UCONN
UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

Syllabus - Sprng 2022

Syllabus information may be subject to change. The most up-to-date syllabus is located within the course in HuskyCT.

Course and Instructor Information
Course Title: Environmental Philosophy (PHIL 1108E) **Credits:** 3
Format: online via HuskyCT **Prerequisites:** none
Professor: Mitchell Green **Email:** mitchell.green@uconn.edu
Office Hours/Availability: TR 12:30-1:30

Course Materials
All readings will be either on, or accessible via links from, HuskyCT.

Course Description
Welcome to Environmental Philosophy (PHIL 1108E). In this course we will explore philosophical issues raised by humanity's interaction with its environment. Topics may include ethical and policy ramifications of the use of non-human animals for food, medicine, and scientific inquiry; whether the natural world has a status calling for its protection or preservation; humanity's obligations to future generations, and how those obligations should affect our current choices; environmental justice; and movements such as deep ecology, ecofeminism, and traditional ecological knowledge. Students will have the opportunity to research environmental issues that most interest them, as well as to implement changes in their lifestyle that could have environmental significance or to advocate changes in institutions around them. This course meets CA 1; as well as UConn's Environmental Literacy requirement.

Course Objectives
By the end of the course, students should be able to:

1. Assess an argument's cogency and construct a persuasive argument of their own concerning a controversial environmental issue.
2. Explain the main features of, and differences among, the three leading ethical theories (deontological, consequentialist, and virtue-ethical theories).
3. Explain the difference between anthropocentric and non-anthropocentric approaches to environmental value.
4. Explain aesthetic concepts regarding the distinction between beauty and the sublime.
5. Show how at least one of the three ethical theories (deontological, utilitarian, and virtue-ethical theories) would guide solutions to an environmental problem.
6. Show how at least one of the four environmental movements (deep ecology, the land ethic, traditional ecological knowledge, and ecofeminism) would guide solutions to an environmental problem.

Course Outline
       Module 0: Course Orientation
       Module 1: Assessing and Constructing Arguments
       Module 2: Ethical Concepts
       Module 3: Concepts of Aesthetics
       Module 4: Environmental Issues I
       Module 5: Environmental Movements
       Module 6: Group Projects
       Module 7: Environmental Issues II
       Module 8: Solutions Posed as Individuals
       Module 9: Solutions Posed as Groups
       Module 10: Final paper for those on the "A" track.

Course Components

Journal entries: These are used as a scratch pad for your first thoughts on a topic. Only you and the instructor will have access to your journal. The instructor may comment on your journal entry for the purpose of suggesting clarifications or other points you may wish to consider as you refine your thinking.

Discussion forum posts and replies to classmates: after journaling about a topic, and refining your thoughts in light of any comments from the instructor, you will post your ideas on the discussion forum in response to the prompts that you will find there, as well as offer comments on what your classmates have posted.

Short essays: These are brief (300-600 word) essays in response to specific prompts.

Group projects: Students will work in groups of 2-3 to make presentations on a course topic that interests them. These may be narrated slideshows, podcasts, videos, or other creative ways of presenting a problem in environmental philosophy.

Lifestyle change or advocacy: Students will either adopt a change in their own lifestyle and journal about the experience, or they will develop and, where feasible, pursue a strategy for advocacy aiming to catalyze change in the world around them.

Paper (only for students seeking an A): This is a formal essay of about 1,000 words in which students will argue for a stance on a controversial position on a problem of environmental philosophy. (Paper prompts will be provided.)

Study questions for the final (only for students seeking B or above): Students will propose questions for possible inclusion on the final exam.

