

SOUTHEAST COMMUNITY COLLEGE
DIVISION OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
Humanities
Revision Date: 07-01-19

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION

Course Number: PHIL2250
Course Title: Environmental Ethics
Prerequisite(s):
Catalog Description: An examination of ethical issues that arise from the interaction of human beings and the natural environment. What is moral value and where does it come from? Do things we find in nature, such as individual organisms, species, or ecosystems, have moral value above and beyond their usefulness to human beings? Should the scope of human beings' moral concern extend beyond humanity, to other parts of nature? What concrete environmental policies should be pursued in light of our answers to these moral questions?
Credit Hours: 3.0
Class Hours: 45
Lab Hours: 0
Total Contact Hours: 45

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES: *Course will:*

- A. Examine central philosophical theories about the nature and source of morality and moral value.
- B. Survey writers who argue for expanding the scope our ethical concern to extend beyond human beings, and critical responses to such arguments.
- C. Explore the question of which specific environmental policies ought to be pursued in light of these theoretical considerations.

III. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND GENERAL EDUCATION LEARNING OUTCOMES

- A. Student Learning Outcomes: *Student will be able to:*
 - 1. Understand and explain the main perspectives on the question of moral value, where it comes from, and what sorts of things have it.
 - 2. Understand and explain the debate between those who argue that the scope of humans' ethical concern should extend beyond other humans, and those who deny this.
 - 3. Evaluate several concrete environmental policies, how they are intended to work, their costs and benefits, and how they can help (or hinder) ethical human interaction with the natural environment.
 - 4. Present and defend his/her own informed and plausible views on these issues, both orally and in writing.
- B. General Education Learning Outcomes
 - 1. GELO #3: Critical Thinking & Problem Solving
 - Outcome: Synthesize information to arrive at reasoned solutions to problems.
 - Outcome: Evaluate ideas presented in writing, media, speech, or artistic presentations.
 - Outcome: Evaluate the validity of arguments, alternatives, data, outcomes, and/or impacts of actions.
 - 2. GELO #4: Global Awareness and Citizenship
 - Outcome: Identify and evaluate different theoretical or philosophical perspectives and their relevance to ethical decision-making.

IV. CONTENT/TOPICAL OUTLINE (*course outline may provide more detailed information*)

- A. Philosophical foundations of environmentalism
 - 1. Traditional accounts of moral value (e.g., Aristotelian, Kantian, Utilitarian), and how these perspective address (or fail to address) moral concerns regarding humans and the environment.
 - 2. New approaches to moral value (e.g., Leopold's Land Ethic, Næss's Deep Ecology, Singer and Regan on animals, Ecofeminism), and criticisms of these approaches.
- B. Environmentalism in practice
(Suggested topics)
 - 1. Restoring and preserving wilderness
 - 2. The "animal rights" movement and its relation to environmental ethics
 - 3. Overpopulation
 - 4. Cities
 - 5. Global poverty and environmentalism
 - 6. Climate change
 - 7. Food
 - 8. Environmental activism

V. INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

- A. Required Text(s):
 - 1. Schmitdz, David and Dan Shahar, *Environmental Ethics: What Really Matters, What Really Works*, Oxford University Press, 3rd edition, 2018. ISBN 13: 978-0190259228.
- B. Other resources:
 - 1. Handouts supplied by instructor or web address links for appropriate philosophy websites.
 - 2. Outside reading/Research required: a research paper based on an appropriate topic for the course along with smaller essays based on the course readings, lectures, documentaries, films and discussions.

VI. METHODS OF PRESENTATION/INSTRUCTION

- A. Methods of presentation typically include a combination of the following:
 - 1. Lectures
 - 2. Small and large discussion groups
 - 3. Collaborative projects
 - 4. Research
 - 5. Peer response
 - 6. Essays
 - 7. Student presentation on assigned projects

VII. METHODS OF EVALUATION

- A. Methods of evaluation typically include a combination of the following:
 - 1. In-class and collaborative project participation
 - 2. Daily work
 - 3. Quizzes and tests
 - 4. Oral and written assignments
- B. SCC GRADING SCALE

A+	95-100	C+	75-79	F	59 or less
A	90-94	C	70-74		
B+	85-89	D+	65-69		
B	80-84	D	60-64		

VIII. SPECIFIC COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- A. General Requirements

1. To receive a passing grade, students must complete all work assigned by the instructor, and attend class within instructor guidelines.
2. Content, assessment and schedule determined by instructor.