



RLG 6183: ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

Spring 2022

Instructor: Anna Peterson

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Class Schedule: Tues 7th (1:55-2:45), Thu 7th-8th (1:55-3:40)

Office hours: Tues 8th period and Thurs. 6th period (in person) and by appointment (zoom)

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.

The course will be taught alongside REL 4188, Environmental Values and Practices, an advanced undergraduate seminar. Graduate students enrolled in RLG 6183 will attend class sessions of REL 4188 and share common readings, in addition to separate graduate-only readings and discussion sessions. Most assignments will be the same for the two courses, but there are additional expectations for graduate students in terms of length and depth in written work.

Readings and discussions will explore classic and contemporary theoretical approaches and models in environmental ethics from both religious studies and philosophy. We will focus in particular on the relationship between values and practices. 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 Participation:* Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies, found in the online catalog at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

Please let me know about any planned absences (for religious holidays, athletic events, or other reasons) as soon as possible. For unplanned absences (due to illness or emergency), please let me know as soon as possible and provide documentation (e.g, doctor's note).

2. *Make-up policy:* I will arrange for a make-up or early in-class exam only with sufficient notice. If you do not receive an extension from the instructor, assignment will be marked down a half grade (e.g., from B+ to B) for each day late.

3. *Honor Code:* The honor code applies to this and all courses taken at UF: "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity. On all work submitted for credit by students at the university, the following pledge is either required or implied: On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment"

(<https://archive.catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/1617//advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx>).

The university specifically prohibits cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation, bribery, conspiracy, and fabrication. Any student(s) 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 may result in judicial action and sanctions, as specified in the Student Conduct Code (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>).

4. *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.

5. *Counseling and Emergency Resources:* Please let me know if you need support facing challenges that affect your academic performance. There are many resources available for students, and I will be glad to help you get the assistance you need in order to thrive at UF. Some resources include:

- a. University Counseling Center, 301 Peabody Hall, 392-1575, personal and career counseling;
- b. Student Mental Health, Student Health Care Center, 392-1171, personal counseling;
- c. Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 392-1161, sexual counseling;
- d. Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601, career development assistance and counseling.
- e. For security issues, please contact the University Police Department: 392-1111, or 911 for general emergencies.

7. *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

Books

Elizabeth DeSombre, *Why Good People Do Bad Environmental Things* (Oxford, 2018). 978-0190636272

Paul Taylor, *Respect for Nature: A Theory of Environmental Ethics* (Princeton, 2011)

Steven Vogel, *Thinking Like a Mall: Environmental Philosophy after the End of Nature* (MIT Press, 2016)

Articles (on Canvas)

Thomas Princen, Michael Maniates, and Ken Conca, "Confronting Consumption," Ch. 1 in *Confronting Consumption*, ed. Princen, Maniates, and Conca (MIT Press, 2002)

Michael Maniates, "Individualization: Plant a Tree, Buy a Bike, Save the World?" Ch. 3 in *Confronting Consumption*, ed. Princen, Maniates, and Conca (MIT Press, 2002)

Tom Princen, "Distancing: Consumption and the Severing of Feedback," Ch. 5 in *Confronting Consumption*, ed. Princen, Maniates, and Conca (MIT Press, 2002)

Aldo Leopold, "The Land Ethic," from *A Sand County Almanac* (Harper, 1949)

Thomas Dietz, Amy Fitzgerald, and Rachael Shwom, "Environmental Values." *Annual Review of Environmental Resources* 30 (2005): 335–72.

Arun Agrawal, "Environmentality: Community, Intimate Government, and the Making of Environmental Subjects in Kumaon, India." *Current Anthropology* 46, no. 2 (April 2005): 161-81.

"Sustainability and Politics: An Interview with Wes Jackson," by Robert Jensen
Counterpunch (July 10, 2003) <http://www.counterpunch.org/jensen07102003.html>

Katie Shilton, "Values Levers: Building Ethics into Design." *Science, Technology, & Human Values* 38, No. 3 (May 2013): 374-397.

Peter-Paul Verbeek, "Materializing Morality: Design Ethics and Technological Mediation." *Science, Technology, & Human Values* 31, No. 3 (May, 2006): 361-380.

