

Course Information



Intro Environmental Ethics(HU)

PHIL 2300-001

Fall 2025

Course Section Information

Days: Tuesdays and Thursdays

Time: 10:00–11:20AM

Campus: Redwood (Taylorsville)

Classroom: AAB 323

Course Description

This course introduces students to moral philosophies focused on our conceptions of, and obligations to, the environment; including topics such as moral extensionism; animal rights and welfare; ecocentrism, deep ecology and ecofeminism; environmental justice, future generations, and sustainability; and more. Application to classic and contemporary environmental issues.

Semester(s) taught: Fall and Spring

Course Prerequisites/Co-requisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Textbooks, Readings, and Course Materials

Title: All course readings are OER / available online for free.

For more information on textbook accessibility, contact Accessibility & Disability Services at ads@slcc.edu.

Course Student Learning Outcomes

- Students will demonstrate knowledge of how traditional ethical standpoints (utilitarianism, deontology, rights-based theories, virtues-based theories) inform us about how humans (should) think about and behave towards the environment.
- Student will demonstrate knowledge of how ethical philosophers, in response to traditional theories, have critically analyzed traditional, western, human-centered ethic, and have developed more eco-centric models, and/or models that expand our conceptions of morality to include animals and the non-human natural world.
- Students will demonstrate knowledge of how humans have historically viewed their conceptions to nature. In particular, students will encounter how religious, scientific and economic standpoints reflect, and respond to, various conceptions of nature, our place in it, and our responsibilities and obligations towards it.
- Students will demonstrate abilities to draw understandings of philosophical concepts, arguments and explorations through substantive encounters with, and analyses of primary philosophical texts, while grounding foundational understandings through secondary textual readings as needed.
- Students will demonstrate learned-skills of critical analysis and application of primary texts as cultural and intellectual expressions with historical, philosophical, hermeneutic, and cultural features.
- Students will situate environmental events, philosophies and concepts in their appropriate cultural contexts, and to evaluate the historical, cultural, moral and conceptual forces that shape and are shaped by those contexts.
- Students will demonstrate effective engagement with diverse moral theories and perspectives: navigating and negotiating disparate value systems and meanings, identifying, analyzing and responding to the complexities of the human condition,

and in particular our relationship to, conceptions of, and obligations to the nonhuman natural world.

- Given real-life ethical dilemmas, Students will demonstrate the ability to clearly present theoretical issues and concepts that are applicable, and suggest possible ethically-grounded solutions/ conclusions.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to speak analytically and effectively in applying theory to practice, with a focus on expanding insights and points of inquiry.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to effectively and concisely offer written arguments and analysis in order to communicate their understandings of the theoretical frameworks and substantive knowledge, apply theories to cases, expand points of inquiry, and persuade their audience to a particular position.
- Students will demonstrate the development of skills and practices of critical analysis and expression that enable them to respectfully and effectively participate in public life with those who differ in perspectives and positions on important issues.
- Students will demonstrate self-reflective communication, as they are asked to explore, evaluate, develop and express their own personal positions and perspectives.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to compare and analyze the variety of theoretical approaches they encounter through an exploration of the primary texts and styles of the philosophers from whom those ideas originate, as well as their respondents.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to understand the impact, implications and applications of environmental ethical theories, and to identify underlying moral and conceptual frameworks, understand how contexts affect ideas, and the dialogic nature of philosophical thinking.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to “shift perspectives,” exploring dilemmas by shifting their analytical lenses from one position/framework on a debate to another; as well as shifting their analytical lenses from humans and/or themselves as a “center” of moral experience to other beings/locations/ perspectives, in order to “recenter” the inquiry and debate.

