



## CIEE Rome, Italy

Course title:	Environmental Ethics
Course code:	(GI) ENVI 2001 ROIT
Programs offering course:	Rome OC
Open Campus Track:	STEM and Society
Language of instruction:	English
U.S. semester credits:	3
Contact hours:	45
Term:	Spring Block I 2020

### 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:

- 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. Research Paper	25%
2. Animal Ethics Case Studies	10%
3. Group Project	20%
4. Final Exam	25%
5. Participation	20%
TOTAL	100%

Course Requirements

Research Paper

Students are expected to write a 2,000-word 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 five relevant books or articles. Your description of ethical perspectives from the course should be brief (not more than two 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 of 2-3 students on a case study regarding an animal-human issue. Each group will answer to a list of questions provided by the instructor 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 (of 250 words), a written report (of 500 words), and a class presentation.

#### Final Exam

A final exam will be administered in the last class session. The exam 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



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 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.

Percentage of Total Course Hours Missed	Minimum Penalty
Up to 10%	Participation graded as per class requirements
10 – 20%	Participation graded as per class requirements; grade penalty & <b>written warning</b>
More than 20%	<b>Automatic course failure</b> , and possible expulsion



N.B. Course schedule is subject to change due to study tours, excursions, or local holidays. Final schedules will be included in the final syllabus provided to students on site.

### Weekly Schedule

#### Week 1

##### Class 1.1 Introduction to Environmental ethics

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 Introduction to Environmental ethics

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

#### Reading:

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

#### Week 2

##### Class 2.1 Environmental Ethics Approaches and World Views

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 Environmental Ethics Approaches and World Views

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.

Reading:

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.

Due: Group Project Proposal

Week 3

Class 3.1 Animal Ethics

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) .

Reading:

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

Class 3.2 Animal Ethics

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

Reading:



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

Due: Animal ethics case studies

Week 4

Class 4.1 Ethics of sustainability and climate change

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.

Reading:

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

Class 4.2 Ethics of sustainability and climate change

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

Reading:

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

Week 5

Class 5.1 Environmental Justice

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.



Reading:

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

Class 5.2 Environmental Justice

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?

Reading:

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

Group project (review)

Week 6

Class 6.1 Class Presentations and Conclusions

Due: Group project (presentation)

Reading:

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

Class 6.2 Final Exam

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>

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-80059>

Keady, Cameron. (2015). Colorado Teenager Rallies Youth Around The World To Protect The Planet. *The Huffington Post*. [TheHuffingtonPost.com](http://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%20Ethics%20and%20Weak%20Anthropocentrism.pdf](http://data.naturalcapitalproject.org/natcap/ES281_What%20is%20Nature%20Worth/ES281%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](http://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-80059>



Thompson, Paul. B. (2012) Sustainability: Ethical Foundations. Nature Education Knowledge 3(10):11

<https://www.nature.com/scitable/knowledge/library/sustainability-ethical-foundations-713>

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>