

Term Information

Effective Term Autumn 2022
Previous Value Summer 2015

Course Change Information

What change is being proposed? (If more than one, what changes are being proposed?)

Add to new GE Theme in Sustainability

What is the rationale for the proposed change(s)?

The Department would like to participate in the new GE program and this course seems to make an important contribution to the Sustainability Theme.

What are the programmatic implications of the proposed change(s)?

(e.g. program requirements to be added or removed, changes to be made in available resources, effect on other programs that use the course)?

We anticipate no programmatic changes.

Is approval of the request contingent upon the approval of other course or curricular program request? No

Is this a request to withdraw the course? No

General Information

Course Bulletin Listing/Subject Area	Philosophy
Fiscal Unit/Academic Org	Philosophy - D0575
College/Academic Group	Arts and Sciences
Level/Career	Undergraduate
Course Number/Catalog	2342
Course Title	Environmental Ethics
Transcript Abbreviation	Environmntl Ethics
Course Description	Examination of the moral issues generated by the impact of human beings on the natural environment.
Semester Credit Hours/Units	Fixed: 3

Offering Information

Length Of Course	14 Week, 12 Week, 8 Week, 7 Week, 6 Week, 4 Week
Flexibly Scheduled Course	Never
Does any section of this course have a distance education component?	No
Grading Basis	Letter Grade
Repeatable	No
Course Components	Lecture
Grade Roster Component	Lecture
Credit Available by Exam	No
Admission Condition Course	No
Off Campus	Never
Campus of Offering	Columbus, Lima, Mansfield, Marion, Newark, Wooster
<i>Previous Value</i>	<i>Columbus</i>

Prerequisites and Exclusions

Prerequisites/Corequisites

Exclusions

Previous Value

Not open to students with credit for 533.

Electronically Enforced

No

Cross-Listings

Cross-Listings

Subject/CIP Code

Subject/CIP Code

38.0103

Subsidy Level

Baccalaureate Course

Intended Rank

Freshman, Sophomore, Junior

Requirement/Elective Designation

Sustainability

The course is an elective (for this or other units) or is a service course for other units

Previous Value

The course is an elective (for this or other units) or is a service course for other units

Course Details

Course goals or learning objectives/outcomes

- This course provides students opportunities for sustained reflection and engagement on the ethical problems associated with environmental sustainability, climate change, and our relationship to non-human animals
- The object of this course will be to help students understand a complex set of intersecting ethical challenges, and to provide the skills to allow them to re-assess their own beliefs and values on them.
- *The primary purpose of the course is to provide students a critical understanding of major debates concerning environmental ethics.*
- *Students will be expected to demonstrate proficiency in constructing and critically analyzing ethical arguments concerning the treatment of non-human animals, environmental sustainability, and related environmental topics.*

Previous Value

Content Topic List

- The Gaia hypothesis
- Human-centered environmentalist arguments
- Deep ecology
- Food choices and the environment
- The tragedy of the commons
- Climate change
- Sustainable development

COURSE CHANGE REQUEST
2342 - Status: PENDING

Last Updated: Vankeerbergen, Bernadette
Chantal
12/07/2021

Previous Value

- [The Gaia hypothesis](#)
- [Human-centered environmentalist arguments](#)
- [Deep ecology](#)
- [Food choices and the environment](#)
- [The tragedy of the commons](#)

Sought Concurrence

No

Attachments

- PHILOS 2342 Syllabus (for Sustainability theme) as of 11.12.2021.doc: Syllabus
(Syllabus. Owner: Shuster, Amy Lynne)
- 2342 submission-sustainability as of 11.12.2021.pdf: Theme form
(Other Supporting Documentation. Owner: Shuster, Amy Lynne)

Comments

Workflow Information

Status	User(s)	Date/Time	Step
Submitted	Shuster, Amy Lynne	11/12/2021 05:01 PM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	Lin, Eden	11/15/2021 03:08 PM	Unit Approval
Approved	Vankeerbergen, Bernadette Chantal	12/07/2021 02:38 PM	College Approval
Pending Approval	Cody, Emily Kathryn Jenkins, Mary Ellen Bigler Hanlin, Deborah Kay Hilty, Michael Vankeerbergen, Bernadette Chantal Steele, Rachel Lea	12/07/2021 02:38 PM	ASCCAO Approval

