

## CPSP 218E Environmental Ethics

*"We live in a world of problems, but environmental ethics reminds us not only that these mountains need to be saved and that they can be, but that they are worth saving. Environmental ethics teaches us how to enjoy the world, not just how to fix it."*

*Willott and Schmidtz (2001)*

### CCC 1105

**Sections 0101:** TU 7-7:50

**0201:** TU 6-6:50

**0301:** TH 6-6:50



Ken Cousins, Instructor  
[kcousins@gvpt.umd.edu](mailto:kcousins@gvpt.umd.edu)  
CPSP: (301) 314-1519  
1215 Centerville Hall  
T/TH 5:15-5:45 pm,  
or by appointment  
GVPT: (301) 405-6862  
3114P Tydings Hall

In this course, we study and reflect on the place of nature in human society – as well as the place of humans in nature – from various perspectives, emphasizing real examples of environmental ethics. Students will read, discuss, and write about personal and social values that frame our ideas about nature, and therefore influence the actions of individuals, organizations, and governments. This colloquium is a 1-credit class for which you are expected to spend 2-3 hours on out-of-class research, reading, or writing each week.

There is no required textbook for this course – instead, most readings are either available from McKeldin reserve, or through the course WebCT page: [www.courses.umd.edu](http://www.courses.umd.edu)

### Course Requirements and Grading:

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Participation                               | 35 |
| WebCT comments                              | 15 |
| Nature album OR<br>Best Environmental Ethic | 20 |
| Field trip reflection                       | 10 |
| Final role-playing project                  | 20 |

**Total points 100**

**Each week** you will be required to:

1. Read the assigned article(s)
2. Enter a comment or question in WebCT ***no later than noon the day before class***
3. Read your classmates' WebCT comments, and be prepared to discuss them in class
4. Actively participate in class discussions and exercises

### Participation and WebCT comments (50 points total)

Informed discussion is vital to understanding the complex ideas we will encounter in this course. Each week, you will be expected to read the assigned article(s), post a thoughtful comment or question to the WebCT discussion board, read your classmates' comments, and be an active participant in class discussions.

- **In-class participation:** (35 points) will be based on the quality and frequency of your contributions to the discussions and exercises in class, your work in small groups, and extra initiative taken outside of class.
- **WebCT comments:** (3 pts/week 15 points total) Notice that there are 8 weeks where WebCT comments are required, meaning that you will have 3 weeks (of your choosing) where you will not have to comment (but you are still heartily encouraged to do so). **You must post your comments by noon the day before class to earn credit for that week.**

### Nature Album or Best Environmental Ethic: (choose one – 20 points)

Choose whichever project you prefer. Grading will be based on: analysis of social and ethical values, creativity, and clarity of presentation.

- **Nature Album Project:** You must produce one entry for a *Nature Album* (see Cronan's Uncommon Ground in the ES Library). Your entry should demonstrate the diversity of ways that humans value and "construct" nature today. **You will need to read all the Albums in Cronan's Uncommon Ground (see page 11), which can be found in the ES Library.**
- **Best Environmental Ethic Project:** Using an accepted ethical theory framework (which I will provide), you must create your own environmental ethic. You should think analytically about the role of nature in our lives, the values and morals we live by in our complex relationship with the non-human world.

*Detailed guidelines and grading criteria for these projects will be available on WebCT soon.*

### Field Trip Reflections: (10 points)

Each of you must attend one Environmental Studies-sponsored field trip during the semester and write a 2-page reflection paper, based on the handout provided during the trip. Information about field trips will be given in advance or will be available online. **Papers are due no later than 3:00pm on the Friday following the trip.** Your grade will be based on both the clarity of your writing and how well you address the issues presented on the handout.

### Role-Playing Project: (20 points)

Near the beginning of the semester, students may submit suggestions for a role-play topic. Once we have chosen a final topic, I will divide you into small teams, each of which will be required to represent assigned viewpoints in class debates on November 28<sup>th</sup> (Section 0301), Dec. 5<sup>th</sup> (Section 0201), or Dec. 12<sup>th</sup> (Section 0101).

