

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
Undergraduate Course Outline 2015-2016

Philosophy 2033A: Introduction to Environmental Philosophy
Previously Philosophy110

Fall Term 2015
MWF 9:30–10:30
Talbot College 341

Instructor: Wayne C. Myrvold
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Office: Stevenson Hall 4143
Office Hours: MW 11:30–12:30, or by appointment

DESCRIPTION

We live in a time in which environmental issues are very much in the news, with discussions regarding climate change and its consequences looming large.

This course is about how to think about such things. How are we to react to sometimes contradictory information in the media? Once we believe we know what is happening, what are the causes and solutions? Is environmental degradation an inevitable by-product of the presence of more than 7 billion human beings, or is it rooted in some fact about our culture? Is it the Western attitude towards the natural world? Is it something about our economic system? If we want to protect our environment, what is it that is worth saving, and why? Do we have a duty to protect Nature which is independent of its benefits to human beings? Is governmental regulation the answer, or should we let markets take care of things? This course is an invitation to think about and discuss these philosophical questions and others, and to investigate what others have said about them.

TEXTS

Assigned readings available on the course OWL site.

OBJECTIVES

This course has three main objectives. The first is to give a broad overview of the sorts of environmental issues that are facing us today. The second is for students to become familiar with the main schools of thought in approaching such issues. The third, and most important, is for students to develop a set of skills that will help them make up their own minds about environmental issues in a changing political and social context.

REQUIREMENTS

Attendance and active participation in class discussion; three short (2–3 pp) written assignments; 2 tests.

- Written Assignments:

# 1 (Due Sept. 25)	10%
# 2 (Due Nov. 6)	10%
# 3 (Due Dec. 9)	10%
- Tests:

Test 1 (Oct. 9)	20%
Test 2 (Nov. 20)	20%
Test 3 (TBA, exam period)	30%

Assignments are to be handed in by 4:00 PM on the due date. If you are unable to hand your assignment directly to the instructor, place it in the Philosophy Department drop-off box, which is on the first floor of Stevenson Hall. *Make sure that your student number and the instructor's name are on your assignment.* Late assignments will be penalized 5% per day late.

In conformity with departmental policy all written assignments must be submitted to turnitin.com for plagiarism checking by the due date. Assignments not submitted to turnitin by the due date will be counted as late, and students will not receive credit for written assignments not submitted to turnitin.com.

No papers will be accepted after the last day of classes, Dec. 9, 2015.

AUDIT

Students wishing to audit the course should consult with the instructor prior to or during the first week of classes.

The **Department of Philosophy Policies** which govern the conduct, standards, and expectations for student participation in Philosophy courses is available in the Undergraduate section of the Department of Philosophy website at <http://uwo.ca/philosophy/undergraduate/proceduresappeals.html>. It is your responsibility to understand the policies set out by the Senate and the Department of Philosophy, and thus ignorance of these policies cannot be used as grounds of appeal.

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.