



## **CIEE Global Institute – Rome**

<b>Course name:</b>	Environmental Ethics
<b>Course number:</b>	(GI) ENVI 2001 ROIT
<b>Programs offering course:</b>	Rome Open Campus Block
<b>Open Campus track:</b>	STEM and Society
<b>Language of instruction:</b>	English
<b>U.S. semester credits:</b>	3
<b>Contact hours:</b>	45
<b>Term:</b>	Fall 2019

### **Course Description**

This course introduces philosophical ethics in the context of environmental such as population growth, resource use, sustainability, non-human animal welfare, biodiversity loss, environmental justice, and global climate change. No prior experience with philosophy is required. The two main goals of the course are to provide students with a more sophisticated understanding and vocabulary to make and evaluate ethical arguments and to engage students' ethical reasoning and reflection on environmental issues.

### **Learning Objectives**

By completing this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate important concepts and vocabulary related to ethics
- Exhibit ethical literacy and its application to environmental issues
- Use critical thinking to critique how environmental problems relate to ethical consideration
- Differentiate between normative and meta-ethics and how they relate to how humans react with the environment
- Relate how biocentrism, eco-centrism and anthropocentrism impact environmental justice and conservation
- Comprehend the intersection of environmental ethics and culture

### **Course Prerequisites**

None



### **Methods of Instruction**

This course is taught through lecture, guest lecture, discussions and small group or individual assignments. Audiovisual material and site visits will augment the in-class learning experience. The student may at any time seek additional guidance in office hours or by scheduling an appointment with the instructor via Canvas.

### **Assessment and Final Grade**

1.	Individual research paper:	25%
2.	Animal ethics case studies:	10%
3.	Group project:	15%
4.	Final Exam:	30%
5.	Class participation:	20%
	TOTAL	100%

### **Course Requirements**

#### **Individual research paper**

Students are expected to write a research paper that fulfills one of the following requirements:

- analysis of an environmental issue through the application of contrasting ethical perspectives from the course
- comparative analysis of environmental ethics in two different countries

In each case, the essay must include additional research, with a bibliography of at least 5 relevant books or articles. Your description of ethical perspectives from the course should be brief (not more than 2 paragraphs), the core of the essay should consist of original analysis, critical and comparative evaluation, etc.

#### **Animal ethics case studies**

Students will work in small groups (2/3 students) on a case study regarding an animal-human issue. Each group will answer to a list of questions provided by the professor and will then search and suggest another case study that offer a different solution to the issue.

#### **Group Project**

The project consists in examining and analyzing a current environmental issue in groups of 3-4 students. Students are expected to carry out both background research and fieldwork, including interviews, on the issue and on the people most directly affected by it. The project will include a written proposal, a written report and a class presentation.



### **Final Exam**

A final exam will be administered on the last day of class. The test will include information from lectures, case studies, guest speakers, business visits, readings, and video clips. The exam will be an essay based exam, with students expected to complete three questions within the allotted time. Essays should present, analyze, discuss the topics using, when possible, references from readings, lectures and discussions.

### **Participation**

Participation is valued as meaningful contribution in the digital and tangible classroom, utilizing the resources and materials presented to students as part of the course. Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared in advance of each class session and to have regular attendance. Students must clearly demonstrate they have engaged with the materials as directed, for example, through classroom discussions, online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers and attentiveness on co-curricular and outside-of-classroom activities.

### **Attendance Policy**

Regular class attendance is required throughout the program, and all unexcused absences will result in a lower participation grade for any affected CIEE course. Due to the intensive schedules for Open Campus and Short Term programs, unexcused absences that constitute more than 10% of the total course will result in a written warning.

Students who transfer from one CIEE class to another during the add/drop period will not be considered absent from the first session(s) of their new class, provided they were marked present for the first session(s) of their original class. Otherwise, the absence(s) from the original class carry over to the new class and count against the grade in that class.

For CIEE classes, excessively tardy (over 15 minutes late) students must be marked absent. Attendance policies also apply to any required co-curricular class excursion or event, as well as to Internship, Service Learning, or required field placement. Students who miss class for personal travel, including unforeseen delays that arise as a result of personal travel, will be marked as absent and unexcused. No make-up or re-sit opportunity will be provided.

