



**PHI 380: Environmental Philosophy
Fall 2005**

MWF 10:00-10:50 am

Office Hours:

MWF 11-11:50am, Tues 10-11:30am, other times by arrangement.

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Orientation

Philosophical work relating to the environment has expanded to encompass much that lies beyond the original concerns of environmental ethics and animal rights. The course in Environmental Philosophy will survey green philosophy as it has developed during the past four decades in the English-speaking world.

On the historical side, the course will illustrate ways that various styles of philosophical inquiry can help illuminate (or, in some unfortunate cases, obscure) complex social problems. Among the significant approaches to be examined are mainstream ethics and social/political philosophy, pragmatism, continental philosophy, and those based upon religious traditions.

On the contemporary side, students will become familiar with directions of philosophical inquiry that have recently emerged as a result of attention to environmental issues. Such emergent directions include the re-examination of established ethical assumptions in light of environmental considerations, the revitalization of social and political theory as a result of grassroots environmental concerns, the critique of key assumptions of Enlightenment economic theory, development of strong conceptual links between environmentalism and feminism, and renewed attention to the role of science in public policy.

Texts

Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 6th ed. Modern Language Association, 2003. Recommended.

Light, Andrew and Eric Katz, eds. *Environmental Pragmatism*. Routledge, 1996. Required.

Parker, Kelly. PHI 495 Course Pack. Dollar Bill Copying, 2005. Required.

Zimmerman, Michael E., et al. *Environmental Philosophy: From Animal Rights to Radical Ecology*, 4th ed. Prentice Hall, 2004.

Course Requirements

Ten précis of assigned readings. 1-2 pages each. *10 x 5% each = 50%*

One in-class presentation on an assigned reading. *15%*

Research proposal and annotated bibliography. *10%*

Research paper. 3500 words (approx. 12-15 pages). *25%*

Attendance

Your regular attendance and participation is expected by the instructor and the other seminar members. You are expected to be here on time, prepared to discuss the assigned readings. I do not distinguish between "excused" and "unexcused" absences. The equivalent of one week's absences will be tolerated without penalty. Each absence beyond that is the basis for a penalty, to be deducted from your final grade.

3 class periods missed - no penalty

4-6 class periods missed - 3% deduction from semester grade for each class

More than 6 classes missed - No Credit (F)

Note on inclement weather: GVSU very rarely cancels class or closes due to weather. You should assume that class will be held unless you hear otherwise from TV, radio, or the GVSU website. You should of course use common sense in deciding whether to travel to Allendale. I generally do not penalize absences if the schools or other public institutions are closed in the area from which you are traveling, even though class is being held.

Grade Definitions

- A** Outstanding. Work and class participation display thorough mastery of material and genuine engagement with the subject-matter. Writing is exceptionally good. This grade is reserved for those students who attain the highest levels of excellence in thought and scholarship.
- B** Good. Work and class participation display accurate understanding of material. Writing is clear and free of mechanical errors.
- C** Fair. Work and class participation display basic grasp of material, though occasionally with significant misunderstandings or inaccuracies. Writing is acceptable.
- D** Marginal. Work and class participation display a grasp of the material adequate for credit, but the quality of work indicates lack of effort or aptitude. Writing is inadequate for college level work.
- F** Unacceptable. Excessive absences, assignments not completed, or assignments unworthy of credit. Cheating or plagiarism will earn an automatic F for the assignment and/or the course.

Note: Papers encumbered by excessive mechanical, grammatical, or other basic writing errors will not earn a grade higher than "D," whatever other merits the work may have.

Guidelines for Written Work

- ◆ You are strongly encouraged to keep a private journal throughout the semester. Carry the journal with you at all times to provide the space for reading notes, brainstorming, rough drafts of works in progress, and the results of fruitful informal conversations. Such material is the stuff out of which outstanding formal coursework is made.

- ◆ *The Philosopher's Index* is available in the Zumberge Library Reference section or online through the Library's database collection. *PI* provides the standard starting point for finding further information about contemporary philosophy.
- ◆ Written work should be typed, double-spaced, and documented following established scholarly form. The *MLA Handbook* (see list of Texts) is the Philosophy Department's preferred style guide.

Structure of the Course

- I. Origins: The Conservation and Wildlife Management Movements and “The Land Ethic”
(Aug 29—Sept 12)
Guest Speaker Dellas Henke on Sept. 7
- II. The Short Contentious History of Environmental Philosophy
(Sept 14—16)
- III. The Call for “A New, an Environmental Ethic”
(Sept 19—28)
Guest speaker Dale Jamieson on Sept. 23
- IV. The Question of Animal Rights and the Great Divide
(Sept 30—Oct 5)
- V. Making Philosophy Relevant: Environmental Pragmatism
(Oct 7—17)
- VI. The Ecofeminist Insight
(Oct 19—31)
- VII. Continental Influences: Phenomenology and the Environment
(Nov 2—14)
- VIII. Social Implications: Political Ecology, Science, and Economics
(Nov 16—Dec 2)
- IX. Catchup/Wrapup Week
(Dec 5—9)

Important Dates

Drop (100% Tuition Refund)	Fri 9/2, 5pm	First <i>Précis</i> Due	8/31
Labor Day Recess	9/4—9/6	Research Proposal Due	10/26
Drop (75% Tuition Refund)	Fri 9/23, 5pm	Research Paper Due	11/30
Withdrawal Deadline	Fri 10/21, 5pm		
Thanksgiving Break	Nov 23-25		