Instructor

Dr. Rachel Robison-Greene
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Office: ECC 102 B
Office Hours: M/W 10:30-11:30
Class Location and Meeting Time: Old Main 201 9:30-10:20

Course Description

In this course, we will explore the nature of human obligations to the natural environment and to other living beings in that environment. In the first section, we'll consider the scope and nature of our obligations. We will discuss whether we have obligations to living beings because they are living beings, and we'll consider whether it is reasonable to view ourselves as having obligations to ecosystems as a whole. We'll discuss Environmental Justice and how differences in geography and demographics may give rise to differences in moral obligation. In the second section, we'll discuss issues like climate change, pollution, food ethics, consumption, and population.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, you will:

1. Develop a clearer understanding of, and commitment to, personal values.
2. Learn to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view.
3. Acquire an interest in learning more by asking questions and seeking answers.

Course Resources


*Other readings may be posted on Canvas as needed.*
Course Requirements (Worth a total of 1000 points).

Each student will:

1. Attendance (10%--100 pts). Students are expected to attend class regularly. I will take attendance every day. Students can be absent three times without penalty.

2. Complete EXAM ONE (25%--250 pts). EXAM ONE will be a combination of multiple choice and true/false questions and will be available in the testing center on **Wednesday, October 16th**.

3. Complete EXAM TWO (25%--250 pts). EXAM TWO will be a combination of multiple choice and true/false questions and will be available in the testing center on **Monday, December 9th-Wednesday, December 11th**.

4. Complete TEN WEEKLY WRITING ASSIGNMENTS (20%--200 pts). Students will complete these assignments on Canvas. The assignment requirements will be included in the Canvas assignment itself. Responses must not be shorter than three substantial paragraphs.

5. Write a five page, doubled-spaced TERM PAPER (20%--200 pts) Some potential topics are posted on Canvas, but other topics are acceptable if they are approved by the instructor. The first draft of the paper is due, on Canvas, on **Monday, October 28th**. The final version of the paper is due, on Canvas, on **Friday, November 22nd**.

Course Schedule/Outline

**Week One:** *Introduction*

Monday, August 26th: Course Mechanics and Introduction to Environmental Ethics

Wednesday, August 28th: *Reading: Textbook, Introduction (pg. 1) and What is Ethics (pg. 3)*

Friday, August 30th: Introduction to Ethical Theory

**Due:** Reading Response One: Introduction

**Week Two:** *Frameworks and Scope of Environmental Ethics*

Monday, September 2nd: No Class

Wednesday, September 4th: *Contested Frameworks in Environmental Ethics (pg. 14)*
Friday, September 6th: Reading: No new reading. Continued discussion of previous reading.

Due: Reading Response Two.

Week Three: **Biocentrism**

Monday, September 9th: Reading: Reverence for Life by Albert Schweitzer (pg. 169)

Wednesday, September 11th: Reading: Biocentric Egalitarianism by Paul Taylor (pg. 177)

Friday, September 13th: Reading: No new reading. Continued discussion of previous reading.

Due: Reading Response Three.

Week Four: **Holism and Ecocentrism**

Monday, September 16th: Reading: The Land Ethic by Aldo Leopold (pg. 237)

Wednesday, September 18th: ART MUSEUM VISIT

Friday, September 20th: Reading: No new reading. Continued discussion of previous reading.

Due: Reading Response Four (Art Museum Reflection).

Week Five: **Holism and Ecocentrism.**

Monday, September 23rd: Reading: The Conceptual Foundations of the Land Ethic by J. Baird Callicott (pg. 248)

Wednesday, September 25th: Reading: No new reading. Continued discussion of previous reading.

Friday, September 27th: NO CLASS, PROFESSOR AT CONFERENCE.

Due: Reading Response Five.

Week Six: **Holism and Ecocentrism.**

Monday, September 30th: NO CLASS, PROFESSOR AT CONFERENCE.

Wednesday, October 2nd: Reading: Against the Moral Considerability of Ecosystems by Harley Cahen (pg. 276).
Friday, October 4th: NO CLASS, PROFESSOR AT CONFERENCE.
Due: Reading Response Six.

Week Seven: Environmental Justice
Monday, October 7th: Reading: Radical Environmentalism and Wilderness Preservation: A Third World Critique (pg. 307)
Wednesday, October 9th: Reading: No new reading. Continued discussion of previous reading.
Friday, October 11th: Overcoming Racism in Environmental Decision Making by Robert D. Bullard (pg. 315)
Due: Reading Response Seven.

Week Eight: Midterm Preparation and Midterm
Monday, October 14th: Reading: No new reading. Continued discussion of previous reading.
Wednesday, October 16th: Midterm in the Testing Center.
Friday, October 18th: FALL BREAK, NO CLASS.

