plagiarism, which is using the work of others without citation. Academic dishonesty includes any use of content purchased or retrieved from web services such as CourseHero.com or Scribd. Additionally, allowing your work to be placed on such web services is academic dishonesty, as it is enabling the dishonesty of others. The copy and pasting of content from any web page, without citation as a direct quote, is academic dishonesty. When in doubt, do not copy/paste, and always cite.

**Submission Guidelines**

- Some assignments may have very specific requirements for formatting (such as font, margins, etc) and submission file type (such as .docx, .pdf, etc). See the assignment instructions for details. In general, standard file types such as those associated with Microsoft Office are preferred, unless otherwise specified.
- It is the student’s responsibility to ensure the all submitted work can be accessed and opened by the instructor.

**Disclaimer Statement**

- Course content may vary from the outline to meet the needs of a particular group or class.

**Communicating on the Forum**

- Forums are the heart of the interaction in this course. The more engaged and lively the exchanges, the more interesting and fun the course will be. Only substantive comments will receive credit. Although there is a final posting day/time after which the instructor will grade and provide feedback, it is not sufficient to wait until the last day to contribute your comments/questions on the forum. The purpose of the forums is to actively participate in an on-going discussion about the assigned content.
- “Substantive” means comments that contribute something new and important to the discussion. Thus a message that simply says “I agree” is not substantive. A substantive comment contributes a new idea or perspective, a good follow-up question to a point made, offers a response to a question, provides an example or illustration of a key point, points out an inconsistency in an argument, etc.
- As a class, if we run into conflicting view points, we must respect each individual's own opinion. Hateful and hurtful comments towards other individuals, students, groups, peoples, and/or societies will not be tolerated.
- Students must post a response to the weekly forums prompt and post the required number of replies to other students – refer to the grading rubric and/or forum instructions for specific expectations on number of replies and word count requirements.
- The main response to the forum is due mid-week – refer to the grading rubric and/or forum instructions for specific expectations. Late main response posts to a forum may not be accepted without prior
instructor approval. *Replies must be posted in the week due and replies after the end of the each week may not be graded.*

### Quizzes and Exams

- Quizzes and exams may consist of true/false, multiple choice, and short essay questions. Each quiz/exam is accessible only once. Once a quiz/exam is accessed, you will not be able to access it again if you disconnect. Therefore, allocate time to complete your quiz. Weekly quizzes must be submitted by midnight Eastern Time, Day 7 of the assigned week. Late quizzes or exams will not be accepted without prior instructor approval.

### University Policies

**Student Handbook**

- **Drop/Withdrawal policy**
- **Extension Requests**
- **Academic Probation**
- **Appeals**
- **Disability Accommodations**

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