

University of California, Davis
Department of Philosophy
PROBLEMS IN NORMATIVE ETHICS
PHI 115, Winter 2007
115 Wellman, MWF 1:10-2 PM

Contact Information

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Required Texts

Environmental Ethics: Concepts, Policy, Theory, edited by Joseph Desjardins (**EE**)
Case Studies in Environmental Ethics, by Patrick G. Derr and Edward M. McNamara (**CSEE**)
Readings available on course website on MyUCDavis (**web**)

Course Description

Many people are concerned about a variety of environmental issues, from pollution to global warming to the extinction of species. They say that we “should” do something about those issues. But what ethical assumptions underlie that “should”? Is it a concern for human well-being? For animals? For all life? Or, even more broadly, for ecosystems? In other words, which things count morally? The answers matter not only because we need to justify our actions, but because different answers may imply different courses of action. In this class, we will explore the various answers that can and have been given to this question, and see how well these answers hold up when applied to contemporary environmental case studies.

The goals of this course are: 1) to introduce you to some of the major issues within environmental ethics; 2) to encourage you to critically examine your own beliefs as well as the beliefs of others; 3) to provide the opportunity to discuss, both in class and in a more sustained written form, your ideas and arguments concerning important issues in environmental ethics.

Class Policies and Course Requirements

If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodations, or if you would need assistance in the event of an emergency evacuation, please contact me as soon as possible.

You are responsible for *all* material covered in class, including announcements, discussions, etc. – whether you are in class or not. **Take notes on discussions as well as lecture.** Announcements are usually made at the beginning of class, so *please be on time*, and if you must be late or leave early, please do so quietly.

Since we will be discussing the readings in class, **you should bring the reading for the day to each class.** Please turn off pagers & cell phones. Please do not bring guests (friends, children, etc.) without my permission. Eating in class is ok if it is done quietly and unobtrusively.

Your grade will be based on the following (all dates subject to change):

- 10%** - Comments/questions on each day’s readings, **posted to the Disc. Board before class**, and in-class small group discussion projects. These are graded CR/NC. **Note:** 10%=full letter grade!
- 35%** - Paper #1: 5-7 page analysis of a class reading, due at the beginning of class on **Fri, Feb 2**
- 35%** - Paper #2: 5-7 page analysis of a different class reading, due at the beginning of class on **Wed, Feb 28**
- 20%** - Take-home final exam due on **Mon, Mar 19**

You must complete the two papers and the final in order to pass the class. In the case of a borderline grade, class participation will be given serious consideration.

Important note on plagiarism/cheating:

It is a violation of the Code of Academic Conduct to turn in work that is not your own. This includes: turning in the work of another student with your name on it, buying/copying a paper off the Internet, using the words *or* ideas of others without proper quotation and citation. In accordance with the Regulation 550 of the Davis Division of the Academic Senate, **a grade of "0" will be assigned to examinations or assignments on which cheating, plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty is admitted or determined to have occurred by proper adjudication.** If you have trouble with the class material or have personal issues that prevent you from doing your work, come talk to me.

Tentative Schedule - All dates and readings are subject to change.

EE = *Environmental Ethics: Concepts, Policy, Theory*

CSEE = *Case Studies in Environmental Ethics*

web = Philosophy of Normative Ethics Website

Date	Topic	Readings
Jan 3	Introduction	Syllabus
Jan 5	Environmental Crisis?	EE: Simon, pp. 60-65 <i>or</i> web: Simon
Jan 8	Environmental Crisis?	web: McKibben
Jan 10	Utilitarian Ethics	EE: DesJardins, pp. 12-17, CSEE: Case 27
Jan 12	Deontological (Kantian) Ethics	EE: DesJardins, pp. 17-24, CSEE: Case 35
Jan 15	No class - MLK Day	None
Jan 17	Ethical theory	None - Discussion project
Jan 19	Aesthetic values	EE: Muir, pp. 138-144, CSEE: Case 14
Jan 22	Aesthetic values	EE: Krieger, pp. 145-156
Jan 24	Aesthetic values	EE: Eliot, pp. 156-164, CSEE: Case 26
Jan 26	Pollution	EE: Misch, pp. 259-274, CSEE: Case 18
Jan 29	Pollution	EE: Baxter, pp. 274-278, CSEE: Case 15
Jan 31	Anthropocentrism	None - Discussion Project
Feb 2	Moral Status of Animals	EE: Singer, pp. 187-195, CSEE: Case 3
Feb 5	Moral Status of Animals	EE: Regan, pp. 196-202, CSEE: Case 19
Feb 7	Moral Status of Animals	EE: Stephens, pp. 288-301
Feb 9	Moral Status of Animals	EE: Cohen, pp. 301-307, CSEE: Case 2
Feb 12	Moral Status of Animals	None - Discussion Project
Feb 14	Ecocentrism	EE: Leopold, pp. 218-227, CSEE: Case 23
Feb 16	Ecocentrism	EE: Calicott, pp. 227-238, CSEE: Case 24
Feb 19	No class - President's Day	None
Feb 21	Ecocentrism	EE: Worster, pp. 246-256, CSEE: Case 26
Feb 23	Animal Eth. & Env. Ethics?	EE: Sagoff, pp. 317-322, CSEE: Case 5
Feb 26	Ecocentrism	None - Discussion Project
Feb 28	Deep Ecology	EE: Devall & Sessions, pp. 524-530, CSEE: Case 10
Mar 2	Deep Ecology	TBD
Mar 5	Concerns about Holism	EE: Marietta, pp. 238-246, CSEE: Case 16
Mar 7	Social Ecology	EE: Bookchin, pp. 531-540, CSEE: Case 1
Mar 9	Third World Critique	EE: Guha, pp. 589-595 , CSEE: Case 4
Mar 12	Holism, Deep Ecology & Alternatives	None - Discussion Project
Mar 14	Political Theory & Environment	EE: Mills, pp. 562-572