Attendance policies also apply to any required class excursion, with the exception that some class excursions cannot accommodate any tardiness, and students risk being marked as absent if they fail to be present at the appointed time.



Unexcused absences will lead to the following penalties:

<i>Percentage of Total Course Hours Missed</i>	<i>Equivalent Number of Open Campus Semester classes</i>	<i>Minimum Penalty</i>
Up to 10%	1 content class, or up to 2 language classes	Participation graded as per class requirements
10 – 20%	2 content classes, or 3-4 language classes	Participation graded as per class requirements; <b>written warning</b>
More than 20%	3 content classes, or 5 language classes	Automatic <b>course failure</b> , and possible expulsion

**NOTE:** this schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor to take advantage of current experiential learning opportunities.

**Week 1 Introduction to Environmental ethics**

Class 1:1

Overview of ethics: we will explore the definition of ethics and basic ethic concepts, we will compare absolute, intrinsic and instrumental values and we will discuss about the difference between ethics and moral.

Class 1:2

Environmental ethics: we will explore the development of environmental ethics and the relationship between beliefs and action.

Required readings:

Callicott, J. B. (2012) *Ecology: An Ethical Perspective*.  
Sandler, R. (2012) *Intrinsic Value, Ecology, and Conservation*.



**Activity/Essay1:** Brief autobiography of your relationship with the natural environment

**Week 2 Environmental Ethics Approaches and World Views**

Class 2.1

Anthropocentric vs. Non anthropocentric environmental ethics: during this class will be discussed the major approaches to environmental ethics and how they seek a balance between human prosperity and environmental sustainability. Students will explore the spectrum of views from utilitarian conservation (looking at the value of our natural resources for human consumption) through biocentric preservation (the protection of nature because all life deserves respect). We will talk about the Gaia hypothesis.

Class 2.2

We will discuss about some religious views about the environment. We will compare and contrast the different viewpoints discussed during class 2.1 and class 2.2.

Required readings:

McShane, K . (2007). *Anthropocentrism vs. Nonanthropocentrism: Why Should We Care?*

Norton, G. B. (1984). *Environmental Ethics and Weak Anthropocentrism.*

Radford, T. (2010). *How James Lovelock introduced Gaia to an unsuspecting world.*

**Activity/Essay2:** Individual research paper, Group project (proposal)

**Week 3 Animal ethics**

Class 3.1

Humans kill, eat, hunt, experiment on, 'use', etc. a wide range of animals. Also, humans have destroyed large parts of the natural environment depriving animals of a place in which to live. The main questions are: does any of this matter morally? do animals



have moral rights? We will explore the field that studies human and animal relations (zooanthropology).

#### Class 3.2

We will discuss the consequences of the different relationships between humans and animals and the moral challenge of animal rights.

#### Required readings:

Korsgaard, C. M. (2013). *Getting Animals in View*.

Orland, M. A. (2004) *A brief history of the relationship between humans and wildlife*.

**Activity/Essay3:** Animal ethics case studies

### **Week 4**

### **Ethics of sustainability and climate change**

#### Class 4.1

We will discuss ethical issues related to climate change such as: Why is climate change an ethical issue? What would constitute a just allocation of the burdens of climate change? In what ways does uncertainty challenge our ability to understand what we should do about climate change? What are we individually required to do about climate change? We will explore the definitions of sustainability.

#### Class 4.2

We will discuss climate science and the problem of trust and we will explore the possible future scenarios.

#### Required readings:

UNESCO (2010). *The Ethical Implications of Global Climate Change*.

Thompson, Paul. B. (2012) *Sustainability: Ethical Foundations*.



**Week 5                      Environmental justice**

Class 5.1

We will discuss how prejudice throughout the world can form the basis for environmental injustice. In all walks of life, environmental justice strives to provide equal and fair treatment for all people regardless of race, color, sex, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

Class 5.2

We will explore the links between environmental rights and human rights. How to integrate the personal and the political? Can ecological culture solve the problems?

Required readings:

Armiero, M. & D'Alisa, G. (2012). *Rights of Resistance: The Garbage Struggles for Environmental Justice in Campania, Italy*.

Bullard, R.D. (2001). *Environmental Justice in the 21st Century: Race Still Matters*.

