

School of Liberal Arts



ENST 201
Environmental Ethics
Winter 2025

3 Credits

Course Outline

INSTRUCTOR	Matthew Cameron	OFFICE HOURS	By appointment
OFFICE	N/A	CLASSROOM	A2603
E-MAIL	mcameron@yukonu.ca	CLASS TIME	4:30-5:50pm (Tues; Thurs)
TELEPHONE	(867)-668-8770 (Admin. Assistant)	CRN	20086
Liberal Arts office: Ayamdigut Campus A2501, liberalarts@yukonu.ca, 867-668-8770			

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A survey of contemporary issues in environmental ethics. Topics may include: animal rights, the intrinsic value of nature, 'deep ecology', obligations to future generations, conservation, ecofeminism, environmental justice, economics and ecology, climate change, as well as relevant background materials in ethical theory. The class will provide students with the theoretical foundation required to examine environmental problems in ethical terms.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Second year standing in the School of Liberal Arts; ENGL 100 and ENGL 101 or COMM 100; COMM 192; COMM 193; COMM 204. Please check with the Chair of Liberal Arts if you have questions.

EQUIVALENCY OR TRANSFERABILITY

CAMO PHIL 204 (3) UBCV PHIL 2nd (3)

SFU PHIL 1XX (3) UNBC ENVS 2XX (3)

TRU PHIL 2XXX (3) UVIC PHIL 2XX (1.5)

TWU PHIL 2XX (3)

Students are reminded that it is always the receiving institution that determines whether a course is acceptable as an applicable, equivalent course or if it may be transferred to their program for credit. Find further information at: <https://www.yukonu.ca/admissions/transfer-credit>

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Identify and critically evaluate various ethical frameworks for understanding environmental issues;
2. Evaluate contemporary global and northern environmental problems from an ethical perspective;
3. Explain their own ethical orientation toward environmental issues;
4. Demonstrate knowledge of major debates in the field of environmental philosophy; and
5. Communicate effectively in writing and oral presentations about ethical and moral issues.

COURSE FORMAT

Delivery format

The course will involve a mixture of lectures and classroom group discussions (both in-person and online) on pre-assigned material. Classes will be structured as discussions/seminars on the assigned material. Individual and/or group activities may be assigned during class. Informed participation in all discussions and activities will be important for student learning. Students will need to visit the Moodle course site and participate in online activities and discussions as assigned and scheduled. Students will be responsible for completing assigned readings, materials and assignments on schedule, and participating in online group discussion (via Zoom and Moodle) as necessary.

Workload

This course will involve 3 hours of in-class/online lectures and classroom discussions each week. In addition to lectures, it is expected that this course will require 3-5 hours each week of homework and additional reading. Students are expected to have read the assigned materials in advance and actively participate in classroom and online group discussions. It is important to note that the time required for successful course completion will vary by individual.

EVALUATION

Engagement and Participation

Attendance at classes is mandatory. Students are expected to have read the assigned materials in advance and actively participate in classroom and online group discussions.

Assignments

Students will be assessed on the basis of short written assignments (3 in total), one policy submission (1000 words), one essay (2000 words), one final assignment, as well as active participation in classroom and online group discussions (via Zoom and Moodle). See grading guidelines for additional information about evaluation.

NOTE: Late assignments will be penalized by **5% per day to a maximum of 7 days**, after which they will not be accepted unless there is a legitimate excuse approved by the instructor in advance of the deadline.

Quizzes and Tests

There are no scheduled tests or quizzes for this course.

Engagement and Participation	10 %
Assignments (x3)	30 % (10% each)
Policy Submission	15 %
Essay	25 %
Final Assignment	20 %
Total	100%

TEXTBOOKS & LEARNING MATERIALS

List Selected readings and materials (e.g., podcasts, videos) will be made available online (Moodle). See Reading Schedule below.

COURSE WITHDRAWAL INFORMATION

Students may officially withdraw from a course or program without academic penalty up until two-thirds of the course contact hours have been completed. Specific withdrawal dates vary, and students should become familiar with the withdrawal dates of their program. See withdrawal information at www.yukonu.ca/admissions/money-matters

Refer to the YukonU website for important dates: www.yukonu.ca/admissions/important-dates

Refunds may be available. See the Refund policy and procedures at www.yukonu.ca/admissions/money-matters

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are expected to contribute toward a positive and supportive environment and are required to conduct themselves in a responsible manner. Academic misconduct includes all forms of academic dishonesty such as cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, fraud, deceit, using the work of others without their permission, aiding other students in committing academic offences, misrepresenting academic assignments prepared by others as one's own, or any other forms of academic dishonesty including falsification of any information on any Yukon University document.

