

ENVI 462 ETHICS and the ENVIRONMENT **Course Syllabus**

Foundational Studies—Ethics and Social Responsibility

Course Instructor: Nancy J. Obermeyer, Ph.D.
Department Earth and Environmental Systems
Office: 159 Science
Office Hours: TR: 1:45-2:30:00 pm and by appointment
Telephone: (812) 237-4351; Fax: (812) 237 8029
E-mail: Nancy.Obermeyer@indstate.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Ethics and the Environment is designed as an upper division course for students in the environmental sciences program, particularly those who are preparing for a career in the public or non-governmental sector, such as in a Department of Natural Resources, or an organization such as the Nature Conservancy, and in the corporate sector (a growing number of corporations are “going green”). This course will be presented in a seminar format.

The history of thought regarding the environment provides an important underpinning to our understanding of our attitude and actions toward the environment. In this class, we will explore the evolution of environmental ethics from a historical perspective, covering a variety of topics within the realm of the environment. This course will consider both Western and non-Western environmental ethics. Students will be responsible for using one or more principles of ethics and the environment as a framework for undertaking research on a specific topic of their choosing (subject to the instructor’s approval) and for volunteering for a relevant organization in order to learn and understand the role of ethics in environmental applications.

Ethics and the Environment will promote lifelong learning by (1)introducing students to the role of ethics in protecting the environment; (2)helping students to learn basic principles of ethics as they relate to our environment; and (3)providing students with a framework that will enable them to understand how ethics shape our environment.

COURSE GOALS

1. Increase knowledge of the role of the ethical behavior in protecting the environment.
2. Enhance students’ understanding of western and non-western environmental ethics, and of ethics in general.
3. Promote recognition of the role that environmental ethics plays in our world today.
4. Improve communication skills through class discussions, reading assignments, written assignments, and oral presentations.
5. Improve skills in research, writing, editing, and citation through the use of a term paper project that will focus on the application of an ethical principle to a specific environmental situation.

6. Graduates of this course should be knowledgeable about ethics generally, and environmental ethics specifically, in order to enhance their professional performance when they join the world of work.
7. Develop first-hand knowledge of ethics in environmental applications through first-hand experience volunteering for an appropriate organization.

In addition, because this course is part of the larger Foundational Studies Program, it is important to place its goals within the context of the program's goals (the highlighted goals will be emphasized in this course). By the conclusion of your Foundational Studies Program at ISU, you will be able to (FSLO)

- 1. Locate, critically read, and evaluate information to solve problems;**
- 2. Critically evaluate the ideas of others;**
- 3. Apply knowledge and skills within and across the fundamental ways of knowing (natural sciences, social and behavioral sciences, arts and humanities, mathematics and history);**
4. Demonstrate an appreciation of human expression through literature and fine and performing arts;
- 5. Demonstrate the skills for effective citizenship and stewardship;**
6. Demonstrate an understanding of diverse cultures within and across societies;
- 7. Demonstrate the skills to place their current and local experience in a global, cultural, and historical context;**
- 8. Demonstrate an understanding of the ethical implications of decisions and actions**
9. Apply principles of physical and emotional health to wellness;
- 10. Express (yourself) effectively, professionally, and persuasively both orally and in writing.**

The Foundational Studies program is also designed to build skills for applied learning. The Skill and Applied Learning Objectives (S&ALO) require that this course

1. Explicitly demonstrate how the curriculum will develop critical thinking skills
2. Explicitly demonstrate how the curriculum will develop information literacy skills
3. Include a graded writing component, which whenever possible is developmental
4. Must give students the opportunity to apply what they are learning to real world scenarios
5. Must include opportunities for experiential learning or community engagement
6. Must give students the opportunity to identify and solve problems
7. Must incorporate opportunities for students to critically read and analyze text-based materials beyond textbooks (e.g., novels, classical literature, primary sources, science journals, poems, lyrics, blogs, etc.)