- Students will demonstrate learned skills of critical reading and analysis, including skills of philosophical critique: breaking-down and evaluating arguments as encountered in primary texts.
- Students will demonstrate their abilities to identify and understand complexities involved in socially and cultural pressing philosophical issues, perspectives and approaches.
- Students will demonstrate their abilities to reflect on, evaluate and develop their own personal positions and perspectives.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to apply skills of analysis and evaluation of environmental ethical theory and practice for the express purpose of improving their abilities to engage in creative, intelligent and coherent discussion and problem-solving regarding environmental issues which pose critical challenges to our world—locally, nationally and globally.
- Students will demonstrate the ability apply skills that enable them to respectfully and effectively participate in public life with those who differ in perspectives and positions on important issues.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to recognize the complexities involved in environmental issues, perspectives and approaches. This attention to complexity and multiplicity will contribute to their active engagement in civic life.
- Students will demonstrate the application of skills and practices of critical analysis and expression that will enable them to respectfully and effectively participate in public and professional life with those who differ in perspectives and positions on important issues.
- Students will demonstrate skills of understanding and working effectively and respectfully amidst the complexities involved in socially- and culturally-pressing philosophical issues, perspectives and approaches. These skills will enable them to engage in civic and professional life meaningfully and impactfully.
- Students will demonstrate learned skills of critical reading and analysis. These skills include philosophical critique: breaking-down and evaluating arguments as encountered in primary texts. But they also include skills of source analysis and evaluation (e.g. internet research and academic scholarship).

Assignment Schedule

Due Date	Assignment Name	Assignment Type	Points
	Introduce Yourself	Discussion	0
	Introduce Yourself	Discussion	0
	Introduce Yourself	Discussion	0
	Roll Call Attendance	Assignment	100
9/1/25	Discussion 1: Introduce Yourself / Issues of Environmental Concern	Discussion	20
9/8/25	Extra Credit Photo Upload	Assignment	0
9/8/25	Reflection 1: Responses to Pollan on Gardens and Mediation and Utilitarianism	Assignment	20
9/15/25	Quiz 1: Utilitarianism	Quiz	20

Coursework & Assignment Descriptions

Assignment.	Due Date	Grading
Weekly Writing (10)	Mondays @ Midnight	200 pts. 20%
Nature Phenomenology	Sep. 28	75 pts. 7.5%
Midterm Exam	Oct. 23	100 pts. 10%
Case Study Group Presentation	Nov. 4/6	150 pts. 15%

Group Case Study Peer Reviews	Nov. 10	25 pts. 2.5%
Attendance	NA	100 pts. 10%
Participation	NA	100 pts. 10%
Final Project	Dec. 8 / 10	100pts. 10%
Final Exam	Dec. 12–18	150 pts. 15%

Grading Scale

A = 930+

A- = 900-929

B+ = 867-899

B = 833-866

B- = 800-832

C+ = 767-799

C = 733-766

C- = 700-732

D+ = 667-699

D = 633-666

D- = 600-632

E= 0-599

Engagement Plan

- I will respond to email within two working days (i.e., not on weekends). I will offer feedback on major assignments within two weeks. The best way to contact me is

through Canvas Inbox, as I will prioritize this method over other modes of communication.

- In this course I will be posting interactive announcements which will offer specific opportunities for class questions, extra credit, etc. every other week.

How to Navigate to Canvas

This course uses the Canvas course management system. All students must use Canvas to retrieve course readings, access web pages, upload assignments, receive course announcements, and review the class section's syllabus.

General Education Information

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This course fulfills the above requirement for the General Education Program at Salt Lake Community College. It is designed not only to teach the information and skills required by the discipline, but also to develop vital workplace skills and to teach strategies and skills that can be used for life-long learning.

General Education courses teach basic skills as well as broaden a student's knowledge of a wide range of subjects. Education is much more than the acquisition of facts; it is being able to use information in meaningful ways in order to enrich one's life.

While the subject of each course is important and useful, we become truly educated through making connections of such varied information with the different methods of organizing human experience that are practiced by different disciplines. Therefore, this course, when combined with other General Education courses, will enable you to develop broader perspectives and deeper understandings of your community and the world, as well as challenge previously held assumptions about the world and its inhabitants.

Additional Class Policies

Late Work

Late work is accepted for ten days at a penalty of 3.3% per day late. Students should request extensions in advance of the due date to avoid penalties.

