

Environment and Global Justice
PHIL 305-01/SCHG 300-02, FALL 2010
MW 4:00 – 5:15 p.m.
DAVIDSON 203

Instructor: Avery Kolers

Office: Humanities bldg., room 314

Office hours: M, W 12:00 – 1:30, and by appointment

Phone: 852-0453

email: akolers@louisville.edu

web: <https://blackboard.louisville.edu>

Curricular role: this course fulfills an upper-division Humanities elective in the College of Arts & Sciences. **Philosophy majors:** this course fulfills a 300-level requirement in the major. **Social Change minors:** this course fulfills an elective in the minor.

What this course is about:

The global environment is currently undergoing major changes due to human activity, and these changes threaten to make the Earth as a whole significantly less hospitable to human habitation. These changes and their effects are not evenly distributed, either spatially or temporally; nor does everyone have a say in which changes we are willing to risk or how we will plan for them; nor still are the benefits of these human activities distributed evenly. These are all problems of justice. Does justice give us reasons to act on the environment in certain ways rather than others, or to clean it up, to mitigate climate and other environmental changes, or to distribute the costs and benefits of adaptation to these changes? In short, humans and other creatures need to use environmental “goods and services,” and yet we don’t live in an arcadia of superabundance; what should we do about these two facts? And how, if at all, does the *global* context alter what we say here?

Purpose of the course:

In addressing these questions we will to some degree simply want to find answers. But every philosophy course has two subject-matters: the content of the course—in this case, what was just described above—and *a particular way of approaching* that content. Philosophical inquiry is in the first instance a method of interacting with what you read, hear, and think. The fundamental questions are: a) “what does this mean?”; b) “if this is true, what are its implications?”; and c) “is this true?” In order to answer the first question we engage in *conceptual analysis*, which is a fancy word for *definition*. But philosophical definitions are not dictionary definitions; we don’t care how a word is generally used, but what the concept is. The premium is on significance and precision. In order to answer the second and third questions we engage in *argumentation*: identifying premises and relationships among them; disambiguating by drawing distinctions; drawing inferences; assessing theses and inferences; and setting up a claim against other salient theses and determining whether they are compatible or incompatible, and why.

Philosophy requires a slight shift in perspective to permit scrutiny of that which is unseen or taken for granted, but no less important for that. Think of radio waves. You could live your life without ever knowing they were there—as people did until the 19th century. But they are all around us, coming from all directions, bouncing off us, sometimes tickling our ear drums. They make possible a lot of modern life. They might be killing us slowly as we talk on cell phones or microwave our popcorn. And – as you know if you’ve ever operated a shortwave radio (or an FM radio in New York City) – even small distinctions between wavelengths can make the difference between two completely different broadcasts.

Doing philosophy is like attending to radio waves. If your radio waves or your interactions with them got out of whack, things could go quite wrong; your life might even be unbearable. Similarly, if the intellectual structure of your life got out of whack, your life might be unbearable. But if you didn't know about radio waves, or didn't do philosophy, you would never be able to diagnose, let alone fix, the problem.

Moreover, your own confidence that you've got the radio waves in check is not, in itself, evidence that they are in check. If you are not monitoring your connections and listening carefully, you don't have good grounds for your confidence. Certitude is the enemy of philosophy; groundless certitude is the enemy of knowledge. Memorization and absorption of facts are *useful* for philosophy, for the sake of informing our philosophical reflection, but do not themselves constitute philosophy. But at the same time, pure speculation and rumination, unmoored from any purpose, also do not constitute philosophy.

Academic Integrity: Cheating and plagiarism are immoral because a) they are *dishonest* (to me and others), in that the cheater/plagiarist presents as her/his own something that is not; b) they are *unfair* (to classmates), who work hard to meet shared requirements that the cheater/plagiarist circumvents; c) they violate *academic obligations* (to the university) that students voluntarily accept upon enrollment; and d) they may violate *self-regarding duties of self-development or self-perfection* (if such duties exist).