PHILOSOPHY 2342 ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

Instructor: Prof. Piers Turner

turner.894@osu.edu

368 University Hall

Class Meeting (lecture/discussion): T/Th 12:45—2:05PM Journalism Bldg 304

Course Description:

This course provides students opportunities for sustained reflection and engagement on the ethical problems associated with environmental sustainability, climate change, and our relationship to non-human animals. Questions include:

- Who counts in the moral calculus: humans, other animals, or even whole ecosystems?
- What obligations do we have to *future* generations of human beings or other animals?
- How does population growth and the depletion of natural resources affect the prospects for human development and global justice?
- If climate change is a collective problem, what is my individual responsibility?

Any satisfactory solution to sustainability requires careful consideration of both value trade-offs and feasibility constraints, including various technological, social, and political facts. The object of this course will be to help students understand this complex set of intersecting ethical challenges, and to provide the skills to allow them to re-assess their own beliefs and values on them.

General Education Category: Sustainability Theme.

Goals and Expected Learning Outcomes for All Themes:

- Goal 1: Successful students will analyze an important topic or idea at a more advanced and in-depth level than the foundations.
 - ELO 1.1: Engage in critical and logical thinking about the topic or idea of the theme.
 - ELO 1.2: Engage in an advanced, in-depth, scholarly exploration of the topic or idea of the theme.
- Goal 2: Successful students will integrate approaches to the theme by making connections to out-of-classroom experiences with academic knowledge or across disciplines and/or to work they have done in previous classes and that they anticipate doing in future.
 - ELO 2.1: Identify, describe, and synthesize approaches or experiences as they apply to the theme.
 - ELO 2.2: Demonstrate a developing sense of self as a learner through reflection, self-assessment, and creative work, building on prior experiences to respond to new and challenging contexts.

This advanced level course expects students to synthesize ethical theory and empirical information to address one of the most pressing challenges facing humanity. Students will achieve the course goals through thoughtful reading of difficult primary texts, active participation in class discussion, exams

testing knowledge of key concepts and distinctions, and writing a sustained, detailed argumentative paper proposing a solution to one or more of the ethical questions defining sustainability. Students will be provided the intellectual tools to engage cutting-edge literature on the ethics of sustainability and to construct a more systematic framework reflecting the intersecting ethical issues at stake. In doing so, students will be encouraged to reflect on and revise (as needed) their own current beliefs and values.

Goals and Expected Learning Outcome for the Sustainability Theme:

- Goal 1: Students analyze and explain how social and natural systems function, interact, and evolve over time; how human well-being depends on these interactions; how actions have impacts on subsequent generations and societies globally; and how human values, behaviors, and institutions impact multi-faceted, potential solutions across time.
 - ELO 1.1: Describe elements of the fundamental dependence of humans on Earth and environmental systems and on the resilience of these systems.
 - ELO 1.2: Describe, analyze and critique the roles and impacts of human activity and technology on both human society and the natural world, in the past, currently, and in the future.
 - ELO 1.3: Devise informed and meaningful responses to problems and arguments in the area of sustainability based on the interpretation of appropriate evidence and an explicit statement of values.

This course provides a sustained, detailed examination of the intersecting ethical questions that define sustainability. These questions about human well-being, the moral standing of non-human animals and ecosystems, our obligations to future generations, and the compatibility of human development with global justice, are all shaped by our fundamental dependence on the Earth's limited resources. Solutions to these interconnected problems will require students to consider changes to human values, human behavior, and the structure of human societies. Class discussions, exams, and a final paper will provide students the tools to address these complex questions, reflect on their own beliefs, and propose new solutions.

Texts:

Readings will be available on the Carmen web site for the course. Readings listed are for the day we will cover them in class, so read them before that day.

