

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
PHL 273H1F: ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS
Fall 2013

Instructor: Professor Ingrid Leman Stefanovic
Time/Place: Mondays and Wednesdays, 2-3:30, Brennan Hall 200, St. Michael's College.
Office Hours: Wednesdays, 4-5, or by appointment, in Jackman Humanities Building, Room 428.
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For all other enquiries, please see Professor Stefanovic personally or contact your teaching assistant, whose contact information will be announced in class.

“At the beginning of the twenty-first century, it is fair to say that human beings face environmental challenges unprecedented in the history of this planet...The tendency in our culture is to treat such issues as simply scientific, technological or political problems. But they are much more than that... Environmental problems raise fundamental questions of ethics and philosophy.”

-Joseph R. DesJardins, *Environmental Ethics* (2013)

This course aims to introduce the student to recent developments in the field of environmental philosophy. What are some of the judgments and attitudes that drive environmental decision making? What kinds of values support the suburbanite's dependency upon the automobile? – the hiker's view of wilderness preservation? – the food industry's perception of the meaning of animal rights or biotechnology? What moral issues arise when we deal with conflicting demands between environmental and economic needs? How have environmental pressures contributed to a re-fashioning of the discipline of ethics itself? These and related issues will be addressed in lecture and group discussion.

Required Texts:

- *Environmental Ethics for Canadians*, by Byron Williston, (Oxford University Press, 2012.) Available at the University of Toronto Bookstores.

Optional, Supplementary Suggested Readings: (Books available in the library.)

- Joseph R. Des Jardins, *Environmental Ethics: An Introduction to Environmental Philosophy*, (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2000.) A readable survey of the field.
- Peter S. Wenz, *Environmental Ethics Today*, (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.) An earlier text used in this course.
- *Environmental Ethics: Readings in Theory and Application*, Louis P. Pojman, ed., (Boston: Jones and Bartlett Publishers, 2012.)
- *Environmental Ethics: Convergence and Divergence*, Susan J. Armstrong and Richard G. Botzler, ed., New York: McGraw-Hill Inc., 1993.)
- Ingrid Leman Stefanovic, *Safeguarding Our Common Future: Rethinking Sustainable Development*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000.)
- Gordon Graham, *Theories of Ethics: An Introduction to Moral Philosophy*, (Routledge, 2010.)

Assignments:

- Participation and Attendance: 10%
- Short, in-class and/or homework assignments: 10%
- Research Essay (2000-2500 words):
 - Thesis Statement and Annotated Bibliography: 20%. **Due October 16, 2013.**
 - Final Submission: 30%. **Due November 20, 2013.**
- Final In-Class Test: 30%.

For more information, including weekly overheads, please see course website on Blackboard. (See <http://portal.utoronto.ca/> and log into Blackboard, using your utor id and password.)

For information about academic integrity, please see www.artsci.utoronto.ca/osai/students.

Description of Assignments:

Participation: 10%

Each week for ten weeks, an attendance sheet will be circulated for you to sign at the beginning of class. Each week of attendance earns you 1% for a total of 10% of this grade. If you are absent from class for medical reasons, you are required to submit a proper medical certificate in order not to lose marks. Latecomers who have not signed the attendance sheet will not receive a mark. Anyone caught indicating attendance for an absent friend will be charged with cheating and will be subject to the same consequences as other plagiarism cases.

Short, in-class and/or homework assignments: 10%

You will get time in some classes (usually about 20 minutes) to write up one page of your own reflections on an assigned question that is based upon the lectures. All such assignments will be submitted at the end of the class in hard copy, or on Blackboard within a limited time frame following the class.

Arbitrarily, teaching assistants will mark *only one* of your weekly submissions, on a week of their personal choice. These assignments will be returned no earlier than the last day of class and grades for this assignment will only be registered at the end of the course. *If you are absent from any class, you must submit a medical certificate to your teaching assistant; otherwise, you will receive 0% for this assignment, even if you have submitted assignments in other weeks.*

Grades will be assigned as follows:

- 9-10 = Exceptional. Well argued; clear; legible handwriting; original insights of publishable quality.
- 8 = Excellent. Well argued; clear; legible handwriting; original insights for a second year class.
- 7 = Good. Well argued; clear; legible handwriting; summarizes a point of view, although does not anticipate objections or answer to them; grammar may be a problem.
- 6 = Acceptable. Satisfies minimal requirements but has problems relating to justifying argument; clarity; may be illegible; grammar is a problem.
- 5 = Pass. Some serious problems in explaining or justifying your position; unclear; illegible; but an effort is made to try to express your thoughts for the purposes of the assignment.
- 4 = Fail. A submission is made but is entirely illegible and does not satisfy requirements.
- 0 = No submissions made or available for marking. (!)

Research Essay: 50% (20% + 30%)

You will receive a list of suggested topics for a research paper that forms a principal component of this course. Part of preparing the paper includes submission of a "thesis statement", outline and annotated bibliography, worth 20% of your course grade. For this initial assignment, you will be required to submit a 250-300 word introduction to your research topic that includes a clear thesis statement that you intend to advance in your research paper. You will need to explain the main reason for writing the paper, and how you intend to support your primary thesis. In addition, you will be asked to include a one-page outline of your argument, as well as an annotated bibliography of four to five works, indicating in 3-4 sentences (per reading) why each reading will be relevant for your research project. The bibliography can consist of either individual articles or books. The actual research paper will be worth 30% of your final grade. More detailed instructions will follow.

Final In-Class Test: 30%

A final test (worth 20%) in short answer and/or multiple choice format, will be conducted on the last class.