

# **PHIL 148 Philosophy and the Environment**

Syllabus  
Winter 2014  
MWF 1:00-2:00 pm  
Warren Lecture Hall  
Room 2111

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Office Hours: Mon & Wed. 2:30-3:30 pm

## **Overview**

This class investigates current environmental issues through the prism of philosophy—primarily ethics, political philosophy, the philosophy of biology and the philosophy of economics. The first half of the class addresses philosophical issues pertaining to animals. What is the moral significance of species membership? What principles of interpretation should govern our investigations of other species' abilities? Is it credible to think any nonhuman species make moral judgements? And how should we conceive the notion of species itself? The second half of the class looks beyond animals to the environment more broadly. We will briefly examine the debate over whether non-sentient life possesses inherent moral value before investigating three questions pertaining to anthropogenic climate change. Do developed countries have a special obligation to pay for the costs of preventing it? What is the correct discounting rate, if any, to apply to the future costs of climate change? Finally, do moral obligations to future generations entail an obligation to prevent global warming? The class is designed to be accessible to students with minimal background in philosophy .

## **Assessment**

Assessment for the class will consist of:

A weekly online quiz about the class readings worth 10 percent of the final mark, due each week five minutes before our first class (normally Mondays at 12:55 pm)

A short essay (1,000 words) worth 15 percent of the final mark, due Tues. Jan. 28

A major essay (2000 words) worth 25 percent of the final mark, due Tues. Feb. 25

An exam worth 40 percent of the final mark

Class attendance and participation worth 10 percent of the final mark

## **Reading Quizzes**

Each week a quiz will be available on TED containing four multiple choice

questions about that week's readings. Each weekly quiz will be worth 1.4% of the final class grade. Students who correctly answer at least three of the four questions will receive full marks for that week. Students who correctly answer less than three questions will receive a mark of zero for that week. Students are expected to complete the quiz for seven of the ten weeks during which it will be available (7 X 1.4 = 10% of the final class grade). While TED will be configured to permit taking the quiz more than seven times, only the first seven attempts will count toward a mark.

## **Readings and Schedule**

All of the required readings will be available on TED.

Week of January Six: Anti-speciesist Ethics

Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation: Second Edition*. (New York: New York Review of Books, 1990), pp. 1-24.

Jeff McMahan, *The Ethics of Killing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 66-86, 189-203.

Week of January 13: Human Exceptionalism

Peter Carruthers, *The Animals Issue* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 35-46, 98-121.

Luc Ferry, *The New Ecological Order*, Carol Volk, trans. (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1995), pp. 91-107.

Optional extra reading: Carruthers, pp. 146-69.

Optional extra reading: Boria Sax, *Animals in The Third Reich: Pets, Scapegoats and the Holocaust* (New York, Continuum, 2000), pp. 110-23.

Week of January 20: Understanding Animals

Simon Fitzpatrick, "Doing Away with Morgan's Canon." *Mind & Language* 23 (2008): 224-246.

Week of January 27: Nonhuman Morality

Sarah Brosnan and Frans De Waal. "Monkeys Reject Unequal Pay." *Nature* 425 (2003): 297-299.

Sarah Brosnan, "Nonhuman Species' Reactions to Inequity and Their Implications for Fairness." *Social Justice Research* 19 (2006): 153-185.

**Tuesday January 28: Short Essay Due 5:00 pm**

### Week of February 3: The Species Problem

Richard Richards, *The Species Problem: A Philosophical Analysis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp 1-16, 145-77.

Optional extra reading: Michael Ghiselin, "A Radical Solution to the Species Problem." *Systematic Biology* 23.4 (1974): 536-544.

### Week of February 10: Intrinsic Value

Holmes Rolston III, "Respect for Life: Counting what Singer Finds of no Account," in *Singer and His Critics*. Dale Jamieson, ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), pp. 247-68.

Holmes Rolston III, "Duties to Endangered Species" *BioScience* 35 (1985) pp. 18-26.

### Week of February 17: Beyond Intrinsic Value

Peter Singer, *Practical Ethics: Third Edition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 238-55.

### Week of February 24: Future Generations and Non-identity

Bryan Norton, "Environmental Ethics and the Rights of Future Generations," *Environmental Ethics* 4 (1982), pp. 321-37.