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

I. Anthropocentrism and its Critics

Introduction

Jan 8 Review aims of the course and syllabus

Our place in nature I

Jan 10 Jared Diamond, excerpt from *Guns, Germs, and Steel*
 Aldo Leopold, excerpt from "The Land Ethic"

Our place in nature II

Jan 15 Rachel Carson, excerpt from “Silent Spring”
 William Cronon, “The Trouble with Wilderness”
 John Stuart Mill, excerpt from “Nature”

Obligations to Non-Human Animals: the utilitarian view

Jan 17 Peter Singer, “All Animals Are Equal”
 R.G. Frey “A Utilitarian Critique of Animal Rights”

Obligations to Non-Human Animals: the utilitarian view continued

Jan 22 Alastair Norcross, “Puppies, Pigs, and People”

Obligations to Non-Human Animals: a deontological view

Jan 24 Tom Regan, “Animals as Subjects-of-a-Life”
 Mary Anne Warren, “A Critique of Regan’s Animal Rights Theory”

Obligations to Natural Objects: biocentrism, capabilities, and species egalitarianism

Jan 29 Martha Nussbaum, “The Moral Status of Animals”
 Paul Taylor, “The Ethics of Respect for Nature”
 David Schmidtz, “Are All Species Equal?”

Philosophy & Ethical Arguments

Jan 31 A methodological detour (no reading)

The Problem of Intrinsic Value

Feb 5 John O’Neill, “Varieties of Intrinsic Value”

Obligations to Natural Objects: Environmental Virtue Ethics

Feb 7 Thomas E. Hill, Jr., “Ideals of Human Excellence and Preserving Natural Environments”

Midterm Review

Feb 12 Review for Midterm-- **HAPPY DARWIN DAY!**

Midterm

Feb 14 **MIDTERM**

II. The Ethics of Climate Change

Climate ethics

Feb 19 Stephen Gardiner, “Ethics and Climate Change”

Global Justice?

Feb 21 Peter Singer, “One Community”

Global Justice and Climate Change

Feb 26 Henry Shue, “Global Environment and International Inequality”
 Simon Caney, “Climate Change, Human Rights, and Moral Thresholds”

Geoengineering?

Feb 28 Patrick Taylor Smith, “Who May Geoengineer?”

Individual Responsibility for Collective Problems

Mar 5 Walter Sinnott-Armstrong, "It's Not My Fault: Global Warming and Individual Moral Obligations"

Individual Responsibility for Collective Problems

Mar 7 Shelly Kagan, "Do I Make a Difference?"

NO CLASS MARCH 12, 14 – Spring Break

III. The Ethics of Sustainable Development**Planetary Boundaries**

Mar 19 Jeffrey Sachs, *Age of Sustainable Development* excerpt
Kate Raworth, *Doughnut Economics* excerpt

Well-being

Mar 21 Derek Parfit, *Reasons and Persons* excerpt

The Capabilities Approach

Mar 26 Martha Nussbaum, *Creating Capabilities* excerpt

Population Growth and Promoting Well-being

Mar 28 Garrett Hardin, "The Ecological Necessity of Confronting the Problem of Human Overpopulation"

Obligations to Future Generations: discounting future people

Apr 2 John Broome, "The Ethics of Climate Change"

Obligations to Future Generations

Apr 4 Brian Barry, "Sustainability and Intergenerational Justice"

Paper thesis and outline due: midnight April 5

Environmental Racism

Apr 9 Sheila Foster and Luke Cole, "Environmental Racism: Beyond the Distributive Paradigm"

Limiting Economic Growth?

Apr 11 John Stuart Mill, *Principles of Political Economy* excerpt
Tim Jackson, *Prosperity without Growth* excerpt

Optimism versus pessimism

Apr 16 Jeffrey Sachs, *Age of Sustainable Development* excerpt

Paper due: midnight April 17

Review and Conclusion

Apr 18 Review for final exam and summarize themes

Final exam

Thursday, April 25 2:00-3:45pm

Course Requirements:

Assignment	Date	Weight
Midterm Exam (short answer)	Feb 14, in-class	20%
Final Paper (10 pp; see description below)	Due by midnight, April 17 – online submission on Carmen; paper thesis and outline construction due by midnight April 5	30%
Final Exam (short answer & essay)	Thursday, April 25 2:00-3:45pm	30%
Participation (see description below)	Ongoing, includes attendance	20%

Grading scheme: A: 93-100, A-: 90-92.9, B+: 87-89.9, B: 83-86.9, B-: 80-82.9, etc...**Late journal entries:** will not be accepted.**Failure to provide acceptable reason in advance for missing an exam:** results in a zero on exam.

