

Syllabus. Phil 3309. MW9. Environmental Ethics. Spring 2013. Menser. 9:30-10:45am; 4145B. 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. 5/ of special focus this term will be the food system and NYC’s future post-Sandy.

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

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

Requirements: 2 quizzes (5% each); 2 short writings assignments/presentations (5% each); midterm (20%) final (20%); 10 page paper (30%); attendance/participation (10%: 2 excused absences permitted; 5% for every one after that regardless of reason; 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

IA. INTRO: the global ecological crisis: nature, human nature

- watch "Earth 2100" (outside of class)
- Bill McKibben, "A New World" (from *Eaarth*) PK
- Williams Rees, "Unsustainable by Nature?" PK

QUIZ1

IB. LOCATION: Universities, Cities and Democratic Sustainability

- 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

QUIZ2

- Menser, "Participatory Democracy in Action: the Case of La Via Campesina" PK
- Rauldo Menegat, "Participatory democracy and sustainable development: integrated urban environmental management in Porto Alegre, Brazil" PK
- Benjamin Barber, "Democracy and Climate Change: How Cities Can Do What States Can't" (handout)
- Menser, "The Participatory Metropolis: Resilience Requires Democracy" (handout)
- NYC Metropolitan and BioRegion (handout)
- Scott Stringer NYC FOOD Plan (PK)

II/ Ethical Views: Virtue, Principle, 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" (handout)

MIDTERM

III/: Globalization and Ecological Economics; the role of State and Market: Energy

- Jeffrey Sachs "Common Challenges, Common Wealth"; "Our Crowded Planet" (from *Common Wealth*) PK
- Herman Daly, "From a Failed Growth Economy to a Steady-State Economy"
- Osha Gray Davidson, "Germany Has Built Clean Energy Economy that US Rejected 30 Years Ago" (handout)

***April 22-3: Future of Food Conference*; ("Sustainable Lunch," april 22nd)**

IV. Community, Nature, Race and Social Change

- M. Menser, "The Bioregion and Social Difference: What Might Environmental Philosophy Learn from Iris Young's Metropolitan Regionalism?" PK
- B. A. Mann, "Good Rule: They Assist One Another"

PAPER DUE

FINAL EXAM: may 22, 8-10am