REQUIRED TEXT

Text: Environmental Ethics: Readings in Theory and Application, 5th Edition by Louis P. Pojman and Paul Pojman (Wadsworth Publishing) 2007.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Exams, grading, and make-up policies

Discussion of readings	50 points
Exams (midterm and final; 50 pts each)	100 points
Research paper with ethics focus	100 points
Research paper outline & sources	25 points
Research paper rough draft	25 points
Oral presentation of term paper	25 points
Discussion of classmates' term papers	25 points
Volunteer/field work	100 points
Oral report on volunteer/field work	25 points
Discussion of classmates volunteer work	<u>25 points</u>
	500 points

Grading Scale

Final letter grades for the course will be assigned on the basis of a 500-point total, according to the following scale of raw scores: A+ =490-500 total points; A=460-489; A-=450-459; B+=440-449; B=410-439; B-=400-409; C+=390-399; C=360-389; C-=350-359; D+=340-349; D=310-339; D-=300-309; a point total of 299 or fewer total points is a non-passing grade.

Discussion of Readings

The instructor will assign a grade for class participation based on the regularity of your contribution to discussion of the readings in class. The discussion will begin with an assigned reading, which must be completed before students come to class. Distance education students will post their comments to the Discussion Board. Face-to-face students will engage in discussion in class. As an extension of this activity, students are invited to raise issues and contribute news items that relate to the concepts and ideas raised in the readings. Participation in regular class discussion of the readings is worth a total of 50 points.

Examinations

The two examinations may consist of multiple choice, matching, definitions, true/false, and/or map questions. They will cover materials discussed in your text, in class lectures, and possibly in supplemental assigned readings. **Make-up exams and assignments are given at the instructor's discretion.** This means that the instructor decides (1)whether or not a make-up will be allowed, (2)the type of make-up exam or assignment (if allowed), and (3)whether or not any deductions in grade will be assessed for taking the exam or submitting the assignment at a later date. In general, if the student notifies the instructor promptly that he/she is unable to take an exam or submit assignments on the due date, AND if the reason for the inability to take the exam or submit assignments is beyond the student's control, the instructor will permit a make-up at the student's earliest convenience without penalty. Each of the two exams is worth 50 points, for a total of 100 points.

Research Paper

You are required to write an original research paper in the 14-15 page range, on a topic of your choosing, *with the concurrence of the instructor*. An acceptable paper topic will explore some aspect of ethics and the environment, incorporating principles and theories discussed in class as well as those that you discover as you do your research and/or during your community engagement experience. The term paper itself is worth 100 points.

You must rely on scholarly sources, and you should expect to identify and consult at least ten such sources. Wikipedia and other similar websites are NOT scholarly resources; do not use them. *You may cite your sources using any of the standard citation formats (MLA, APA, University of Chicago)*. Newest versions of “Word” include a citation wizard that prompt you for the necessary information and then put the citations in any of these standard formats. Please note: a URL is NOT a proper citation.

In order to encourage you to make steady progress on your term paper throughout the course of the term rather than waiting till the last minute, you will be required to submit (1) an outline and sources for your work (worth 25 points) and (2) a rough draft (worth 25 points), for which you will receive credit. You will also be required to make an oral presentation of your research paper to the class (worth 25 points).

Additional information about this assignment is provided on Blackboard under the “Research Paper” button. This additional information includes a detailed explanation of the “Evaluation Criteria” I will use when I read your papers. If you have any questions or if you need assistance, please ask me for help, talk with a classmate, or visit the Writing Center.

Volunteer (Community Engagement/Experiential Learning)

Students must undertake volunteer work with an organization whose mission is relevant to the environment and ethics. Suggested volunteer assignments include (but are not limited to) a recycling center, ISU’s Sustainability Office, an animal shelter, or an “adopt a highway group,” for example. Students are welcome to undertake other assignments, but must inform the instructor and secure her concurrence. During the third week of class, students will let the instructor know their plans for community engagement/experiential learning. Students must complete and document at least ten hours of work to the organization of their choosing; the work itself is worth 100 points. In addition students will make an oral presentation describing their experience in class (25 points) and engage in discussion with their classmates on their experiences (25 points).

