



REL 6183: ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS
Spring 2016, Section 009A

Instructor: Anna Peterson

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Class Schedule: Tues. 4th period, Thurs. 4th-5th periods, Matherly 108

Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:45-2:45 and by appointment

DESCRIPTION

This course is a core seminar required for the Religion and Nature concentration within the Ph.D. program in the Department of Religion. It is also open to graduate students from other subfields in religion and from other departments, as long as they have some background in environmental studies, environmental philosophy, or religion and nature.

Readings and discussions will explore classic and contemporary theoretical approaches and models in environmental ethics, as well as the possibilities of teaching, applying, and critiquing these approaches. Some of the approaches and topics covered will include land ethics, theistic and non-theistic religious ethics, postmodernist critiques, evolutionary and ecological theory, ecofeminism, social ecology, bioregionalism, and others. Special attention

will be paid to thinkers and debates within the discipline of religious studies, although readings will also come from philosophy, anthropology, environmental studies, education, ecology, and related fields.

Throughout the class, we will pay attention not only to theoretical issues but also to the real-world implications and applications of ethical theories. Thus we will explore areas such as environmental education, ecological restoration, and sustainable resource consumption, in addition to philosophically-oriented topics and readings. We will also discuss the process of teaching environmental ethics, at both university and secondary levels, in both practical and theoretical dimensions.

POLICIES, RULES, AND RESOURCES

1. *Attendance and reading:* This is a graduate seminar. I expect you to attend all meetings of the class, barring extraordinary circumstances, and to arrive on time and prepared to discuss the reading at each and every class meeting.
2. *Handing in Assignments:* Place all papers in my mailbox in the Religion Department, 107 Anderson Hall. DO NOT slip them under the door or leave them on the door of my office, the main department office, or the teaching assistant's office. Please also keep a dated electronic copy of all your papers.
3. *Late or Make-Up Assignments:* You may receive an extension on an assignment only in extraordinary circumstances *and* with prior approval from the instructor. If an extension is not granted, the assignment will be marked down ½ grade (e.g., from B+ to B) for each day late.
4. *Completion of All Assignments:* You must complete all written and oral assignments and fulfill the requirement for class participation in order to pass the course. I will not average a grade that is missing for any assignment or requirement.
5. *Common Courtesy:* Cell phones and other electronic devices must be turned off during class. Students who receive or make calls during class will be asked to leave. You may take notes on a laptop computer or other device, although I may ask you to turn off the computer.
6. *Honor Code:* On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The university specifically prohibits cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation, bribery, conspiracy, and fabrication. For more information about the definition of these terms and other aspects of the Honesty Guidelines, see <http://www.chem.ufl.edu/~itl/honor.html>. Any student demonstrated to have cheated, plagiarized, or otherwise violated the Honor Code in any assignment for this course will fail the course. In addition, violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines shall result in judicial action and the sanctions listed in paragraph XI of the Student Conduct Code.
7. *Accommodation for Disabilities:* Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide

documentation to the student, who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

8. *Counseling Resources* available on campus for students:

- a. University Counseling Center, 301 Peabody Hall, 392-1575
- b. Student Mental Health, Student Health Care Center, 392-1171
- c. Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 392-1161
- d. Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601

9. *Software Use*: All faculty, staff, and students of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

READINGS

Required Books

1. Paul Taylor, *Respect for Nature* (Princeton, 2011) (ISBN 0691150249)
2. Lisa Sideris, *Environmental Ethics, Ecological Theology, and Natural Selection* (Columbia University Press, 2003) (0231126611)
3. Val Plumwood, *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature* (Routledge, 1994) (041506810X)
4. Anna Peterson, *Being Animal: Beasts and Boundaries in Nature Ethics* (Columbia University Press, 2013)
5. James Gustafson, *A Sense of the Divine* (Pilgrim Press, 1996) (0829811001)
6. Pope Francis I, *Laudato Si* (2015; available in many editions; USCCB edition ISBN 1601375026).
7. Stephanie Kaza and Kenneth Kraft, eds., *Dharma Rain: Sources of Buddhist Environmentalism* (Shambhala, 2000) (ISBN 1570624755)
8. Steven Vogel, *Thinking Like a Mall: Environmental Philosophy After the End of Nature* (MIT, 2015). (0262029103)
9. Bill Jordan, *The Sunflower Forest* (University of California Press, 2003) (0520233204)

Required Articles

(These will all be posted on the course Canvas e-learning site)