Ritsuko Ozaki, Isabel Shaw, and Mark Dodgson, "The Coproduction of 'Sustainability': Negotiated Practices and the Prius." *Science, Technology, & Human Values* 38, No. 4 (July 2013): 518-541.

Immanuel Kant, "On the Supposed Right to Lie from Benevolent Motives" (1797).

Ornaith O'Dowd, "Care and Abstract Principles." *Hypatia* 27, no 12 (Spring 2012): 407-422.

Daniel N. Robinson and Rom Harré, "The Demography of the Kingdom of Ends." *Philosophy* 69, No. 267 (Jan. 1994): 5-19.

Kollmus, Anja and Julian Agyeman. "Mind the Gap: Why Do People Act Environmentally and What are the barriers to pro-environmental behavior?" *Environmental Education and Research* 8, no. 2 (2002): 239 – 260.

James Blake, "Overcoming 'the Value-Action Gap' in Environmental Policy: Tensions between National Policy and Local Experience." *Local Environment* 4, no. 3 (1999): 257-278.

Shove, Elizabeth, "Beyond the ABC: Climate Change Policy and Theories of Social Change." *Environment and Planning A* 42, no. 6 (2010): 1273-1285.

Marianne E. Krasny, Philip Silva, Cornelia Barr, Zahra Golshani, Eunju Lee, Robert Ligas, Eve Mosher and Andrea Reynosa, "Civic Ecology Practices: Insights from Practice Theory." *Ecology and Society* 20, No. 2 (Jun 2015).

Anthony Weston, "Non-Anthropocentrism in a Thoroughly Anthropocentrized World." *The Trumpeter* 8, no. 3 (1991)

Jim Cheney and Anthony Weston, "Environmental Ethics as Environmental Etiquette," *Environmental Ethics* 21, no. 2 (summer 1999): 115-134.

Carol Booth, "A Motivational Turn for Environmental Ethics." *Ethics & the Environment* 14, No. 1 (Spring 2009): 53-78.

Paul Jepson and Susan Canney, "Values-Led Conservation." *Global Ecology and Biogeography* 12, no. 4 (July 2003): 271-274.

Sarah Hards, "Social Practice and the Evolution of Personal Environmental Values." *Environmental Values*. 20, No. 1 (February 2011): 23-42.

Chelsea Schelly, "Bringing the Body into Environmental Behavior: The Corporeal Element of Social Practice and Behavioral Change." *Human Ecology Review* 24, No. 1 (2018): 137-154.

Anna L. Peterson, "Ideas, Practices, and Climate Change." In *Works Righteousness: Material Practice in Ethical Theory* (Oxford, 2021), pp. 177-198.

Additional Graduate Readings

Books:

J. Baird Callicott, *Earth's Insights: A Multicultural Survey of Ecological Ethics from the Mediterranean Basin to the Australian Outback* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

Max Oelschlaeger, *Caring for Creation: An Ecumenical Approach to the Environmental Crisis* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994).

William Jordan, *The Sunflower Forest* (University of California Press, 2003)

Thom van Dooren, *The Wake of Crows: Living and Dying in Shared Worlds*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2019.

Articles:

Rita Gross, "Buddhist Resources for Population, Consumption, and the Environment," in Mary Evelyn Tucker and Duncan Ryuken Williams, eds., *Buddhism and Ecology* (Harvard University Press, 1998).

Sulak Sivaraksa, "Ecological Suffering: From a Buddhist Perspective," *Buddhist-Christian Studies* 34 (2014): 147-153

Gary Snyder, "Nets of Beads, Webs of Cells," in *A Place in Space: Ethics, Aesthetics, and Watersheds* (Counterpoint, 2008).

Joanna Macy, "The Greening of the Self," in Allan Hunt Badiner, ed., *Dharma Gaia: A Harvest of Essays in Buddhism and Ecology* (Parallax Press, 1990).

Andrew Gibson, "Ideas and Practices in the Critique of Consumerism." *Environmental Philosophy* 8, No. 2 (Fall 2011): 171-188.

