

**Syllabus. Phil 3309. MW 12. Environmental Ethics. Fall 2012. Menser. 12:50-2:05pm; 4137B. Office: 3316 Boylan. morphospace@gmail.com**  
**<http://sustainablebc.blogspot.com/>**

**MISSION:** 1) to become familiar with a range of ethical theories including human-animal rights, participatory democracy, environmental justice, and virtue ethics. 2) to be able to apply these theories to real world environmental cases both global and local and critique them; 3) to understand the historical, cultural, political and economic dimensions of environmental issues; 4) to critically assess the role(s) of the state, market, businesses, technologies and social movements for achieving sustainable development; 5) to understand the meanings of key terms in the debates: ecological footprint, sustainability, environmental racism/justice, food sovereignty, global warming, climate justice; green capitalism, “organic,” commons, ecofeminism.

**GOALS OF THIS COURSE (which is to say, by the end of the course, you should be able to do the following):** 1. Be able to provide a reasoned response to a selection from a philosophical text, a philosophical theory, issue, or argument; 2) construct a debate among opposing or differing views; 3) be able to apply ethical theories and concepts to real world problems and cases. 4) to improve your writing [“The ability to move from low stakes writing to more formal pieces”];

**Text:** Course Packet (available at Far Better Copies on Campus Rd and Hillel)

**Requirements:** quiz (10%); 4 short writings assignments/presentations (20%); midterm (20%) final (20%); 5 page paper (20%); attendance/participation (10%; 2 excused absences permitted; 5% for every one after that regardless of reason, out of 50% of 5%)  
**NOTE:** Philosophy requires discussion and debate and it sometimes gets heated, but remember to always treat other students with appropriate respect and never attack people personally. (Please refrain from texting during class.) Violations of the preceding impact on participation/attendance grade.

**-NOTE:** cheating or plagiarism on any assignment will result in an automatic 0% (F) for that assignment. Grades are not curved. No assignment may be “redone.” One unannounced extra credit assignment will be given (for which there is no “makeup.”).

**Plagiarism Policy:** The faculty and administration of Brooklyn College support an environment free from cheating and plagiarism. Each student is responsible for being aware of what constitutes cheating and plagiarism and for avoiding both. The complete text of the CUNY Academic Integrity Policy and the Brooklyn College procedure for implementing that policy can be found at this site:

<http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/bc/policies>. If a faculty member suspects a violation of academic integrity and, upon investigation, confirms that violation, or if the student admits the violation, the faculty member **MUST** report the violation.

**DISABILITIES POLICY:** In order to receive disability-related academic accommodations students must first be registered with the Center for Student Disability Services. Students who have a documented disability or suspect they may have a disability are invited to set up an appointment with the Director of the Center for Student Disability Services, Ms. Valerie Stewart-Lovell at 718-951-5538. If you have already registered

with the Center for Student Disability Services please provide your professor with the course accommodation form and discuss your specific accommodation with him/her.

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

### **I/: The Ecological Crisis: Climate Change, Ecological Degradation, Waste; *Climate Change*, 350ppm; *Ecological footprint***

- Bill McKibben, "A New World" (from *Eaarth*) PK
- Williams Rees, "Unsustainable by Nature?" PK
- Tristram Stuart, Introduction (from *Waste*)
- TBA, On Env Racism
- Maggie Zhou, "Military Climate Factsheet" (handout)

#### **-assignment1**

### **II/ Can Economic Growth Save Us?; *Green Capitalism*, *Mitigation*, *Adaptation*, *IPAT***

- Jeffrey Sachs "Common Challenges, Common Wealth"; "Our Crowded Planet" (from *Common Wealth*) PK **QUIZ**

### **III/ Ethical Views: Virtue, Duty, Action, Capability**

- Lisa Newton, "Intro," "Ethics and Sustainability" PK
- Sailesh Rao, Prologue, "The Caterpillar and the Butterfly," "Kharma," "Dharma;" "The Butterfly Culture" (from *Carbon Dharma*) PK
- M. Nussbaum, The Capabilities Approach PK
- Donald Van de Veer, "Two Factor Egalitarianism" PK

#### **Assignment2**

MIDTERM

### **IV/ Perspectives on Place, Community, Wild(er)ness; and the *Sustaibale City/Region***

#### **-Assignment3**

- Peter Berg, biography
- B. A. Mann, "Good Rule: They Assist One Another" PK
- Dolores LaChapelle, "Relationships between Humans and Animals"
- Tom Jay, "Land, Earth, Soil, Dirt: Some Notes from the Ground"
- M. Menser, "The Bioregion and Social Difference: What Might Environmental Philosophy Learn from Iris Young's Metropolitan Regionalism?" PK
- Rauldo Menegat, "Participatory democracy and sustainable development: integrated urban environmental management in Porto Alegre, Brazil" PK

### **The Planetary University: Knowledge Production, Place, Democracy**

- Michael M'Gonigle and Justine Stark, CH 5: Taking the High Street ; CH 6: Locating the Commons; CH 7: Structured Power; CH 8: Active Place (from *Planet U: sustaining the world; reinventing the university*); PK

#### **-assignment4**

- R. Eckersley, "The Green State"
- TBA

## **PAPER DUE**

Dec 19, 1-3pm FINAL EXAM