They can also get one in serious trouble. According to the University of Louisville's *Code of Student Conduct*, Section 5, "Academic dishonesty is prohibited at the University of Louisville. It is a serious offense because it diminishes the quality of scholarship, makes accurate evaluation of student progress impossible, and defrauds those in society who must ultimately depend upon the knowledge and integrity of the institution and its students and faculty." It is your responsibility to know this code and comply with its requirements. If I discover violations of this policy I will pursue the required disciplinary channels, which normally involve communicating with the dean for undergraduate affairs. If you have any questions about how to comply with this policy, ask me *in advance*.

Evaluation:

This course is based on the following evaluation system.

At the outset you and I will make a contract committing you to successful completion of assignments totaling a certain number of points. You will decide how many points to commit to based on the grade you want for the course. If you successfully complete all the assignments you commit to, you get that grade. If you successfully complete assignments totaling at most one letter grade less, you get that lower grade. If you successfully complete assignments totaling **more than one letter grade less, you fail**. Work beyond what you contract to do will not count unless you approach me to alter the contract. In no event will I give you a grade lower than what you earn according to this policy, but I reserve the right to raise your grade at the end of the semester if your work is uncommonly meritorious. Here are the minimum scores associated with each grade:

A+	98 points	A	93 points	A-	90 points
B+	88	B	83	B-	80
C+	78	C	73	C-	70
D+	68	D	60	F	> one full letter grade below your commitment or > 8 unexcused absences

Note that if you submit an assignment but it is judged **unsuccessful**, you have not successfully completed it and you will have to redo it until it is judged successful.

Course Requirements:

1. Short Reports	up to	50
2. Environmental Justice Action Plan		25
3. Peer Assessments	up to	20
4. Attendance	up to	5

1. *Short Reports*. You may successfully complete *up to* five short reports. These are written reports of up to four pages on a question engaging the readings. Evaluation criteria and questions are on a separate handout. Each short report you complete successfully will be worth 10 points. Please bring **two** copies – or email me one and bring one – of each assignment.
2. *Environmental Justice Action Plan*. This is a major paper (10 pages or so) including a) careful and detailed presentation of a problem of environmental justice, including a moral assessment of the problem (5 points); b) a plan for addressing it (5 points); c) an explanation of how that plan will address the problem, paying attention also to side-effects and so on (5 points); and d) a moral defense of that plan (10 points). The plan may involve individual/personal choices, collective action, economic action, policy changes, coercion, some or all of the above, etc. The problem may, but need not, be drawn from our readings. You may turn in your EJAP any time during the semester, but no later than **Monday, Nov. 29**. Again, please bring **two** copies.
3. *Peer Assessments*. The first round of assessments of your short reports and action plans will be done by your peers. Each assessment you do successfully will be worth 5 points (short reports) or 10 points (action plans). I will circulate an assessment sheet for you to use. Everyone in the class will be assigned an assessor number. When you hand in your assessment you should bring **two copies**: one for me and one for the person whose assignment you have assessed. (Give them both to me; I will recirculate.)
4. *Attendance*. No matter how smart you are or how diligently you read, you will not be able to learn this material alone: philosophy is a discursive subject; lecture and discussion are essential. Each day I will circulate a sign-in sheet. If you have contracted to attend, every unexcused absence will cost one point. **After your 8th unexcused absence you will fail the course, whether or not you have contracted to attend.**

Handing in assignments. Unless otherwise specified, assignments are always due at the beginning of class on the due date. Short reports **must** be handed in on the day indicated in the syllabus; Peer Assessment forms **must** be handed in exactly **one** class after you receive the assignment to be assessed. Because you have a great deal of flexibility in meeting requirements, the only valid reason for failure to hand in an assignment on time is an unforeseen emergency – in general, one involving physical impossibility, premature birth, or a death in the family. I am not flexible on this policy because, no matter how trustworthy you are, I am sad to say that I’ve learned that some people take advantage of flexibility. I can’t fairly or accurately determine who is trustworthy and who is not. So I just need everybody to provide documentation of any claim that is used to excuse a late assignment.