Course Requirements and Grading

This course uses a grading method known as "specifications grading," in which the majority of individual assignments are graded only on a "meets specifications"/ "does not meet specifications" basis rather than with letter grades. (The exception is the final exam, which is graded with traditional letter grades.) Rather than being determined by a weighted average of letter-graded assignments, your overall course grade is determined by the number of assignments that meet "specs". If, for instance, you feel you will be content with a B in this course, then just do the assignments needed for that grade (specifically, the bottom three rows) and do not bother with the assignment required for an A (the green box at the top of the pyramid); similarly for the other letter grades. This grading policy may be visualized with the aid of the pyramid below:

Specifications Pyramid for Phil 1108E

A	**M: "module"**			**M10: Final paper**			
B			**M7: Env. issues #2** (All: journal, discussion, & short paper)	**Submit 3 final exam study questions**	**Final exam** (>80%)		
C		**M5: Movements** (All: journal, discussion, & short paper)	**M7: Env. issues #2** (Journal & discussion only)	**M8: Solutions** (All: journal & assignment)	**M9: Group solutions** (All: proposed plan & group plan)	**Final exam** (>70%)	
D	**M1: Arguments** (All: quiz & short paper)	**M2: Ethics** (All: quiz, journal, discussion, & short paper)	**M3: Aesthetics** (All: quiz, journal, discussion, & short paper)	**M4: Env. issues #1** (All: journal, discussion, & short paper)	**M5: Movements** (Journal & discussion only)	**M6: Group projects** (All: outline, presentation, & share with class)	**Final exam** (>60%)

The above pyramid may also be translated into more traditional terms so that you may also see how + and - grades are achieved.

A	Meet specs for all blocks on A row and below
A-	Meet specs for all blocks on A row and below, but 60% to 80% on final exam
B+	Meet specs for all blocks on B row and below, plus >90% on final exam OR Meet specs for all blocks on A row and below, but <60% on final exam
B	Meet specs for all blocks on B row and below
B-	Meet specs for all blocks on C row and below, plus 2 of the 3 blocks from B row
C+	Meet specs for all blocks on C row and below, plus 1 block from B row
C	Meet specs for all blocks on C row and below
C-	Meet specs for all blocks on D row, plus 4 of the 5 blocks on C row
D+	Meet specs for all blocks on D row, plus 1 block from C row
D	Meet specs for all blocks on D row
D-	Meet specs for 6 of the 7 blocks on D row

Due Dates and Late Policy
All course due dates are identified in the above schedule. Deadlines are based on Eastern Time; if you are in a different time zone, please adjust your submission times accordingly. *The instructor reserves the right to change dates accordingly as the semester progresses. All changes will be communicated in an appropriate manner.*

Late Policy: Late assignments will not be accepted, as they will not meet specifications. Students will instead need to expend a token in order to have the assignment evaluated.

Feedback and Grades
I will make every effort to provide feedback and assessments of submitted work within 24 hours of its submission. To keep track of your performance in the course, refer to My Grades in HuskyCT.

Learning Tokens and how they work: Learning tokens (or just 'tokens' for short) are a common feature in courses using specifications grading. Each student begins the term with two tokens, and may earn a third by passing the course readiness quiz with a 90% grade or higher. Then, you may expend a token if you ever find that you've submitted an assignment that does not meet specifications for that assignment. By expending a token, you are then allowed to submit that assignment a second time. You must also use a token in order to gain permission to submit an assignment after the due date. To use a token, email the instructor.

Weekly Time Commitment
You should expect to dedicate 25-30 hours a week to this course. This expectation is based on the various course activities, assignments, and assessments and the University of Connecticut's policy regarding credit hours. More information related to hours per week per credit can be accessed at the Online Student website.

Student Authentication and Verification

The University of Connecticut is required to verify the identity of students who participate in online courses and to establish that students who register in an online course are the same students who participate in and complete the course activities and assessments and receive academic credit. Verification and authentication of student identity in this course will include:

1. Secure access to the learning management system using your unique UConn NetID and password.
2. Meeting synchronously via Collaborate with the instructor at the beginning of the course.
3. Ability to answer questions about submitted work at the request of the instructor.