A rough guide to grades: A: truly exceptional work/ A-: excellent work/ B+: very good, clearly above average work/ B: good, above average work / B-: respectable, but not outstanding in any respect/ C+: only fair work/ C: clearly below average/ C-: poor work/ D: barely passable/ E: failing

Class protocols and expectations:

Syllabus: *the student is responsible for all information on this syllabus*, including the information below about plagiarism. If you are not sure what constitutes plagiarism, it is your responsibility to contact me or the university writing center for further details.

Paper: the final paper will be an original, argumentative research paper requiring students to engage multiple readings to creatively address one of the ethical challenges under consideration in debates about sustainability and climate. Students will be required to bring to bear both ethical theory and empirical considerations to address values trade-offs and feasibility constraints affecting their preferred solution. Students will be required to work with instructor to develop a thesis and outline of the paper. The paper will be approximately 3000 words.

Participation: involves active engagement with the course material, listening attentively to classmates, contributing to class discussion, including offering opinions about the readings and responding constructively to the views of others. *I will ensure that all sincere and constructive input is taken seriously and that class discussion remains respectful. Personal attacks will not be tolerated.*

Some questions to ask yourself before every class: (1) What were the main concepts and arguments in the readings? (2) Against whom or what is the author arguing? (3) What does the author hope to accomplish in this piece? (4) How does this reading connect to other readings so far?

Attendance: will affect your participation grade. I reserve the right to take attendance at any class. One cannot expect to master the material while missing the classes. If you must miss a class or exam, it is your responsibility to notify me *before the day of class*, or (in the case of exams) *as far ahead of time as possible*.

Come prepared for class: this means, above all else, that you have done the reading assigned for that day. You are responsible for keeping up with this schedule of readings. *I will post all readings on Carmen in a timely manner.* Reading philosophy can take considerable effort, as it is argumentative, not narrative, in nature. Leave enough time to read the articles twice through.

Office hours: are there for your benefit. Please do not leave questions until just before the exams. It is your responsibility to make sure that you are staying up with the class. *I am happy to answer questions and provide further help to those engaging seriously with the work of the class.*

Rough guide to participation grade: A: the student excels in the foregoing by contributing significantly and substantively to class discussion, engaging respectfully with other students, exhibiting excellent preparation for class, and attending class regularly. B: the student does well in the foregoing by occasionally contributing to class discussion, engaging respectfully with other students, exhibiting good preparation for class, and attending class regularly. C: the student does a fair job in the foregoing by contributing infrequently, listening respectfully but engaging fellow students very little, exhibiting only cursory preparation for class, or attending class less than regularly. D-F: student does poorly in the foregoing, rarely contributing if at all, perhaps disrupting class, exhibiting little or no preparation for class, or attending class infrequently.

Academic Misconduct Statement

Academic misconduct is a very serious issue – and **I am required to report any case of possible misconduct to the University.** I will be vigilant about plagiarism and other forms of cheating. For all our benefit, please simply do the required readings and make use of the course resources (including your instructor) to do well in the course by appropriate means. I am here to help.

From the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM):

“It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>.”

The University understands academic misconduct to include “any activity which tends to compromise the academic integrity of the institution, or subvert the educational process.” Examples include, but are not limited to, such actions as cheating on exams and submitting a term paper written by another. “Plagiarism” is defined by the University to be “the representation of another’s works or ideas as one’s own; it includes the unacknowledged word for word use and/or paraphrase of another person’s work, and/or the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person’s ideas.” There should be no misunderstanding about word for word transcriptions or simple paraphrases—these *must* be acknowledged through proper citations. It is sometimes not clear, though, when simply using the ideas of another requires citation. It is helpful to remember that what is at issue is whether the failure to acknowledge a source would tend to misrepresent the idea as your own. Some ideas have entered the “public domain” (e.g., one needn’t cite Plato every time one mentions democracy, for instance) but failing to cite the source of a *specific* account of an idea could easily tend to misrepresent the account as your own (e.g., Plato had a particular conception of democracy not shared by all theorists). It is clearly better to err on the side of over-acknowledgment in cases in which one is in doubt. Electronic copies of papers will be scanned for plagiarism and inappropriate use of web-based materials. [This paragraph is adapted from one used by Don Hubin (Philosophy) in his syllabi.]