Participation

Attendance and Participation are both graded in this course. Students will receive two free misses, after which non-attendance will begin to affect the final grade. Students who do not attend 2/3 of classes will not be eligible to pass the course, barring extenuating circumstances. Philosophy at SLCC is a community endeavor, and as such, students are expected to participate on a regular basis during class time. Each student has a responsibility to support the learning of every other class member. As such, coming to class prepared to discuss the day's material, ask questions, listen intently, and push back on the ideas in question is an expectation. Students will be graded for attendance (simply being present) as well as for active participation. Students, naturally, differ in personality and temperament, and students may contribute in many ways: by asking questions before and after class, by actively paying attention to one another, and being prepared to ask questions and say when something is not quite clear.

In order to prepare properly for class, students are expected to arrive having carefully read the day's assigned essays, thought about them, and prepared questions and points of interest (confusion, agreement or disagreement, etc.) about the central topics. Philosophy readings can be difficult, and students are encouraged to read more slowly than usual, and when appropriate, to read assignments twice. This is perfectly normal! Learning to read philosophy is a skill developed over time, and one that we'll develop together throughout the term.

AI Policy

In this class, students are generally discouraged—though not prohibited— from using gen-AI tools like ChatGPT. There are limited, legitimate uses of such tools as preliminary research aids, as a personal assistant, and as a brainstorming partner (though classmates and the instructor will likely be better suited to this latter task). Students are

required to disclose any use of AI in the planning and production of their work, and must include a full transcript of conversations for any AI-supported assignment. Students should also understand the myriad ways that such tools are unreliable, misleading, often outright false, and liable to supplant a student's own thinking and hinder intellectual development. Work that is likely or predominantly generated by AI (as opposed to original student thinking) will not be graded. Students will be permitted to re-submit original work after their first infraction. Subsequent infractions may be referred to the college for academic dishonesty.

Course Content Advisory

Please be advised that this course may include discussions, readings, and other content that some students might find distressing or triggering. Specifically, the course may cover topics such as:

- Violence or traumatic events
- Sensitive social and political issues
- Discussions of mental health, including depression and anxiety
- Graphic or explicit descriptions and imagery
- Any other specific content relevant to the course

Our aim is to explore these topics thoughtfully and respectfully, understanding their importance in our field of study. However, we recognize that such material can be challenging. If you have concerns about your ability to engage with certain course materials due to past experiences or personal reasons, please feel free to discuss this with me privately. We can explore alternative ways for you to engage with the material while ensuring your educational experience is not compromised.

Your well-being is important, and support services are available through the college's counseling support services should you need them.

Institutional Policies

As members of our academic community, we would like to invite you to review the Institutional Syllabus which covers important policies and procedures. This document contains important links for students on the code of student rights and responsibilities, academic integrity, and grading policies, Title IX and other important acknowledgements. By familiarizing yourself with this information, you can help us create a safe and respectful environment for everyone.

For more information, navigate to the Institutional Policies tab on the [Institutional Syllabus](#) page.

Learning Support and Tutoring Services

We are pleased to offer a range of tutoring and learning support services to help you achieve your academic goals. Whether you need assistance with a specific subject or want to improve your study skills, you have many options for tutoring or other support.

To learn more about the services we offer and how to access them, visit the [Institutional Syllabus](#) page under the Tutoring and Learning Support tab. We encourage you to take advantage of these resources to help you succeed in your studies. If you have any questions or would like to schedule a tutoring session, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. We are here to support you in any way we can.

Advising and Counseling Support Services

At our institution, we are committed to supporting your academic and personal growth. That's why we offer a range of advising and counseling services to help you navigate the challenges of college life. To learn more about the resources available to you and how to access them, visit the [Institutional Syllabus](#) page under the Advising and Counseling Support Services tab. Our advising team and the support centers across campus are here to support you in achieving your goals and overcoming any obstacles you may face.

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Student Academic Calendar

As students you should be aware of all important dates in the semester, such as the day that courses begin and end, as well as the drop date and the last day to withdraw. To learn more about those dates, navigate to the Student Academic Calendar below:

[SLCC Student Academic Calendar](#)