

PHIL-124 ETHICS & THE ENVIRONMENT

Summer 2020 Jul 6 to Aug 7

MTWRF

1:00 PM - 2:30 PM

Car Barn 301



Instructor:

Deidre Nelms

Dn244@georgetown.edu

Office hours: Mondays at 10am in New North 214, and directly after class by appointment.

Reading:

- No books required to purchase. All readings are posted on Canvas.

Grade Breakdown:

Prompted reflections on selected assigned reading (3): 10%

Take home exam on unit 2: 20%

In-class exam on unit 3: 20%

6-8 page final paper: 20%

- Due the evening of August 9th. No extensions are possible without dean's permission, as my grades are due August 10th.

Participation: 30%

- **Attendance**
 - 5 unexcused absences will result in a failed grade.
 - *All* unexcused absences will affect your participation grade.
 - Please email me if you need to miss class! I don't require a doctor's note for medical absences, and I excuse personal days within reason.
- **3 in class presentations (Monday July 14, 21, 27)**
 - Individual and group presentations will help you learn from your classmates, cover a lot of ground while doing less reading, and apply abstract arguments to particular cases.
 - Presentations should last about 10-15 minutes.

- PowerPoints are welcome but not required. Pictures and relevant short videos are encouraged.
- **Living Journal and Living Experiments**
 - Each unit, you will be prompted to pay attention to an aspect of your personal consumption of energy, food and water, and attend to your production of waste. Over the course of a selected week (or more) of your choice, you are required to take on one “living experiment,” e.g. attempt to carry your trash around for a week, eat vegetarian or vegan for a week. You’re also encouraged to visit and journal about select locations in DC and use the INaturalist App to take photos of plants and animals in DC region.
 - Please note that if attending to or altering your eating habits is an issue for you for any reason, you may opt out.
- **News Sharing**
 - All students should sign up for news alerts or regularly check EHN.org, an aggregator for environmental news. You are also encouraged to read environmental stories from The Guardian, Orion, The Intercept, and Gizmodo’s Earther, and recommend other good environmental news sites to your classmates. At the beginning of each class, I’ll ask for volunteers to share recent headlines and stories and keep track of your participation over time.

Title IX Reporting:

I am happy to help students connect to campus resources for both personal and academic matters. Please know in advance that if I am made aware of gender-based discrimination, harassment, or other forms of gender-based misconduct occurring at or in relation to Georgetown University, I am obligated by Title IX’s mandatory reporting rules to report them to a designated Title IX Coordinator within 24 hours.

Accommodations:

- Students with unique learning needs, including ESL students, should inform me at the beginning of the semester if they’d like any accommodations to be made. I’m also open to feedback throughout the semester and I’m happy to make changes that will improve your experience and help me accurately evaluate your performance in class.
- Students with unique time constraints should also inform me if the assignment schedule is a hardship for them. I’m open to negotiating individualized deadlines in some cases.

Unit One M: July 6	<i>Imagining Futures and Assigning Responsibility</i> No reading: -review syllabus and complete individual baseline survey in class
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T: July 7	Reading (to be completed before class): Chapter 1 and 2 in <i>The Collapse of Western Civilization: A View from the Future</i> by Naomi Oreskes (2014)
W: July 8	Reading: “Peak Oil Fantasy” by Charles Mann (2015). Online . -cont. discussion of <i>Collapse of Western Civilization</i> chapter 2. Assignment: prompted response 1 on “It’s Not My Fault”: due before class on Thursday
Th: July 9	Reading: Walter Sinnott Armstrong, “It’s Not My Fault” (sectns 1-3) In class: share prepared responses in small groups
F: July 10	Reading: “The Climate Mitigation Gap” -Explore Project Drawdown *Long-term Assignment Consumption Journaling and Living Experiments *Prompted response 2 due Monday before class
M: July 13	Reading: “Climate Change as Climate Debt: Forging a Just Future” by Cynthia Moe-Lobeda *Assignment: “Future of your community” presentations Tuesday
T: July 14	In class presentations
Unit Two W: July 15	<i>Nature, Property and Colonialism</i> Reading: “On Property” by John Locke
Th: July 16	Reading: - selections from <i>The Rise of the American Conservation Movement</i> “Preservation, Conservation and Business Interests Collide” pg. 290-305 by Dorceta Taylor. -“Ethnic Cleansing and America’s Creation of National Parks” by pg. 48-52
F: July 17	Reading: -“With 10 Million Acres in Patagonia, a National Park System is Born,” NYT. Online . - “The Entrepreneur Who Wants to Save Paradise,” Atlantic. Online
M: July 20	Reading: “Is it Colonial Déjà vu?” by Kyle Whyte “Frontline communities” presentations on Monday
T: July 21	In class presentations
W: July 22	Reading: Selections from <i>Privatizing Water</i> by Karen Bakker *Assignment: Prompted response 3 on Bakker due before class on Friday
Th: July 23	Reading: Selections from <i>Privatizing Water</i> by Karen Bakker

	Film: selections from <i>Blue Gold</i>
F: July 24	Reading: Selected articles from CLEAR lab's website https://civiclaboratory.nl/ *Take home mid-term exam on Unit 2 due Wednesday before class
M: July 27	Reading: "On Alienation from the Built Environment" by Stephen Vogel "Alienation" presentations on Tuesday
T: July 28	In class presentations
Unit Three W: July 29	Moral Status: Animals, Nature and Urban Ecosystems Reading: "The Case for Animal Rights" by Tom Reagan "Puppies Pigs and People: Eating Meat and Marginal Cases" (read part 1 "Fred's Basement") by Alistair Norcross In class: complete individual baseline survey *Assignment: start thinking about your final paper, come with ideas or an outline next Wed to share with a partner in class
Th: July 30	Reading: "An Animal's Place" by Michael Pollen
F: July 31	Reading: "Rights of Nature: Rivers That Stand in Court" by Lidia Caño Pecharroman <i>Choice of additional article:</i> -Scientific American article "Rivers Get Human Rights: They Can Sue to Protect themselves OR -Guardian article: "Ganges and Yamuna Rivers Granted Same Legal Rights as Human Beings"
M: August 3	Reading: "Animal Rights and The Values of Nonhuman Life" by Elizabeth Anderson
T: August 4	No new reading In class: rough outline-sharing with partners In class film: Planet Earth Cities
W: August 5	"Extending Animal Rights via Citizenship Theory" in <i>Zoopolis</i> by Sue Donaldson and Will Kymlicka
Th: August 6	In class final exam on Unit 3
F: August 7	Share highlights from experiments in living journal *participation graded, and living journal due by the end of the day INaturalist Award for best wildlife shot Course evaluations Vegetarian potluck