Disability Services:

The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately

discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. SLDS contact information: slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; slds.osu.edu; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

Mental Health Services:

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. The Ohio State University offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. If you or someone you know are suffering from any of the aforementioned conditions, you can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Office of Student Life's Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS) by visiting ccs.osu.edu or calling [614-292-5766](tel:614-292-5766). CCS is located on the 4th Floor of the Younkin Success Center and 10th Floor of Lincoln Tower. You can reach an on call counselor when CCS is closed at [614-292-5766](tel:614-292-5766) and 24 hour emergency help is also available through the 24/7 National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-TALK or at suicidepreventionlifeline.org.

GE THEME COURSES

Overview

Courses that are accepted into the General Education (GE) Themes must meet two sets of Expected Learning Outcomes (ELOs): those common for all GE Themes and one set specific to the content of the Theme. This form begins with the criteria common to all themes and has expandable sections relating to each specific theme.

A course may be accepted into more than one Theme if the ELOs for each theme are met. Courses seeing approval for multiple Themes will complete a submission document for each theme. Courses seeking approval as a 4-credit, Integrative Practices course need to complete a similar submission form for the chosen practice. It may be helpful to consult your Director of Undergraduate Studies or appropriate support staff person as you develop and submit your course.

Please enter text in the boxes to describe how your class will meet the ELOs of the Theme to which it applies. Please use language that is clear and concise and that colleagues outside of your discipline will be able to follow. You are encouraged to refer specifically to the syllabus submitted for the course, since the reviewers will also have that document. Because this document will be used in the course review and approval process, you should be as specific as possible, listing concrete activities, specific theories, names of scholars, titles of textbooks etc.

Course subject & number

General Expectations of All Themes

GOAL 1: Successful students will analyze an important topic or idea at a more advanced and in-depth level than the foundations.

Please briefly identify the ways in which this course represents an advanced study of the focal theme. In this context, “advanced” refers to courses that are e.g., synthetic, rely on research or cutting-edge findings, or deeply engage with the subject matter, among other possibilities. *(50-500 words)*

Course subject & number

ELO 1.1 Engage in critical and logical thinking about the topic or idea of the theme. Please link this ELO to the course goals and topics and indicate *specific* activities/assignments through which it will be met. (50-700 words)

ELO 1.2 Engage in an advanced, in-depth, scholarly exploration of the topic or idea of the theme. Please link this ELO to the course goals and topics and indicate *specific* activities/assignments through which it will be met. (50-700 words)

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the student to write their response to the ELOs. It occupies the lower half of the page.

Course subject & number

GOAL 2: Successful students will integrate approaches to the theme by making connections to out-of-classroom experiences with academic knowledge or across disciplines and/or to work they have done in previous classes and that they anticipate doing in future.

ELO 2.1 Identify, describe, and synthesize approaches or experiences as they apply to the theme.

Please link this ELO to the course goals and topics and indicate *specific* activities/assignments through which it will be met. (50-700 words)

ELO 2.2 Demonstrate a developing sense of self as a learner through reflection, self-assessment, and creative work, building on prior experiences to respond to new and challenging contexts.

Please link this ELO to the course goals and topics and indicate *specific* activities/assignments through which it will be met. (50-700 words)

Course subject & number

Specific Expectations of Courses in Sustainability

GOAL 1: Students analyze and explain how social and natural systems function, interact, and evolve over time; how human wellbeing depends on these interactions; how actions have impacts on subsequent generations and societies globally; and how human values, behaviors, and institutions impact multi-faceted, potential solutions across time.

1.1 Describe elements of the fundamental dependence of humans on Earth and environmental systems and on the resilience of these systems. Please link this ELO to the course goals and topics and indicate *specific* activities/assignments through which it will be met. (50-700 words)

Course subject & number

1.2 Describe, analyze and critique the roles and impacts of human activity and technology on both human society and the natural world, in the past, currently, and in the future. Please link this ELO to the course goals and topics and indicate *specific* activities/assignments through which it will be met. (50-700 words)

1.3 Devise informed and meaningful responses to problems and arguments in the area of sustainability based on the interpretation of appropriate evidence and an explicit statement of values. Please link this ELO to the course goals and topics and indicate *specific* activities/assignments through which it will be met. (50-700 words)