Philosophy 283: Environmental Ethics  
Professor: Christopher Martin

Class Hours: TR 12:00-1:20  
Classroom: MAC 107  
Office Hours: W 3:00-5:00, TH 1:00-2:00, and by appt.

Learning Outcomes pertaining to Content
- Raise your awareness of certain deep philosophical questions about the nature and location of value
- Appreciate and consider competing conceptions of value
- Explore the space wherein idealistic philosophical thinking and practical, worldly problems confront one another
- Apply philosophical positions regarding value and its location to concrete questions about land management, resource allocation, animal care, and our responsibilities toward future generations

Learning Outcomes pertaining to Skills
- Become more confident in your ability to identify, articulate and defend your own opinions on controversial philosophical and/or ethical issues
- Sharpen your critical reading, speaking and writing skills
- Become a more informed and aware member of your global climate and community

Philosophical Questions We Will Embrace
- Why Study environmental ethics?
- Is value confined to the human experience?
- What might value, located outside of the human experience, be like?
- What distinguishes those entities deserving of moral considerability from those that do not deserve moral considerability?

Practical Questions We Will Embrace
- Are we and our environment better served by prioritizing human interests?
- How do we adjudicate competing interests between entities of relative moral worth?
- Are we capable of addressing these issues philosophically? Might it be better to privilege practicality over philosophical complexity?
- Is the size and technological advancement of the human population sustainable? Can we employ technology for environmental benefit rather than harm?
- To what extent is this a global problem? Are we debating the wrong issues?

Assignments:
- Complete 4 Argument Outlines and Critiques -- 10 %
- Complete a short paper defending Anthropocentrism or Nonanthropocentrism -- 20 %
- Participate in a class debate regarding the reach of moral considerability -- 10 %
- Complete a short paper articulating and defending an ethically sound policy initiative for one environmental problem -- 20 %
- Briefly present an ethically sound policy initiative for one environmental problem -- 10 %
- Complete a Final Exam -- 30 %

Schedule:
Week 1: Why Study Environmental Ethics:
The Climax of Humanity – George Musser
Read George Sessions, J. Baird Callicott, Ian Smith, Holmes Rolston III, Michael E. Zimmerman, and Anthony Weston. Identify the central reason each offers. Then choose one that you most agree with.

**Week 2: Anthropocentrism:**
Humans as Moral Ends - St. Thomas Aquinas
Nonhumans as Machines - Rene Descartes
Mechanistic Metaphysics - Isaac Newton

**Weeks 3-4: Nonanthropocentrism:**
Walking - Henry David Thoreau
Should Trees Have Standing? – Christopher D. Stone
The End of Anthropocentrism? – Mary Midgley
Is the Crown of Creation a Dunce Cap? – Chip Ward

**Weeks 5-7: What is the Scope of Moral Considerability?**
All Animals are Equal - Peter Singer
The Ethics of Respect for Nature – Paul W. Taylor
The Land Ethic - Aldo Leopold
The Conceptual Foundations of the Land Ethic – J. Baird Callicott
Gaia As Seen Through the Atmosphere – James E. Lovelock

**Week 8: Class Debate Defining the Extent of Moral Consideration**

**Week 9: Environmental Pragmatism**
Raymond Bonner: Peril and Hope for Africa's Wildlife (D2L)
David Schmidtz: When Preservationism Doesn't Preserve (D2L)

**Week 10: Ecological Science and Environmental Ethics:**
The Metaphysical Implications of Ecology – J Baird Callicott
The Ends of the World as We Know Them – Jared Diamond

**Weeks 11-12: The Population/Poverty Debate**
Impact of Population Growth – Paul R. Ehrlich and John P. Holdren
The Ecological Necessity of Confronting the Problem of Human Overpopulation – Garrett Hardin
Population: Delusion and Reality – Amartya Sen

**Week 13: Other Topics**
More Profit with Less Carbon – Amory B. Lovins (D2L)
A Sunshade for Planet Earth – Robert Kunzig (D2L)
The Ethics of Climate Change – John Broome (D2L)

**Week 14: Conference on Policy Initiatives**
Student Presentations