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend every class, unless there is an illness, accident, or other important commitment that makes attendance impossible. The instructor will determine if an absence meets this requirement and thus counts as an “excused” absence.

The instructor will create a seating chart and check attendance at each class meeting. If a student has 3 or more absences, the grade of A will not be awarded as a course grade; in this case, the highest possible final course grade will be a B+.

As an incentive, students with exemplary attendance (no more than one absence over the entire semester) will have the opportunity to replace their lowest exam grade with the average of their other two (higher) exam grades.

Reading assignments

The reading schedule is provided in the grid located above. You are expected to read the textbook and other assigned articles and books before coming to class so that you will be prepared to participate actively in the classroom activities and discussions.

Computer literacy

Students should be familiar with (1)receiving and sending e-mail, (2)world-wide web; (3)Blackboard; (4)word processing; and (5)library research. If you are unfamiliar with any of these skills, you may take one or more of the courses offered by Computer Sciences.

Academic Honesty

Indiana State University and your instructor are committed to academic integrity in all its practices. The faculty value intellectual integrity and a high standard of academic conduct. Activities that violate academic integrity undermine the quality and diminish the value of educational achievement.

Cheating on papers, tests or other academic works is a violation of ISU rules. No student shall engage in behavior that, in the judgment of the instructor of the class, may be construed as cheating. This may include, but is not limited to, plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty such as the acquisition without permission of tests or other academic materials and/or distribution of these materials and other academic work. This includes students who aid and abet as well as those who attempt such behavior. The instructor reserves the right to use the resources of the University to check student work for plagiarism; including using the plagiarism detection software.

Academic dishonesty is a serious offense because it undermines the bonds of trust and honesty between members of the community and defrauds those who may eventually depend upon our knowledge and integrity. All students are expected to adhere to the Code of Student Conduct. Academic dishonesty (including plagiarism) in any portion of the academic work in this course shall be grounds for awarding a grade of F for the work or the entire course and Student Judicial Programs will be notified of the academic integrity violation.

Please refer to Code of Student Conduct at: <http://www1.indstate.edu/sjp/docs/code.pdf>. Academic dishonesty will subject its author(s) to failure in the course and could lead to further disciplinary action. University policies regarding academic freedom, documented disabilities, expected personal responsibilities, and other matters apply to this course and may be found on the Foundational Studies website at:

<http://www.indstate.edu/gened/docs/Foundational%20Studies/Info%20on%20Sycamore%20Standard%20and%20ADA%20and%20Laptops%20and%20Academic%20Freedom.pdf>

Critical thinking skills

Critical thinking skills will be necessary for class discussions, exams, and for the term paper. Thus, students will demonstrate their abilities in both oral and written activities.

Americans with Disabilities Statement

“Indiana State University seeks to provide effective services and accommodation for qualified individuals with documented disabilities. If you need an accommodation because of a documented disability, you are required to register with Disability Support Services at the beginning of the semester. Contact the Director of Student Support Services. The telephone number is 237-2301 and the office is located in Gillum Hall, Room 202A. The Director will ensure that you receive all the additional help that Indiana State offers. If you will require assistance during an emergency evacuation, notify your instructor immediately. Look for evacuation procedures posted in your classrooms.”

Laptop usage

Your use of a laptop is generally permitted as long as such usage remains within the bounds of the Code of Student Conduct and it conforms to the provisions of its use as laid out in this syllabus. There may be occasions where laptop usage is forbidden and if that occurs, failure to comply with this direction will be viewed as a violation of the Code of Student Conduct. Use of your laptop for non-course related work during class time may result in a loss of laptop privileges during class.