**NOTE:** Each group must prepare a 1-page handout for the class beforehand, outlining its position. You will receive further details once we have chosen a topic. Grades will be based on the thoroughness of your preparation and the quality of arguments made.

**Note: These class sessions will be on Tuesday evenings from 6-7:50pm. If you have a scheduling conflict with this, please let me know as soon as possible!**

**Submitting assignments electronically:**

You may turn in your graded assignments as MS Word.doc documents via e-mail, but **it is your responsibility to ensure that I have received these in good order**. All assignments handed in via email should include your name and Section number in the subject line. Files should be named with your last name, the date the assignment is due, and the title of the assignment. **Work submitted via e-mail is due before class.**

**Course Policies:**

**Unexcused absences** will result in a grade of zero for all of that day's assignments. Students with excused absences (due to illness or a university-sponsored event) may make up the day's assignments and should consult with me to set up a schedule for doing so.

**Documentation with a contact phone number must be provided for all excused absences.**

To make-up your participation grade, you may write a 1-2 page paper on the day's topic, or you may arrange with me to attend one of the other sections for one week.

If you know ahead of time that you will be absent, **you must inform me at least 24 hours before your absence**. It is your responsibility to keep me informed.

**Cheating: DON'T BE A FOOL.** You may study with other students, but always produce your own work. **I do not tolerate plagiarism – you must cite all sources.** You are responsible to live up to the University's Honor Code – and I WILL hold you to it.

**Grading Policies:**

**Late homework** will lose 10 percent of the points possible for every 24 hours that it is overdue, including weekends and holidays.

Please write in clear, grammatical English – *I will deduct for spelling and punctuation errors*. Please use 1" borders and 12-point Times New Roman. Your work should be polished and professional. If you need help with your writing, the University Writing Center (5-3785) provides free assistance to all students. You may also come to me for help.

Please keep all of your graded work throughout the semester in case you have a question about your final course grade. **To contest a grade, you must send me an email detailing why you believe your work should be re-graded no later than 2 months from the last day of the semester.** If you put forth a valid argument, I can be flexible on this – we all make mistakes.

CPSP 218E Environmental Ethics

|   | Topic   | Date  | Readings  | Assignments     |
|---|---|---|---|-----------------|
| 1 | Introduction  | TU 9-5<br>TH 9-7  | None  | In-class survey |
| 2 | Environmental ethics in thought and action                      | TU 9-12<br>TH 9-14  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Syllabus</li> <li>▪ Sagoff 1991 "Zuckerman's Dilemma" at WebCT</li> <li>▪ Taphorn 2003 "Forging the Environmental Ethic: Transforming the Army through Environmental Stewardship" at WebCT or <a href="http://www.wood.army.mil/engrmag/PDFs%20for%20Apr-Jun%2003/Taphornprint.pdf">www.wood.army.mil/engrmag/PDFs%20for%20Apr-Jun%2003/Taphornprint.pdf</a></li> </ul>  | WebCT comment   |
| 3 | Animal nature and wilderness<br><b>Film:</b> Grizzly Man (2005) | <b>All classes meet</b><br><b>TU 9-19</b><br><b>6-8pm</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Des Jardins 2000 "Responsibilities to the Natural World: A Case for Animals" from <u>Environmental Ethics</u></li> </ul>   | WebCT comment   |
| 4 | Boundaries, survival, and ethics                                | TU 9-26<br>TH 9-28  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Come prepared to discuss the previous week's film and reading as well as:</li> <li>▪ Leopold 1949 "The Land Ethic" from <i>A Sand County Almanac</i> at WebCT or <a href="http://www.luminary.us/leopold/land_ethic.html">www.luminary.us/leopold/land_ethic.html</a></li> </ul>   | WebCT comment   |
| 5 | Food, farming, and sustainable agriculture                      | TU 10-3<br>TH 10-5  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Kingsolver 2005 "Lily's Chickens" at WebCT or <a href="http://www.motherearthnews.com/Nature_and_Environment/2005_August_September/Viewpoint">www.motherearthnews.com/Nature_and_Environment/2005_August_September/Viewpoint</a></li> <li>▪ Berry 1999 "Conserving Farm-Raised Children at WebCT or <a href="http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1295/is_1_63/ai_53531069">www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1295/is_1_63/ai_53531069</a></li> <li>▪ Guthman 2003 Fast food, Organic Food at WebCT or <a href="http://www2.ucsc.edu/cgirs/research/environment/afsrp/publications/Guthman_2003.pdf">www2.ucsc.edu/cgirs/research/environment/afsrp/publications/Guthman_2003.pdf</a></li> </ul>   | WebCT comment   |
| 6 | Urban, suburban, rural and wild: nature and settlement          | TU 10-10<br>TH 10-12                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sanderson et al. 2002 "The Human Footprint and the Last of the Wild" <a href="http://www.wcs.org/media/file/human_footprint2.pdf">www.wcs.org/media/file/human_footprint2.pdf</a></li> <li>▪ <b>(Skim)</b> Grumet 2000 "Chesapeake Metropolis, 1930 to 2000" <a href="http://www.chesapeakebay.net/pubs/gateways/plainandpiedmont/HF-CH9.pdf">www.chesapeakebay.net/pubs/gateways/plainandpiedmont/HF-CH9.pdf</a></li> </ul> <p><b>AND</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Karnasiewicz 2005 "Do today's kids have nature deficit disorder?" <a href="http://dir.salon.com/story/mwt/feature/2005/06/02/Louv">http://dir.salon.com/story/mwt/feature/2005/06/02/Louv</a><br/><b>or listen to the first 4 minutes of:</b></li> <li>▪ WildeBeat 2006 "Kid's Nature, Part 1" <a href="http://www.wildebeat.net/index.cgi/2006/06/15">www.wildebeat.net/index.cgi/2006/06/15</a></li> </ul> | WebCT comment   |