WRITING AND PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Active participation in class discussions, based on careful reading of all assigned texts prior to each class (10% of grade).
2. Graduate only sessions. We will meet once or twice a module to discuss the graduate-only readings, which are listed on this syllabus. We will schedule these sessions at the start of the semester, based on availability of all participants.

3. First short paper (2000 words) due Sunday, Feb. 13 (20% of grade)
4. In-class exam, week of March 21 (20% of grade)
5. Final project. This assignment will have two components:
 - a) Poster/presentation (10% of grade), due Sunday, April 10. Create a print or PowerPoint (one slide) presentation summarizing your research questions and findings, to present to the class during the final two weeks of the semester.
 - b) Research paper (40% of grade), due Sunday, April 24 – Write a research paper (at least 4000 words) analyzing the distinctively moral dimensions of a significant contemporary social or environmental problem. Your paper will explain how these moral issues differ from other aspects of the problem, e.g. politics, economics, or ideology, and then identify one or more structures or institutions that facilitate better ethical choices and one or more that create obstacles to better choices, explaining why these structures have these effects.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading/listening/watching</u>
<u>Module One: Introduction to the Course</u>		
Th 1/6	Introduction to the course	

<https://sites.owu.edu/envs110-198-498/projects/assessing-your-environmental-values/>

Module Two: Practices: Environmental Behavior

Grads read: Callicott, Oelschlaeger

Tu 1/11	Moral psychology	De Sombre, Ch. 1
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Listen:

[Dan Ariely](#), "How to Change your Behavior for the Better" (TED talk)

[Erez Yoeli](#), "How to Motivate People to do Good for Others" (TED talk)

Th 1/13	Moral psychology	De Sombre, Ch. 2-3
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Tu 1/18	Moral psychology	DeSombre, Ch. 4-5
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Th 1/20	Moral psychology	DeSombre, Ch. 6-7
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Tu 1/25	Structures and individuals	Maniates et al., <i>Confronting Consumption</i> , Ch. 1, 3, 5
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Listen: [Leyla Acaroglu](#), "Paper Beats Plastic?" (TED Talk)

Th 1/27	Structures and individuals	Agrawal; "Sustainability and Politics" interview with Wes Jackson
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Tu 2/1	Design	Shilton
Th 2/3	Design	Verbeek; Ozaki et al

Listen: [William McDonough](#), “Cradle to Cradle Design” (TED talk)

First short essay due by midnight on Sunday, Feb. 6

Module Three: Ideas: Environmental Ethics

Grads read: Leopold, White; Jordan

Tu 2/8	What is environmental ethics?	Dietz et al.
Th. 2/10	Idealist approaches in environmental ethics	Taylor, <i>Respect for Nature</i>
Tu 2/15	Idealist approaches in environmental ethics	Taylor, <i>Respect for Nature</i>
Th 2/17	Idealist approaches in environmental ethics	Taylor, <i>Respect for Nature</i>
Tu 2/22	Materialist approaches	Vogel, <i>Thinking like a Mall</i>
Th 2/24	Materialist approaches	Vogel, <i>Thinking like a Mall</i>
Tu 3/1	Materialist approaches	Vogel, <i>Thinking like a Mall</i>
Th 3/3	In class exam	

Week of March 7 - Spring Break

Module Four: Theorizing Values and Practices

Grads read: Van Dooren, Gibson

Tu 3/15	Kant	Kant
Th 3/17	Rethinking Kant	O’Dowd; Robinson and Harré
Tu 3/22	“The Gap”	Kollmus and Ageyman; Blake
Th 3/24	Critiquing the gap	Shove; Krasny et al.
Tu 3/29	Critiques of linear approaches	Weston; Cheney and Weston
Th 3/31	Motivation	Booth; Jepson and Canney

Tu 4/4	Embodiment	Schelly
Th 4/6	Practice	Hards; Peterson

Posters due by midnight, Sunday, April 10

Module Five: Showcasing Student Research

Tu 4/12	Class presentations
Th 4/14	Class presentations
Tu 4/19	Class presentations
Th 4/21	Class presentations

Final papers due by midnight, Sunday, April 24