SYLLABUS

I. Texts

Louis P. Pojman, Paul Pojman, & Katie McShane eds., Environmental Ethics: Readings in Theory and Application, 7th ed. (All readings are from the Pojman et al. text unless otherwise noted)*

II. Course Description

Welcome to Philosophy 422, Environmental Ethics. During this semester we will consider issues involving the moral significance of humans, non-human animals, plants and ecosystems. Historically, the non-human constituents of nature have been largely marginalized as a result of Western philosophy’s efforts to reason-out what is morally significant and why. However, in the 1970s a number of moral philosophers began arguing that non-human entities deserve better. Our class examines some of this early scholarship, even some that came prior to it, but we will primarily look to more recent writings that continue challenging the moral status quo.

III. General Education Core Curriculum Objectives/Outcomes

Students will demonstrate awareness of the scope and variety of texts dealing with various philosophical issues. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the historical and social contexts of philosophical movements. Students will demonstrate an ability to respond critically to works in philosophy. Students will have participated in assignments requiring them to formulate, express, and support their opinions on the philosophical issues covered in the course. Students will have acquired knowledge of the cross-cultural influence of philosophy.

IV. Program Learning Outcomes

Program Learning Outcomes: When presented with a philosophical passage, either theoretical or applied, a student will be able to perform close textual analysis.
V. **Exemplary Educational Objectives**

1. Awareness of the scope and variety of texts dealing with ethical issues.
2. Understanding of the historical and social contexts of philosophical movements in ethics.
3. Ability to respond critically to works in philosophy.
4. Ability to formulate, express, and support arguments on ethical issues.
5. Knowledge of the cross-cultural influence of philosophy.

VI. **Student Learning Outcomes**

1. Arguments for moral considerability
   a. Students will acquire factual knowledge of theories regarding moral considerability and how environmental ethicists otherwise go about problem-solving moral conflicts.
   b. Students will acquire familiarity with critiques of these theories.
   c. Students will acquire facility in the practical application of these theories.

2. Students will recognize the importance of basic ethical principles and distinctions in their own lives and will analyze and evaluate the choices they make regarding ethical issues.

VII. **Acceptable Student Behavior**

Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.

VIII. **Attendance/Participation**

An important part of doing philosophy is participating in an exchange of ideas. Several things follow from this: (1) In order to participate in class discussion, **you must do the readings assigned** (you will find a tentative course calendar on the pages that follow)—your responsibility is to make sure you have already read the material we will discuss in class for each of our particular meetings. (2) In order to participate in class, you obviously have to be present in class. Thus, you will only be allowed two unexcused absences during the semester without having your grade affected. **Beginning with your third such absence, you will**
have four points taken away from your overall point total each time you are absent. So please, don’t miss class!

IX. Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty
Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes, but is not limited to:
- using or attempting to use unauthorized materials on any class assignment or exam;
- falsifying or inventing of any information, including citations, on an assignment; and/or;
- helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism.

Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were one’s own. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:
- submitting an assignment as one's own work when it is at least partly the work of another person;
- submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from the Internet or another source; and/or,
- incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper or presentation without giving the author credit.

Penalties for Academic Dishonesty
Penalties may include, but are not limited to reprimand, no credit for the assignment or exam, re-submission of the work, make-up exam, failure of the course, or expulsion from the university.

Student Appeals
A student who wishes to appeal decisions related to academic dishonesty should follow procedures outlined in Academic Appeals by Students (Student Handbook 6.3).

Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp

X. Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (A-54)

Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in
future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

**XI. Students with Disabilities**

To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/).

**XII. Grading Policy: Papers**

There will be 3 take-home essays (5-6 pages in length and each worth 1/3 of your grade). Your papers are to be word processed. For the first two papers, everyone will write on the same topics; the third and final paper will be written upon a mutually agreed topic. Drafts are optional. I will issue paper instructions at least two weeks before the paper is due. Any drafts are due a week after the paper is assigned. I will look them over and will give you feedback prior to the paper’s ultimate due date. You are always to proofread your papers carefully before submitting them, even when submitting a draft. Indeed, I encourage you to consult the University’s Writing Lab for help regarding issues of grammar and style.

**XIII. Tentative Course Calendar**

Week 1: January 15-17
   Introduction to class

Week 2: Jan. 20-24
   Genesis 1-3, Link to reading on our course’s D2L page.
   White Jr., “The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis,” PDF of this reading is found on this course’s D2L page

Week 3: Jan. 27-31
   Reading 1: Palmer, “Contested Frameworks in Environmental Ethics”

Week 4: Feb. 3-7 (First Paper assigned on February 6th)
   Reading 10: Tom Regan, “The Radical Egalitarian Case for Animal Rights”
Week 5: Feb. 10-14
  Reading 13: Rolston III, “Naturalizing Values: Organisms and Species”
  Reading 14: Hettinger, “Comments on Holmes Rolston’s ‘Naturalizing Values’”

Week 6: Feb. 17-21 (First paper due on February 20th)
  Reading 24: Leopold, “The Land Ethic”

Week 7: Feb. 24-28
  Dixon, “Deriving Moral Considerability from Leopold’s A Sand County Almanac,” PDF on course website.

Week 8: Mar. 2-6

Week 9: Mar. 9-13: No classes, Spring Break

Week 10: Mar. 16-20 (Second Paper Assigned on March 20th)
  Reading 56: Oreskes, “The Scientific Consensus on Climate Change: How Do We Know We’re Not Wrong?”
  Reading 45: Gardiner, “Ethics and Global Climate Change: An Introduction”

Week 11: Mar. 23-27
  Reading 55: Schlosser et al., “One Thing to Do About Food”

Week 12: Mar. 30-April 3 (Second Paper due on April 3)
  Reading 32: Wenz, “Just Garbage: The Problem of Environmental Racism”
  Reading 33: Bullard, “Overcoming Racism in Environmental Decision Making”

Week 13: April 6-8 No classes on April 9-10, Easter Break
  Reading 27: McKibbon, “A Special Moment in History: The Challenge of Overpopulation and Overconsumption”

Week 14: April 13-17
  Reading 30: Hardin, “Lifeboat Ethics”
  Paper Discussion

Week 15: April 20-24: (Final Paper drafts, if you do one, are due on April 24)
  Reading 19: Attfield, Biocentrism and Artificial Life

  FINAL EXAM: Our University Scheduled Final Exam is Tuesday, May 5 from 10:45am-1:15pm. Your Third Paper Assignment is due the day of the Final Exam