Professor-Created Videos: The web-based video delivery of each class in this course is for sole use of the students enrolled in this course. Any other use of these class videos or any pictures or derivatives of the class videos without the written consent of the course's professor is prohibited.

Student-Created Videos: The videos created by students as part of this course are for sole use of the students enrolled in this course. Any other use of these videos or any pictures or derivatives of the videos without the written consent of the video creator is prohibited.

Copyright

My lectures, syllabus, notes, recordings, handouts, and displays are protected by state common law and federal copyright law. They are my own original expression and I've recorded them prior or during my class in order to ensure that I obtain copyright protection. Students are authorized to take notes in my class; however, this authorization extends only to making one set of notes for your own personal use and no other use. I will inform you as to whether you are authorized to record my lectures at the beginning of each semester. If you are so authorized to record my lectures, you may not copy this recording or any other material, provide copies of either to anyone else, or make a commercial use of them without prior permission from me.

Student Responsibilities and Resources

As a member of the University of Connecticut student community, you are held to certain standards and academic policies. In addition, there are numerous resources available to help you succeed in your academic work. Review these important standards, policies and resources, which include:

- The Student Code
  - Academic Integrity
  - Resources on Avoiding Cheating and Plagiarism
- Copyrighted Materials
- Credit Hours and Workload
- Netiquette and Communication
- Adding or Dropping a Course
- Academic Calendar
- Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment and Inappropriate Romantic Relationships
- Sexual Assault Reporting Policy

Students with Disabilities

The University of Connecticut is committed to protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities and assuring that the learning environment is accessible. Students who require accommodations should contact the Center for Students with Disabilities, Wilbur Cross Building Room 204, (860) 486-2020 or http://csd.uconn.edu/.

Blackboard measures and evaluates accessibility using two sets of standards: the WCAG 2.0 standards issued by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act issued in the United States federal government." (Retrieved March 24, 2013 from Blackboard's website)

Software/Technical Requirements (with Accessibility and Privacy Information)

The software/technical requirements for this course include:

- HuskyCT/Blackboard (HuskyCT/ Blackboard Accessibility Statement, HuskyCT/ Blackboard Privacy Policy)
- Adobe Acrobat Reader (Adobe Reader Accessibility Statement, Adobe Reader Privacy Policy)
- Google Apps (Google Apps Accessibility, Google for Education Privacy Policy)
- Microsoft Office (free to UConn students through uconn.onthehub.com) (Microsoft Accessibility Statement, Microsoft Privacy Statement)
- Dedicated access to high-speed internet with a minimum speed of 1.5 Mbps (4 Mbps or higher is recommended).
- WebCam with microphone

For information on managing your privacy at the University of Connecticut, visit the University's Privacy page.

NOTE: This course has NOT been designed for use with mobile devices.

Help

This course is facilitated online using the learning management platform, HuskyCT. The IT Knowledge Base provides students with support, troubleshooting, and how-to information about HuskyCT. The IT Knowledge Base includes a video tour of HuskyCT.

For technical help with HuskyCT, you have access to the in-person/live person support options available during regular business hours through the Help Center. You also have 24x7 Course Support outside of business hours, including access to live chat, phone, and support documents.

Technical and Academic Help provides a guide to frequently asked questions for online students.

Study Groups

Are you interested in forming a study group with other students in the class? There is a study group application in Nexus that can help you get started. View this video for more information.

Minimum Technical Skills

To be successful in this course, you will need the following technical skills:

- Use electronic mail with attachments.
- Save files in commonly used word processing program formats.
- Copy and paste text, graphics or hyperlinks.
- Work within two or more browser windows simultaneously.
- Open and access PDF files.
- Use a webcam with a microphone.

Evaluation of the Course

Students will be provided an opportunity to evaluate instruction in this course using the University's standard procedures, which are administered by the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness (OIRE).

Additional informal formative surveys may also be administered within the course as an optional evaluation tool.