Please refer to Academic Regulations & Procedures (updated bi-annually) for further details about academic standing, and student rights and responsibilities: www.yukonu.ca/policies/academic-regulations

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

Reasonable accommodations are available for students requiring an academic accommodation to fully participate in this class. These accommodations are available for students with a documented disability, chronic condition or any other grounds specified in section 8.0 of the Yukon University Academic Regulations (available on the Yukon University website at www.yukonu.ca/policies/academic-regulations)

It is the student's responsibility to seek these accommodations by contacting the Learning Assistance Centre (LAC): LearningAssistanceCentre@yukonu.ca.

COURSE AND READING SCHEDULE

Note: The schedule is subject to revision. All readings are available on Moodle.

Date/Week	Topics/Assignments	Readings and other info
Jan. 6-12/Week 1	Introduction to Environmental Ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> David Suzuki and Holy Dressel, "Bigfoot" Andrew Kernohan, "Introduction to Environmental Ethics"; "Metaethics"
Jan. 13-19/Week 2	Ethical Theory: Ethical Egoism & Consequentialism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Andrew Kernohan, "Ethical Egoism"; "Utilitarianism"
Jan. 20-26/Week 3	Ethical Theory: Virtue Ethics, Rights & Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Andrew Kernohan, "Virtue Ethics"; "Rights"; "Justice"
Jan. 26	Written Assignment #1	Due: Sunday, January 26 (via Moodle)
Jan. 27- Feb. 2/Week 4	Environmental Ethics: Roots of the Ecological Crisis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lynn White Jr., "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis" Clive Ponting, "Ways of Thought"
Feb. 2-9/Week 5	Environmental Ethics: Roots of the Ecological Crisis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aldo Leopold, "Thinking Like A Mountain"; "The Land Ethic"
Feb 10-16/Week 6	Environmental Ethics: Roots of the Ecological Crisis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Garrett Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons"
Feb. 16	Written Assignment #2	Due: Sunday, February 16 (via Moodle)

Feb. 17-23/Week 7	Reading Week	•
Feb. 24-Mar. 2/Week 8	Environmental Ethics: Preserving Wilderness Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martin Kreiger, "What's Wrong with Plastic Trees?" • Eric Katz, "The Call of the Wild" • Andrew Light, "Ecological Restoration and the Culture of Nature" William Denevan, "The Pristine Myth"
Mar. 2	Essay	Due: Monday, March 2 (via Moodle)
Mar. 3-9/Week 9	Environmental Ethics: Moving Beyond Anthropocentrism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peter Singer, "All Animals Are Equal" • Christopher Stone, "Should Trees Have Standing?"
Mar. 10-16/Week 10	Environmental Ethics: Moving Beyond Anthropocentrism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mark Sagoff, "Animal Liberation and Environmental Ethics: Bad Marriage, Quick Divorce" • Andrew Kernohan, "Deep Ecology"
Mar. 13	Final day to withdraw or change to audit	<i>Final day to withdraw or change to audit from credit courses without academic penalty</i>
Mar. 17-23/Week 11	Environmental Ethics: Population and Consumption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ronald Sandler, "Global Justice: Population, Poverty and the Environment"
Mar. 23	Written Assignment #3	Due: Sunday, March 23 (via Moodle)
Mar. 24-30/Week 12	Environmental Ethics: Ecology and Economics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andrew Kernohan, "Ethics and Economics"; "Free-Market Environmentalism" • David Suzuki and Holly Dressel, "Follow the Money"
Mar. 31-Apr. 6/Week 13	Environmental Ethics: Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stephen Gardiner, "Ethics and Global Climate Change" (excerpt); "A Perfect Moral Storm" • Andrew Kernohan, "Precautionary Principles"

Apr. 1	Policy Submission	Due: Tuesday, April 1 (via Moodle)
Apr. 7-13/Week 14	Review (if required)	
Apr. 17/Week 15	Final Assignment	Due: Thursday, April 17

If you have any questions, concerns or feedback about the course, please contact me at mcameron@yukonu.ca