CPSP 218E Environmental Ethics

| Topic   | Date   | Readings   | Assignments               |
|---|--|--|---------------------------|
| 7 Ethical business<br><b>Speaker:</b> Alix Davidson, Coop America | <b>All classes meet</b><br>TH 10-19,<br>6-7PM in<br>PLS 1140 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Skim <a href="http://www.coopamerica.org">www.coopamerica.org</a> for at least 20 minutes</li> <li>Hollender "The Value of Values" from <i>What Matters Most</i> at WebCT</li> </ul> <p><b>REMEMBER: CLASS MEETS THURSDAY 6-6:50 IN 1140 PLANT SCIENCES</b></p>                   | WebCT comment             |
| 8 Consumerism, simplicity, and survival                           | TU 10-24<br>TH 10-26   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading TBA</li> <li>Come prepared to discuss the previous week's speaker, and both this and last week's article</li> </ul>   | WebCT comment             |
| 9 Open Discussion of any topics thus far                          | TU 10-31<br>TH 11-02   | No new readings, but come prepared to discuss past readings  | <b>No WebCT this week</b> |
| 10 Moving Toward Sustainability                                   | TU 11-07<br>TH 11-09   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ruckelshaus "Toward a Sustainable World" from <i>People, Penguins and Plastic Trees</i>.</li> <li>Sauer "Global Ethics: An American Perspective" at <a href="http://www.oriononline.org/pages/om/02-1om/Sauer.html">www.oriononline.org/pages/om/02-1om/Sauer.html</a></li> </ul> | WebCT comment             |
| 11 Nature Albums / Best Envl Ethic Paper                          | TU 11-14<br>TH 11-16   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cronan's "Nature Albums"</li> </ul>   | <b>No WebCT this week</b> |
| 12 THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS  |  | Gobble, gobble.  | Eat and be merry          |
| 13 Final project Section 0101                                     | <b>All classes meet</b><br>TU 11-28 in<br>PLS 1140           | None   | <b>No WebCT this week</b> |
| 14 Final project Section 0201                                     | <b>All classes meet</b><br>TU 12-5 in<br>PLS 1140            | None   | <b>No WebCT this week</b> |
| 15 Final project Section 0301                                     | <b>All classes meet</b><br>TU 12-12 in<br>PLS 1140           | None   | <b>No WebCT this week</b> |