Cell Phones and Blue Tooth Devices Prohibited in Class

Please turn your cell phones on silent and put them away, out of sight (mine and yours) during class. Any cell phones that are out in class will be confiscated and placed on the instructor’s podium until the end of class.

Academic Freedom

Teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to their subject.

The preceding comes from the American Association of University Professors statement on academic freedom. Though the entire statement¹ speaks to many issues, it is this portion on the conduct of the course that is most relevant. For the purpose of Foundational Studies courses this means that faculty have the right to conduct their class in a fashion they deem appropriate as long as the material presented meets the learning objectives laid out by the entire faculty

¹ <http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/pubsres/policydocs/contents/1940statement.htm>

**ETHICS AND THE ENVIRONMENT
COURSE OUTLINE**

Week #	Text Chapter	Assigned Reading
Part One: Theory		
Week 1	Perspectives	Chapter 1
	<i>Readings: Genesis 1-3</i> <i>The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis</i> (Lynn White) <i>The Cultural Basis of our Environmental Crisis</i> (Lewis W. Moncrief) <i>The Judeo-Christian Stewardship Attitude to Nature</i> (Patrick Dobel) <i>The Power and Promise of Ecological Feminism</i> (Karen J. Warren) <i>The Green Kant: Environmental Dynamics and Sustainable Policies</i> (Martin Schönfeld)	
Week 2	Animal Rights	Chapter 2
	<i>Readings: Rational Beings Alone Have Moral Worth</i> (Immanuel Kant) <i>The Green Kant: Kant's Treatment of Animals</i> (Holly L. Wilson) <i>A Utilitarian Defense of Animal Liberation</i> (Peter Singer) <i>The Radical Egalitarian Case for Animal Rights</i> (Tom Regan) <i>A Critique of Regan's Animal Rights Theory</i> (Mary Ann Warren) <i>Against Zoos</i> (Dale Jamieson)	
Week 3	Philosophical Theories of Nature: Biocentric & Ecocentric Ethics, & Deep Ecology	Chapter 3
	<i>Readings: Nature</i> (John Stuart Mills) <i>Reverence for Life</i> (Albert Schweitzer) <i>Ecocentrism: The Land Ethic</i> (Aldo Leopold) <i>The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecological Movement</i> (Arne Naess) <i>A Critique of Anti-Anthropocentric Ethics</i> (Richard Watson) <i>Environmental Justice: Reconciling Anthropocentric and Nonanthropocentric Ethics</i> (James Sterba)	
Week 4	Preservation of Species, Nature and Natural Objects	Chapter 4
	<i>Readings: Biodiversity: The Key to Saving Life on Earth</i> (Donella H. Meadows) <i>Why Do Species Matter?</i> (Lilly-Marlene Russow) <i>What's Wrong with Plastic Trees?</i> (Martin H. Krieger) <i>Faking Nature</i> (Robert Elliot) <i>Should Trees Have Standing? Toward Legal Rights for Natural Objects</i> (Karen J. Warren)	

