PHI 380: Environmental Ethics
University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point
Summer 2024 – Online
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Aldo Leopold's "shack" from *A Sand County Almanac*

Course Description

This course will explore a variety of possible ethical relationships humans have to the natural world. For example, should we be concerned about the health of the environment out of concern for human well-being or for the sake of nature itself? Do we have ethical commitments to species, particular animals, organisms, or ecosystems? The goal of this course is to familiarize students with many of the major approaches to environmental ethics along with exploring a few particularly interesting environmental issues. Students will appreciate and understand the complexity and intricacy of the arguments involved in adopting one approach or position over another.

Course Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to:

- explain the broad contours of a variety of ethical theories and understand some ethical dimensions of environmental issues. (CLO1)
- identify the biographical dimensions of Aldo Leopold and explain his "land ethic." (CLO2)
- identify the philosophical underpinning of Naess's Deep Ecology. (CLO3)
- explain the philosophical underpinning of biocentrism. (CL04)
- explain the utilitarian argument for animal ethics and identify the tension that concerns about animals sometimes have with environmental concerns. (CLO5)
- explain the contested meaning of nature or wilderness and relate this to environmental concerns. (CLO6)
- identify how climate change presents problematic moral questions on a individual and global scale. (CLO7)
- explain how agricultural systems contribute to environmental problems and possible ways to address them. (CLO8)

Required Texts:
1. All readings will be available on Canvas.

Course Technology Requirements

Minimum recommended computer and internet configurations for online courses can be found here.

You will also need access to the following tools to participate in this course.
- webcam
- microphone
- printer
- a stable internet connection (don't rely on cellular)

Technical Assistance

If you need technical assistance at any time during the course or to report a problem with Canvas you can: ·
  - Visit with a Student Technology Tutor:
    https://www3.uwsp.edu/tlc/Pages/default.aspx
  - Seek assistance from the IT Service Desk (Formerly HELP Desk)
  - IT Service Desk Phone: 715-346-4357 (HELP)

Course Prerequisites: None

Expected Student Response Times

1. I typically check my email several times a day, so I will attempt to respond to your emails within 24 hours (and often much sooner). If you do not receive a response within 24 hours, please resend your email.
2. If you have a general question, you can post it to the Muddiest Forum on the course homepage. This is a general venue where students can respond to general questions (and I can respond as well).
3. I will attempt to respond to discussion posts within 48 hours.
4. For papers, I will try to respond with comments and grades within 72 hours.

Graded assignments will include:

Assignment	Percentage Each	Percentage Total	Points Each
12 Quizzes (Best 10 count)	2%	20%	10
6 Discussions (Best 5 count)	4%	20%	20
3 Short Essays	6.33%	20%	100
3 Exams	13.33%	40%	100

Quizzes: Quizzes must be completed in Canvas by the due date/time listed on the schedule. There will be (12) quizzes, but only the best (10) will count. As a result of this policy, quizzes cannot be made-up for any reason (including sickness, etc.).

Discussions: Discussion threads will be completed on Canvas. You will only be able to comment and view existing threads after posting your initial thread. Half of your points (10) will be given to starting a discussion thread, and half of your points (10)will be given to extending an existing discussion thread.

Short Essays: Short essays will be 500-word essays summarizing a reading or responding to a particular question. Essay prompts will be posted on Canvas. Your essays will be checked for "originality" via "Turnitin.com." Details and suggestions on writing essays, as well as grading criteria, are included in the paper prompts.

Exams: There will be three exams. Exams consist of multiple-choice and true/false questions. Exams are not cumulative. Exam dates are listed on the schedule.

Final grades will be determined on the following scale:

Grade	Percentage
A	100-93
A-	<93-90
B+	<90-87
B	<87-83
B-	<83-80
C+	<80-77
C	<77-73
C-	<73-70
D+	<70-67
D	<67-60
F	<60

Late Policy: Quizzes must be completed by the time that they are do (there are no make-up opportunities even for excused absences. Short assignments will be docked 10% off per class late. Exams cannot be made-up without a university approved absence notification (e.g. a note from a health care provider explaining why the student couldn't be there). Furthermore, you need to contact me immediately in order to reschedule the exam as early as possible. If this condition is not met, you may not be able to re-take the exam.

Academic Honesty: If you commit any acts of academic dishonesty (such as plagiarism on written work or cheating on an exam) you will earn a zero for that work (and possibly other disciplinary actions). Please refer to the Student Academic Standards and Disciplinary Procedures for more information (https://www3.uwsp.edu/dos/Documents/AcademicIntegrity.pdf).

