

PLS 495
Departmental Seminar
Political Theory and Environmentalism
Fall 2009

Instructor: Dr. Earl Sheridan
Office Hours: Tu-Th 10-11 am; W 2-3 pm
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Text

Environmental Philosophy, from Animal Rights to Radical Ecology, 4th edition by Zimmerman et.al; also reserved readings and class handouts.

Course Objectives

The course objective is to examine the relationship between normative political theory, ideology and environmentalism and examine the philosophical and ideological underpinnings and assumptions of the environmental movement. Upon completion of the course students should be able to understand the philosophical and ideological basis of environmentalism and articulate this understanding.

Course Requirements

Two exams and a group project/paper/oral presentation. The exams will count 100 points each, the group project will count 50 points and 50 points will be assigned on the basis of participation. Participation means attendance (20pts), discussion of assigned readings and other class discussion (15pts) and pop tests or quizzes (15 pts). The points from the exams, the group project, and participation will be added up to get 300 and divided by to get your final grade. Make-up exams will only be given with a written, acceptable excuse on Reading Day.

Grading

The grading scale is as follows: 90-100=A; 80-89=B; 70-79=C; 60-69=D; below 60=F

Attendance and Classroom Etiquette

I take attendance. You have three unexcused absences. For each unexcused absence over three, four points will be deducted from your participation grade. Excused absences are only granted with a written justification from an official authority and must be for serious reasons. Be in class on time and once in class you are expected to be in class the whole period unless you get sick or have made prior arrangements with me. Cell phones must be turned off during class and no texting is allowed during class. Laptops are allowed as long as they are being used for class material. Behavior must be civil and respectful at all times. Violations of classroom etiquette could diminish your participation grade.

Academic Integrity

All students are expected to follow the academic honor code (as covered in the UNCW Student Handbook). Academic dishonesty of any form will not be tolerated and will seriously impact your grade.

Course Outline

Overview -- Zimmerman Introduction

Part I Environmental Ethics – articles in Zimmerman

Deep Ecology -- articles on e-reserve.

“The Viable Human” by Thomas Berry

“ The Deep Ecological Movement: Some Philosophical Aspects” by Arne Naess

“Demystifying the Critiques of Deep Ecology” by Harold Glasser

Part II Ecofeminism and Social Justice --articles in Zimmerman

“The Death of Nature” by Carolyn Merchant

First Exam

Part III Environmental Continental Philosophy -- articles in Zimmerman

Part IV Political Ecology – articles in Zimmerman

Film –To Be Announced

Second Exam

Group Presentations – Exam Day December 10