Keady, C. (2015). *Colorado Teenager Rallies Youth Around The World To Protect The Planet*.

**Activity/Essay4:** Group project (review)

**Week 6                      Class presentations and final exam**

Class 6.1                      Class presentations

Class 6.2                      Final exam

Required readings:

Anderson, C. (2013). *How to give a killer presentation*

**Activity/Essay4:** Group project (presentation)



## Course materials

### Readings

There is no required textbook. Additional readings will be assigned in class as needed.

Anderson, Chris. (2013). How to give a killer presentation. Harvard Business Review, June issue. <https://hbr.org/2013/06/how-to-give-a-killer-presentation>

Armiero, Marco & D'Alisa, Giacomo. (2012). Rights of Resistance: The Garbage Struggles for Environmental Justice in Campania, Italy. Capitalism Nature Socialism, 23:4, 52-68  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10455752.2012.724200>

Bullard, Robert D. (2001). Environmental Justice in the 21st Century: Race Still Matters. Phylon (1960-), vol. 49, no. 3/4, 2001, pp. 151–171.  
[www.jstor.org/stable/3132626](http://www.jstor.org/stable/3132626).

Callicott, J. B. (2012) Ecology: An Ethical Perspective. Nature Education Knowledge 3(10):16  
<https://www.nature.com/scitable/knowledge/library/ecology-an-ethical-perspective-80059530>

Keady, Cameron. (2015). Colorado Teenager Rallies Youth Around The World To Protect The Planet. The Huffington Post. TheHuffingtonPost.com, 22 Apr. 2015. Web.  
[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/04/22/kid-warrior-earth-guardian\\_n\\_7111530.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/04/22/kid-warrior-earth-guardian_n_7111530.html)

Korsgaard, Christine M. (2013). Getting Animals in View. The Point, 6. Web  
<https://thepointmag.com/2012/examined-life/getting-animals-view>

McShane, Katie . (2007) Anthropocentrism vs. Nonanthropocentrism: Why Should We Care? Environmental Values 16 (2007): 169–185  
[http://hettingern.people.cofc.edu/Environmental\\_Philosophy\\_Fall\\_2011/McShane\\_Anthropocentrism\\_vs\\_Nonanthropocentrism\\_%20Why\\_Should\\_We\\_Care.pdf](http://hettingern.people.cofc.edu/Environmental_Philosophy_Fall_2011/McShane_Anthropocentrism_vs_Nonanthropocentrism_%20Why_Should_We_Care.pdf)

Norton, G. Bryan (1984). Environmental Ethics and Weak Anthropocentrism. Environmental Ethics 6 (2):131-148  
[http://data.naturalcapitalproject.org/natcap/ES281\\_What%20is%20Nature%20Worth/ES281\\_What%20is%20Nature%20Worth/Readings/Intrinsic%20vs%20Instrumental%20Value/Environmental%20Ethics%20and%20Weak%20Anthropocentrism.pdf](http://data.naturalcapitalproject.org/natcap/ES281_What%20is%20Nature%20Worth/ES281_What%20is%20Nature%20Worth/Readings/Intrinsic%20vs%20Instrumental%20Value/Environmental%20Ethics%20and%20Weak%20Anthropocentrism.pdf)



Orland, Mary A. (2004). A brief history of the relationship between humans and wildlife - MarineBio.org. MarineBio Conservation Society. Web.  
<http://marinebio.org/oceans/conservation/moyle/ch1-3/>

Radford, Tim. (2010) How James Lovelock introduced Gaia to an unsuspecting world. The Guardian.TheGuardian.com, 27 Aug.2010.Web  
<https://www.theguardian.com/science/2010/aug/27/james-lovelock-gaia>

Sandler, Ronald. (2012) Intrinsic Value, Ecology, and Conservation. Nature Education Knowledge 3(10):4  
<https://www.nature.com/scitable/knowledge/library/intrinsic-value-ecology-and-conservation-25815400>

Thompson, Paul. B. (2012) Sustainability: Ethical Foundations. Nature Education Knowledge 3(10):11  
<https://www.nature.com/scitable/knowledge/library/sustainability-ethical-foundations-71373239>

UNESCO (2010). The Ethical Implications of Global Climate Change. Report by the World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology(COMEST).  
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001881/188198e.pdf>