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Statement: The ADA is a federal law requiring educational institutions to provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information about UWSP's policies, see: http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/ADA/rightsADAPolicyInfo.pdf.

If you require *classroom and/or exam accommodations*, please register with the **Disability and Assistive Technology Center** and then contact me at the beginning of the course. For more information, please visit the Disability Center's office, located at 604 LRC or their webpage at: http://www.uwsp.edu/disability/Pages/default.aspx.

Conduct/Netiquette
When you participate in an online discussion, or any part of an online course for that matter, you should behave the same way you would in any face-to-face course or setting.

Basic Guidelines

1. Be polite
2. Be respectful
3. If you are going to disagree with somebody, do it in a professional and adult manner.
4. Fully explain your thoughts and ideas
5. Express yourself
6. Complete your posts several days before the due date so others have time to respond.

Netiquette

Netiquette is a set of rules for behaving properly online. Your instructor and fellow students wish to foster a safe online learning environment. All opinions and experiences, no matter how different or controversial they may be perceived, must be respected in the tolerant spirit of academic discourse. You are encouraged to comment, question, or critique an idea but you are not to attack an individual. Working as a community of learners, we can build a polite and respectful course community.

The following netiquette tips will enhance the learning experience for everyone in the course:

- Do not dominate any discussion.
- Give other students the opportunity to join in the discussion.
- Do not use offensive language. Present ideas appropriately.
- Be cautious in using Internet language. For example, do not capitalize all letters since this suggests shouting.
- Popular emoticons such as ☺ or / can be helpful to convey your tone but do not overdo or overuse them.
- Avoid using vernacular and/or slang language. This could possibly lead to misinterpretation.
- Never make fun of someone's ability to read or write.
- Share tips with other students.
- Keep an "open-mind" and be willing to express even your minority opinion. Minority opinions have to be respected.
- Think and edit before you push the "Send" button.
- Do not hesitate to ask for feedback.
- Using humor is acceptable.

Adapted from:
Mintu-Wimsatt, A., Kernek, C., & Lozada, H. R. (2010). *Netiquette: Make it part of your syllabus.* Journal of Online Learning and Teaching, 6(1). Retrieved from http://jolt.merlot.org/vol6no1/mintu-wimsatt_0310.htm
Shea, V. (1994). Netiquette. Albion.com: http://www.albion.com/netiquette/book/.

Schedule

Week	Days and Tasks	Readings
Week1 Introduction to Ethics	T- Readings W – Discussion/Quiz	Rachels: A Brief Introduction to Ethics Palmer: Contested Frameworks in Environmental Ethics
Leopold's Land Ethic	R – Cutoff for Discussion Readings F – Quiz S – Paper Due	Film: Green Fire Leopold: Wisconsin Leopold: The Land Ethic
Week 2 Deep Ecology	M- Reading T – Discussion/Quiz W – Cutoff for Discussion	Naess: Deep Ecology De Cruz: Why Seek Self-Realization
Biocentrism	R – Reading F – Quiz S – **Exam**	Taylor: Respect for Nature Varner: Biocentric Individualism
Week 3 Animal Ethics	M – Readings T – Quiz/Discussion W – Cutoff for Discussion	Singer: A Utilitarian Defense of Animal Liberation Rolston: Higher Animals
Ethics of Hunting and Zoos	R – Readings F – Quiz S – Paper Due	Varner: Can Animal Rights Activists Be Environmentalists? Jamieson: Against Zoos
Week 4 Welfare Centered Conservation	M – Readings T – Quiz/Discussion W – Cutoff for Discussion	Marris: Compassionate Conservation Lean: Invasive Species Denialists
Wilderness (or lack thereof)	R – Readings F – Quiz S – **Exam**	Cronon: The Trouble with Wilderness Marris: Designer Ecosystems Marris: Conservation Everywhere
Week 5 Climate Change	M – Readings/Video T – Quiz/Discussion W – Cutoff for Discussion	Oreskes: Scientific Consensus on Climate Change Shue: Global Environment and International Inequality
Individual vs. Collective Moral Duties	R – Readings F – Quiz S – Paper Due	Sinnott-Armstrong: It's Not My Fault Hourdaquin: Climate, Collective Action, and Moral Obligations
Week 6 Food Ethics	M - Readings T – Quiz/Discussion W – Cutoff for Discussion	Film: Food Inc. Pollan: The Farm and The Feedlot Laudan: A Plea for Culinary Modernism Mann: How to Feed the New Global Middle Class
	R – Holiday F – Quiz/**Exam**	