Week Nine: Human Obligations to Animals.
Monday, October 21st: Why Animals Do Not Have Rights by Carl Cohen (Posted on Canvas).
Wednesday, October 23rd: A Utilitarian Case for Animal Liberation by Peter Singer (pg. 96).
Friday, October 25th: Reading: The Radical Egalitarian Case for Animal Rights by Tom Regan (pg 106).
Due: Reading Response Eight.

Week Ten: Food Ethics
Monday, October 28th: Reading: TBA
Due: Paper Rough Draft.
Wednesday, October 30th: Reading: TBA
Friday, November 1st: Reading: TBA

Due: Reading Response Nine.

Week Eleven: Climate Change
Monday, November 4th: Reading: TBA
Wednesday, November 6th: Reading: TBA
Friday, November 8th: Reading: TBA

Due: Reading Response Ten.

Week Twelve: Climate Change and Pollution
Monday, November 11th Reading: TBA
Wednesday, November 13th Reading: TBA
Friday, November 15th Reading: TBA

Week Thirteen Population and Consumption
Monday, November 18th Reading: TBA
Wednesday, November 20th Reading: TBA
Friday, November 22nd Reading: TBA

Due: Final Paper (On Canvas)

Week Fourteen: Population and Consumption.
Monday, November 25th Reading: TBA
Wednesday, November 27th NO CLASS, THANKSGIVING BREAK.
Friday, November 29th NO CLASS, THANKSGIVING BREAK.

Week Fifteen
Monday, December 2nd:
Wednesday, December 4th:
Friday, December 6th:
Due: Final Paper (On Canvas)

Nonattendance Policy

Students May Be Dropped For Nonattendance

If a student does not attend a class during the first week of the term or by the second class meeting, whichever comes first, the instructor may submit a request to have the student dropped from the course. (This does not remove responsibility from the student to drop courses which he or she does not plan to attend.) This option is typically used for classes that are full and the instructor is trying to make a seat available for another student, but may be considered for other courses. Requests must be made during the first 20 percent of the course and will be considered on an individual student basis. Students who are dropped from courses will be notified by the Registrar's Office through their preferred e-mail account (see 2018-2019 General Catalog (Links to an external site.)).

Assumption of Risk

All classes, programs, and extracurricular activities within the University involve some risk, and certain ones involve travel. The University provides opportunities to participate in these programs on a voluntary basis. Therefore, students should not participate in them if they do not care to assume the risks. Students can ask the respective program leaders/sponsors about the possible risks a program may generate, and if students are not willing to assume the risks, they should not select that program. By voluntarily participating in classes, programs, and extracurricular activities, a student does so at his or her own risk. General information about University Risk Management policies, insurance coverage, vehicle use policies, and risk management forms can be found at: http://www.usu.edu/riskmgt/ (Links to an external site.).

Library Services

All USU students attending classes in Logan, at our Regional Campuses, or online can access all databases, e-journals, and e-books regardless of location. Additionally, the library will mail printed books to students, at no charge to them. Students can also borrow books from any Utah academic library. Take advantage of all library services and learn more at libguides.usu.edu/rc. (Links to an external site.)

Classroom Civility

Utah State University supports the principle of freedom of expression for both faculty and students. The University respects the rights of faculty to teach and students to learn. Maintenance of these rights requires classroom conditions that do not impede the learning process. Disruptive classroom behavior will not be tolerated. An individual
engaging in such behavior may be subject to disciplinary action. Read Student Code Article V Section V-3 (Links to an external site.) for more information.

University Policies & Procedures

**Academic Freedom and Professional Responsibilities**

Academic freedom is the right to teach, study, discuss, investigate, discover, create, and publish freely. Academic freedom protects the rights of faculty members in teaching and of students in learning. Freedom in research is fundamental to the advancement of truth. Faculty members are entitled to full freedom in teaching, research, and creative activities, subject to the limitations imposed by professional responsibility. Faculty Code Policy #403 (Links to an external site.) further defines academic freedom and professional responsibilities.

**Academic Integrity – "The Honor System"**

Each student has the right and duty to pursue his or her academic experience free of dishonesty. To enhance the learning environment at Utah State University and to develop student academic integrity, each student agrees to the following Honor Pledge: "I pledge, on my honor, to conduct myself with the foremost level of academic integrity." A student who lives by the Honor Pledge is a student who does more than not cheat, falsify, or plagiarize. A student who lives by the Honor Pledge:

- Espouses academic integrity as an underlying and essential principle of the Utah State University community;
- Understands that each act of academic dishonesty devalues every degree that is awarded by this institution; and
- Is a welcomed and valued member of Utah State University.