Week 10	Pesticides	Chapter 10
	<i>Readings:</i> <i>Silent Spring</i> (Rachel Carson) <i>Is Silent Spring Behind Us?</i> (David Pimentel) <i>Combating Malaria</i> (Anne Platt McGinn) <i>The Blessings of Pesticides</i> (Dixy Lee Ray and Louis Guzzo)	
Week 11	Climate Change	Chapter 11
	<i>Readings:</i> <i>Understanding the Causes of Global Climate Change</i> (Pew Center on Global Climate Change) <i>Ethics and Global Climate Change</i> (Stephen Gardiner)	
Week 12	Economics and the Environment	Chapter 12
	<i>Readings:</i> <i>In Defense of Steady-State Economics</i> (John Stuart Mill) <i>Sustainable Development: Economic Myths and Global Realities</i> (William Rees) <i>Consumption: The Economics of Value Added and the Ethics of Value Distributed</i> (Herman E. Daly) <i>At the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima, or Why Political Questions are Not All Economic</i> (Mark Sagoff) <i>On the Value and Limits of Cost-Benefit Analysis</i> (David Schmidtz)	
Week 13	Environmental Justice	Chapter 13
	<i>Readings:</i> <i>Overcoming Racism in Environmental Decision Making</i> (Robert D. Bullard) <i>From Global Ethics to International Law Instrument</i> (The Earth Charter) <i>Just Garbage: The Problem of Environmental Racism</i> (Peter S. Wenz) <i>Deceiving the Third World: The Myth of Catching-Up Development</i> (Maria Mies) <i>Environmental Risks, Rights, and the Failure of Liberal Democracy: Some Possible Remedies</i> (Laura Westra)	
Week 14	From Dysfunctional to Sustainable Society	Chapter 14
	<i>Readings:</i> <i>Dysfunctional Society</i> (Al Gore) <i>An Ecological Critique of Global Advertising</i> (Alan Thein Durning) <i>The Challenge of the Future: Private Property, the City, the Globe, and a Sustainable Society</i> (Louis P. Pojman) <i>Ecology and Community Design</i> (Todd Saunders) <i>Pedaling Power: Sustainable Transportation</i> (Louis P. Pojman) <i>Ecosabotage and Civil Disobedience</i> (Michael Martin) <i>Strategic Monkeywrenching</i> (Dave Foreman) <i>A Vision of a Sustainable World</i> (Lester Brown, Christopher Flavin, and Sandra Postel) <i>EXAM 2: covers Chapters 7-14 (Practice)</i>	
Week 15	Presentation and discussion of student term papers	
Week 16	Report on and discussion of volunteer experience	

Right of Revision

The above course schedule and procedures in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances as determined by the instructor.

Date of last revision: December 2, 2010.

ENVI 462 TERM PAPER EVALUATION GUIDELINES

Please use this as a guide as you write your essay. I will be using this guide as I grade.

A. Research: Solid research generally results in great papers. Research that includes sufficient detail leads to clear, insightful descriptions of concepts that can be used to support later conclusions. Research that is multi-sided, and contains accurate information makes it easier to analyze your topic and reach logical conclusions.

1. Sources must be sufficiently accurate, reliable, analytical and/or scholarly.
2. There must be enough sources (avoid total reliance on internet sources)
3. Sources must be appropriately current and/or reflect the most recent thought and events on the topic.

B. Content: Substantively, the essay must demonstrate that the writer knows the topic thoroughly. The writer does this by providing substantiated and accurate facts, specific detail, presented in a framework of sound logic.

1. Sufficient factual basis: facts must be supportable and accurate.
2. Information must be specific rather than vague. Include adequate detail.
3. Logic must be clear and supportable; arguments must make sense.
4. Conclusions must be supported by evidence, not merely stated as fact; just because something is written and published does not make it true. Draw on your factual content to make your case.

C. Organization: In order to be most effective, the essay must be logically organized. A common and straightforward way to organize writing is chronologically (from an earlier point in time to a later point in time). Good organization leads the reader from the facts to a well-supported conclusion. You may also follow the “subquestions” in the essay question as an alternative organization strategy.

1. Points must follow in a logical progression
2. Points should be made clearly, and not repeated.
3. All points should be relevant (NO irrelevant points).

D. Grammar, spelling: The writer must use correct grammar and spelling

1. Grammar should be excellent.
2. Spelling should be error free.

E. Citations: The purpose of citations is to make it possible for the reader to look up the source. Citations acknowledging sources must be included in text. In addition, a “Works Cited” page must be included at the end of the text.

1. Citations must be included in text (they are required).
2. Citation information in “works cited” must be complete (author and/or title, dates, etc.) -- even for internet sources (a URL is NOT complete citation for internet sources). Citations must use a standard format of your choice APA, MLA or University of Chicago/Turabian). For help, go to “Citation Wizard” (<http://workscited.tripod.com/>).
3. “Works Cited” list or page must be included.

GOOD LUCK!