You should submit **two copies of each assignment**, at least one of which should be in hard copy. The second may be electronic. Assignments should be typed with normal margins (like the ones on this document) and normal font (about this size), and bereft of any ornamentation beyond a single staple. For electronically submitted assignments your best bet is to send attachments through Blackboard’s “send email” function, but you can also **use your UofL (groupwise) account and always cc yourself**. Just make sure you get my email address right. I have an aggressive spam filter and if you use a non-UofL address I cannot guarantee that the spam filter will not eat your message. If your assignment does not reach me it has not been submitted. Electronic documents must be in one of the following document formats **only**: .doc, .docx, .odt, or .rtf. Other formats risk being unreadable by my computer;

if I cannot open your assignment I cannot give you credit for handing it in on time. Electronically submitted assignments are due at the same time as hard-copy assignments.

Disabilities: The University of Louisville is committed to providing access to programs and services for qualified students with disabilities. If you are a student with a disability and require accommodation to participate in and complete requirements for this class, notify me immediately and contact the Disability Resource Center (Robbins Hall, 852-6938) for verification of eligibility and determination of specific accommodations.

Electronic Devices: You may use a laptop in this class but you must sit in the front row if you do so. All other electronic devices are forbidden, except if for some reason you need to be reachable (e.g., your partner is about to go into labor). In such cases you should let me know at the beginning of class that you need to keep your phone on. **Electronic interruptions other than these will count as unexcused absences for the day.**

Required Texts:

1. Kristin Shrader-Frechette, *Environmental Justice: Creating Equality, Reclaiming Democracy* (Oxford U. P., 2002).
2. Readings available online (see embedded links or citations at bottom of this document).

Schedule

Date	Topic	Reading	Due Today	Notes
M 8/23	Introduction			
Part I. Environments in Crisis				
W 8/25	Unsustainable Consumption	WWF “Living Planet Report 2008” (online)		
M 8/30	The Global Commons	Hardin, “The Tragedy of the Commons” (online)	Short report: ecological footprint	
W 9/1		Schmidtz, “When is Original Appropriation Required?” (online)		
M 9/6	Labor	Day	No	Class
W 9/8		Ostrom <i>et al.</i> , “Revisiting the Commons” (online)	Short report: Hardin	
M 9/13		Gardiner, “The Real Tragedy of the Commons” (online)		
W 9/15		Continued	Short report: Hardin, Ostrom and Gardiner	Last day to apply for December graduation

Part II. Justice and Global Environments: Theories and Problems				
M 9/20	Environment and Justice Beyond Borders	Shue, “Global Environment and International Inequality” (online)		
W 9/22	A non-Utopian liberal approach to global justice	Pogge, “An Egalitarian Law of Peoples” (online)		
M 9/27	A theory of Environmental Justice	KSF , chap. 2 (also skim chap. 1 for acronyms & background)		
W 9/29		Continued	Short report: NIMBY vs. EJ	
M 10/4	Land Use	KSF , chap. 3		
W 10/6	Developing Nations	KSF , chap. 8		Alastair Norcross events Thursday
M 10/11	Fall	Break	No	Class
W 10/13	Natural Resources	Hayward, “Global Justice and the Distribution of Natural Resources” (online)	Short report: Hayward vs. Pogge	Thursday 10/14 is last day to withdraw
M 10/18	Intergenerational Justice?	Roberts, “The Nonidentity Problem” (online)		
W 10/20		KSF , chap. 5		Priority Registration begins Friday
M 10/25	Confluence of Problems	Gardiner, “A Perfect Moral Storm” (on Blackboard)	Short report: future people	
W 10/27		Continued		
M 11/1	A just global climate regime?	Vanderheiden, “Allocating Ecological Space” (online)		
W 11/3	Global Debt	Hayward, “International Political Theory and the Global Environment” (online)	Short report: ecospace egalitarianism	
M 11/8	Greenhouse Development Rights	Baer <i>et al.</i> , “The Greenhouse Development Rights Framework” (online)		