**Academic Dishonesty**

The instructor of this course will take appropriate actions in response to Academic Dishonesty, as defined the University’s Student Code. Acts of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to:

- **Cheating**: using, attempting to use, or providing others with any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, examinations, or in any other academic exercise or activity. Unauthorized assistance includes:
  - Working in a group when the instructor has designated that the quiz, test, examination, or any other academic exercise or activity be done “individually;”
  - Depending on the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments;
  - Substituting for another student, or permitting another student to substitute for oneself, in taking an examination or preparing academic work;
  - Acquiring tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty member, staff member, or another student without express permission;
Continuing to write after time has been called on a quiz, test, examination, or any other academic exercise or activity;

- Submitting substantially the same work for credit in more than one class, except with prior approval of the instructor; or engaging in any form of research fraud.

- **Falsification**: altering or fabricating any information or citation in an academic exercise or activity.

- **Plagiarism**: representing, by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person as one's own in any academic exercise or activity without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes using materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in the sale of term papers or other academic materials.

For additional information go to: [ARTICLE VI. University Regulations Regarding Academic Integrity (Links to an external site.)](#)

### Sexual Harassment/Title IX

Utah State University is committed to creating and maintaining an environment free from acts of sexual misconduct and discrimination and to fostering respect and dignity for all members of the USU community. Title IX and [USU Policy 339 (Links to an external site.)](#) address sexual harassment in the workplace and academic setting. The university responds promptly upon learning of any form of possible discrimination or sexual misconduct. Any individual may contact USU’s [Office of Equity (Links to an external site.)](#) for available options and resources or clarification. The university has established a complaint procedure to handle all types of discrimination complaints, including sexual harassment ([USU Policy 305 (Links to an external site.)](#)), and has designated the Office of Equity Director/Title IX Coordinator as the official responsible for receiving and investigating complaints of sexual harassment.

### Withdrawal Policy and "I" Grade Policy

Students are required to complete all courses for which they are registered by the end of the semester. In some cases, a student may be unable to complete all of the coursework because of extenuating circumstances, but not due to poor performance or to retain financial aid. The term ‘extenuating’ circumstances includes: (1) incapacitating illness which prevents a student from attending classes for a minimum period of two weeks, (2) a death in the immediate family, (3) financial responsibilities requiring a student to alter a work schedule to secure employment, (4) change in work schedule as required by an employer, or (5) other emergencies deemed appropriate by the instructor.

### Students with Disabilities

USU welcomes students with disabilities. If you have, or suspect you may have, a physical, mental health, or learning disability that may require accommodations in this course, please contact the [Disability Resource Center (DRC) (Links to an external site.)](#) as early in the semester as possible (University Inn # 101, (435) 797-2444, drc@usu.edu). All disability related accommodations must be approved by the DRC. Once approved, the DRC will coordinate with faculty to provide accommodations.
Diversity Statement

Regardless of intent, careless or ill-informed remarks can be offensive and hurtful to others and detract from the learning climate. If you feel uncomfortable in a classroom due to offensive language or actions by an instructor or student(s) regarding ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation, contact:

- Division of Student Affairs: https://studentaffairs.usu.edu (Links to an external site.), (435) 797-1712, studentservices@usu.edu, TSC 220
- Student Legal Services: https://ususa.usu.edu/student-association/student-advocacy/legal-services (Links to an external site.), (435) 797-2912, TSC 326
- Access and Diversity: http://accesscenter.usu.edu (Links to an external site.), (435) 797-1728, access@usu.edu, TSC 315
- Multicultural Programs: http://accesscenter.usu.edu/multiculture (Links to an external site.), (435) 797-1728, TSC 315
- LGBTQA Programs: http://accesscenter.usu.edu/lgbtqa (Links to an external site.), (435) 797-1728, TSC 3145
- Provost's Office Diversity Resources: https://www.usu.edu/provost/diversity (Links to an external site.), (435) 797-8176

You can learn about your student rights by visiting:
The Code of Policies and Procedures for Students at Utah State University: https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode (Links to an external site.)

Grievance Process

Students who feel they have been unfairly treated may file a grievance through the channels and procedures described in the Student Code: Article VII (Links to an external site.).

Full details for USU Academic Policies and Procedures can be found at:

- Student Conduct (Links to an external site.)
- Student Code (Links to an external site.)
- Academic Integrity (Links to an external site.)
- USU Selected Academic Policies and Procedures (Links to an external site.)
- USU Academic Policies and Procedures (Links to an external site.)
- Academic Freedom and Professional Responsibility Policy (Links to an external site.)

Emergency Procedures

In the case of a drill or real emergency, classes will be notified to evacuate the building by the sound of the fire/emergency alarm system or by a building representative. In the event of a disaster that may interfere with either notification, evacuate as the situation dictates (i.e., in an earthquake when shaking ceases or immediately when a fire is discovered). Turn off computers and take any personal items with you. Elevators should not be used; instead, use the closest stairs.