Derek Parfit, "Overpopulation and the Quality of Life," in *Applied Ethics*, Peter Singer ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986) pp. 145-64.

### **Major Essay Due Tues. Feb 25 5:00 pm**

### Week of March 3: Climate Change and Discounting

William Nordhaus. *A Question of Balance: Weighing the Options on Global Warming Policies* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2008) Extracts from Chapter 9.

John Broome. *Counting the Cost of Global Warming* (Cambridge: White Horse Press, 1992). Extracts from Chapters 2 and 3.

### Week of March 10: Climate Change and Moral Responsibility

Peter Singer, *Practical Ethics: Third Edition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 216-38.

Stephen Gardiner, "The Real Tragedy of the Commons." *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 30 (2001): 387-416.

**Week of March. 17-21: Final exam**

## **General Information**

### *Office Hours*

I will be keeping both normal and electronic office hours between 2:30-3:30 pm on Mondays and Wednesdays. You are welcome to drop by in person or, if you prefer, contacting me via Skype. Just drop me an email so I know to go on Skype, where my ID is andy\_lamey. I am also available by appointment outside my office hours. I am always happy to discuss any aspect of this course with you.

### *Email Policy*

I will be happy to reply to emails sent from UCSD email addresses. I do not reply to emails from non-UCSD addresses.

Please note that there are three subjects I do not discuss by email, even if they are sent from a UCSD account. These are:

- a) Requests for information about the exam that arrive in the 24-hour period immediately preceding the exam.
- b) Requests for the release of exam results by email.
- c) Requests to adjust your final class grade. If you have an issue with your grade please make an appointment to discuss it during my office hour next quarter.

### *Submission*

Both essays in this class will be submitted electronically. Students are not required to submit a hard copy.

### *Extensions*

I am happy to grant extensions of up to 48 hours without requiring a medical certificate or other documentation. In order to grant such an extension I need to receive your request before noon on the day the assessment in question is due (email is fine). Requests received after noon on the due date will require documentation, as will requests for extensions longer than 48 hours. Please note that if you receive an extension your paper may be graded and returned a few days after those that were completed on time.

### *Late Work*

For all short assignments (1,000 words or less), if your work is submitted late

without an extension, your mark will be capped at a bare pass (60%). You will not receive comments on your work. Short assignments submitted more than 7 days late without an extension cannot be accepted at all without a medical certificate or similar documentation.

For all assignments of 1,000 words or more handed in after the due date and without an extension, a five percent penalty applies for the first day of the missed deadline. After that, a subsequent penalty of two percent per day will be applied for the next thirteen calendar days after the due date (including Saturdays and Sundays). No assignment can be accepted after more than fourteen calendar days except in exceptional circumstances and in consultation with your instructor. Assignments that are handed in late and without extension will be graded and returned after those that were completed on time and will not receive comments.

### *Feedback*

Feedback on written work may take the form of written comments or oral comments from the instructor in a recorded video.

### *Accommodation for Disability*

Students requesting accommodations for this course due to a disability must provide a current Authorization for Accommodation (AFA) letter issued by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) which is located in University Center 202 behind Center Hall. Students are required to present their AFA letters to Faculty (please make arrangements to contact me privately) and to the OSD Liaison in the department in advance so that accommodations may be arranged. Contact the OSD for further information:

858.534.4382 (phone)    [osd@ucsd.edu](mailto:osd@ucsd.edu)(email)    <http://disabilities.ucsd.edu> (web)

### *Academic Integrity*

Integrity of scholarship is essential for an academic community. The University expects that both faculty and students will honor this principle and in so doing protect the validity of University intellectual work. For students, this means that all academic work will be done by the individual to whom it is assigned, without unauthorized aid of any kind. More information about UCSD's policy on academic integrity is available at <http://senate.ucsd.edu/manual/appendices/appendix2.pdf>.

### *Lecture Slides*

Lecture slides will be made available on TED.

### *Technology in the Classroom*

Please note that until further notice, laptops and tablets are not permitted in

class.

*Waitlist*

Unenrolled students will be admitted to this class according to their place on the waitlist.