W 11/10		Continued	Short report: GDRs	
Part III. Problems & Puzzles				
M 11/15	Conflicts between cultural and environmental values	Perrett, "Indigenous Rights and Environmental Justice" (on Blackboard)		
W 11/17		Gaard, "Tools for a Cross-Cultural Feminist Ethics" (online)		
M 11/22		Continued	Short report: Makah Whale Hunt	
W 11/24	Thanksgiving	Break	No	Class
M 11/29	Civil Disobedience?	Stuart White, "Climate Change: Is 'Direct Action' Justifiable?" (online)	Last Day to turn in EJAP	
W 12/1	Military Force?	Eckersley, "Ecological Intervention" (online)		
M 12/6	Conclusions	KSF chap. 9	Short report: civil disobedience	
W 12/8	No class		Peer assessors return short reports to me	
Sat 12/11			EJAP revisions due by 1:45 p.m. (if required)	

Online articles

1. World Wide Fund for Nature, *Living Planet Report 2008*. URL: http://wwf.panda.org/about_our_earth/all_publications/living_planet_report/
2. Garrett Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons." *Science* New Series 162, No. 3859 (Dec. 13, 1968), 1243-48. <http://www.jstor.org.echo.louisville.edu/stable/pdfplus/1724745.pdf>
3. David Schmidtz, "When is Original Appropriation Required?" *The Monist* 73 (1990), 504-519. URL: <http://search.ebscohost.com.echo.louisville.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=9706191229&site=ehost-live>
4. Elinor Ostrom, Joanna Burger, Christopher B. Field, Richard B. Norgaard, and David Policansky, "Revisiting the Commons: Local Lessons, Global Challenges." *Science* 284 (9 April 1999), 278-82. URL: http://isites.harvard.edu/fs/docs/icb.topic209735.files/Revisiting_the_Commons.pdf
5. Stephen Gardiner, "The Real Tragedy of the Commons." *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 30 (2001), 387-416. URL: <http://www.jstor.org.echo.louisville.edu/stable/pdfplus/3557968.pdf>
6. Henry Shue, "Global Environment and International Inequality," *International Affairs* 75 (1999), 531-45. URL: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1468-2346.00092/pdf>
7. Thomas Pogge, "An Egalitarian Law of Peoples." *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 23 (1994), 195-

224. URL: <http://www.jstor.org.echo.louisville.edu/stable/pdfplus/2265183.pdf>
8. Tim Hayward, "Global Justice and the Distribution of Natural Resources." *Political Studies* 54 (2006), 349-69. URL: <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com.echo.louisville.edu/cgi-bin/fulltext/118601819/PDFSTART>
 9. Melinda Roberts, "The Nonidentity Problem." *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2009 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta. URL: <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2009/entries/nonidentity-problem/>
 10. Steve Vanderheiden, "Allocating Ecological Space." *Journal of Social Philosophy* 40 (2009), 257-75. URL: <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com.echo.louisville.edu/cgi-bin/fulltext/122440743/PDFSTART>
 11. Tim Hayward, "International Political Theory and the Global Environment: Some Critical Questions for Liberal Cosmopolitans." *Journal of Social Philosophy* 40 (2009), 276-95. URL: <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com.echo.louisville.edu/cgi-bin/fulltext/122440740/PDFSTART>
 12. Paul Baer, Glenn Fieldman, Tom Athanasiou, and Sivan Kartha, "Greenhouse Development Rights: towards an equitable framework for global climate policy." *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 21 (2008): 649-69. URL: <http://web.ebscohost.com.echo.louisville.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=4&hid=11&sid=c80d1a71-7852-4c24-9087-a9b7cf99d13c%40sessionmgr14>
 13. Roy Perrett, "Indigenous Rights and Environmental Justice." *Environmental Ethics* 20 (1998), 377-91. Available on Blackboard.
 14. Greta Gaard, "Tools for a Cross-Cultural Feminist Ethics." *Hypatia* 16 (2001), 1-26. URL: <http://www.jstor.org.echo.louisville.edu/stable/pdfplus/3810712.pdf>
 15. Stuart White, "Climate Change: Is 'Direct Action' Justifiable?" *Next Left: A Fabian Society Blog*, Tuesday April 14, 2009. <http://www.nextleft.org/2009/04/climate-change-is-direct-action.html>
 16. Robyn Eckersley, "Ecological Intervention: Prospects and Limits." *Ethics & International Affairs* 21 (2007): 293-316. URL: <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com.echo.louisville.edu/cgi-bin/fulltext/117999035/PDFSTART>