1. Aldo Leopold, "The Land Ethic," in *A Sand County Almanac* (Ballantine, 1949), pp. 237-264.
2. Lynn White, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis." *Science* 155 (1967): 1203-1207.
3. Arne Naess, "The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movement." *Inquiry* 16, no 1 (1973): 95-100; http://www.ecology.ethz.ch/education/Readings_stuff/Naess_1973.pdf
4. Anthony Weston, "Non-Anthropocentrism in a Thoroughly Anthropocentrized World," *The Trumpeter* 8, no. 3 (1991); <http://trumpeter.athabascau.ca/contents/v8.3/weston.html>
5. Jim Cheney and Anthony Weston, "Environmental Ethics as Environmental Etiquette," *Environmental Ethics* 21, no. 2 (summer 1999): 115-134.
6. Karen Warren, "The Power and Promise of Ecological Feminism." *Environmental Ethics* 12, no. 2 (Spring 1990): 125-146.
7. Paul Tillich, "Nature and Sacrament," from *The Protestant Era* (University of Chicago Press, 1957), pp 94-112.
8. William Cronon, "The Trouble with Wilderness," in W. Cronon, ed., *Uncommon Ground* (Norton, 1996), pp. 69-89
9. N. Katherine Hayles, "Searching for Common Ground" in Michael E. Soulé and Gary Lease, eds., *Reinventing Nature? Responses to Postmodern Deconstruction* (Island Press, 1995), pp. 47-64.
10. Raymond Williams, "Ideas of Nature," in *Problems in Materialism and Culture* (Verso, 1990), pp. 67-85.

Recommended

Anthony Weston, *A Rulebook for Arguments* (Hackett, 2008. ISBN 0872209547)

ASSIGNMENTS

1. *Active participation* in all class discussions, including completion of all assigned readings by the date due. 10% of total grade.
2. *Take-Home Exam* on course readings (5-7 pages). Due Feb. 5 by 4:00 pm. 20% of grade.
3. *Review Essay*: Read and discuss together 3-5 books on a related topic, to be chosen in consultation with the instructor. Scholarly articles may be substituted for one or more books, but you must have approval in advance. Essay should be 8-10 pages long. Due Feb. 26 by 4:00 pm. 20% of grade.

4. *Individualized Project*: Design a syllabus or another project, subject to instructor approval. This may be a dissertation proposal, grant proposal, literature review, or another project that is related to your teaching and/or research interests. Due April 1 by 4:00 pm. 20% of grade.

5. *Final Exam*, held during finals week. This will be a cumulative exam. 30% of grade.

SCHEDULE

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic/Assignment</u>
Tues. 1/5	Introduction to the class
Thurs. 1/7	White, “The Historical Roots of our Ecologic Crisis,” Leopold, “The Land Ethic,” and Naess, “The Shallow and the Deep”
Tues. 1/12	Weston, “Non-anthropocentrism” and Cheney & Weston, “Environmental Ethics”
Thurs. 1/14	Taylor, <i>Respect for Nature</i> , Ch. 1-2
Tues. 1/19	Taylor, <i>Respect for Nature</i> , Ch. 3-4
Thurs. 1/21	Taylor, <i>Respect for Nature</i> , Ch. 5-6
Tues. 1/26	Sideris, <i>Environmental Ethics</i> , Introduction and Ch. 1
Thurs. 1/28	Sideris, <i>Environmental Ethics</i> , Ch. 2-3
Tues. 2/2	Sideris, <i>Environmental Ethics</i> , Ch. 4-5
Thurs. 2/4	Sideris, <i>Environmental Ethics</i> , Ch. 6 and Conclusion
Friday 2/5:	Take-home essay due by 4:00 pm in my mailbox in 107 Anderson
Tues. 2/9	Ecofeminism: Warren, “The Power and Promise” and Plumwood, <i>Feminism and the Mastery of Nature</i> , Introduction and Ch. 1
Thurs. 2/11	Plumwood, <i>Feminism and the Mastery of Nature</i> , Ch. 2-5
Tues. 2/16	Plumwood, <i>Feminism and the Mastery of Nature</i> , Ch. 6-7 and Conclusion
Thurs. 2/18	Peterson, <i>Being Animal</i> , Ch. 1-3
Tues. 2/23	Peterson, <i>Being Animal</i> , Ch. 4-5

Thurs. 2/25	Peterson, <i>Being Animal</i> , Ch. 6-8
Fri. 2/26	Review Essay due by 4:00 in my mailbox in 107 Anderson
Week of 2/29	Spring Break
Tues. 3/8	Gustafson, <i>A Sense of the Divine</i> , Ch. 1
Thurs. 3/10	Gustafson, <i>A Sense of the Divine</i> , Ch. 2-3
Tues. 3/15	Gustafson, <i>A Sense of the Divine</i> , Ch. 4-5
Thurs. 3/17	Francis I, <i>Laudato Sí</i>
Tues. 3/22	<i>Dharma Rain</i>
Thurs. 3/24	<i>Dharma Rain</i>
Tues. 3/29	Tillich, "Nature as Sacrament," Cronon, "The Trouble with Wilderness," Hayles, "Searching for Common Ground," and Williams, "Ideas of Nature"
Thurs. 3/31	Vogel, <i>Thinking like a Mall</i> , Ch. 1-2
Friday 4/1	Syllabus or individual project due by 4:00 pm in my mailbox
Tues. 4/5	Vogel, <i>Thinking like a Mall</i> , Ch. 3-5
Thurs. 4/7	Vogel, <i>Thinking like a Mall</i> , Ch. 6-7
Tues. 4/12	Jordan, <i>Sunflower Forest</i> , Ch. 1-2
Thurs. 4/14	Jordan, <i>Sunflower Forest</i> , Ch. 3-5
Tues. 4/19	Jordan, <i>Sunflower Forest</i> , Ch. 6-8
Final Exam: TBD during finals week	