

**ETHICAL DILEMMAS IN ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS  
POLITICAL SCIENCE 365/ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES 365  
SPRING 2024**

1-11 Introduction: get acquainted; receive *Cradle to Cradle*, brief overview

**PART 1: WHAT IS SUSTAINABILITY?**

**A: The debate over mimicking nature**

1-16 Beyond cradle to grave design

McDonough and Braungart, *Cradle to Cradle*, 3-44

1-17 SPECIAL EVENT: King Day—20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Teach-In

1pm: Cedric Taylor, Central Michigan University, Environmental Racism

2pm: Chris Cooper, University of Tennessee Extension, Sustainability and Community

3pm: Chloe Bell, Greater Chicago Legal Clinic, Redlining in Chicago

1-18 From Silent Spring to Eco-Efficiency: How the good and less bad is the enemy of the best design

McDonough and Braungart, *Cradle to Cradle*, 45-91

THREE QUESTIONS CLASS

1-23 The efficiency view as the true environmentalist view: the relativity of wild rarity as a value

Krieger, "What is wrong with plastic trees?," 145-156

Elliot, "Faking nature," 76-88

1-25 *Class debate: Should we aim for eco-efficiency or eco-effectiveness?*

McDonough and Braungart, *Cradle to Cradle*, 118-156

1-29 Micro-essay #1 due in Google folder by 4PM

**B: Why is nature worth mimicking in the first place?**

1-30 Leopold's answer: "value in the philosophic sense"

Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*, 237-264; 137-145

2-1 Reading the Scottish Enlightenment into Leopold's intrinsic worth

Callicott, "The conceptual foundations of the land ethic," 75-99

2-6 The varieties of value in the Endangered Species Act and value conflict in land use policy

Norton, *Why Preserve Natural Variety?*, 3-22

Norton, *Toward Unity among Environmentalists*, 155-183

THREE QUESTIONS CLASS

2-8 Special Event: Class visit: Barbara Gallindo, ACLS Fellow in Race, Ethnicity, and Indigeneity

4pm talk on Mining Terror in South America

2-13 Can instrumental value and intrinsic (or inherent) value work together and avoid policy conflicts?

Yes: Miene, "The utility of preservation and the preservation of utility," 131-172

No: Stenmark, "The relevance of environmental ethical theories for policymaking," 564-573

- 2-15 ***Class debate: Should states allow hunting of wolves in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem?***  
Smith, "Managing Wolves in the Yellowstone Area," 436-445
- 2-19 Micro-essay #2 due in Google folder by 4PM

**C. Hard choices in managing ecosystems sustainably**

- 2-20 The view from the land: The prairie ecosystem as an example of a "land" to be valued  
Watts, *Reading the Landscape of America*, 1-37; 96-132
- 2-22 Can the "preservationist intuition" be defended? Is restoration even viable anymore?  
Cahen, "Against the moral considerability of ecosystems," 195-216  
Meine, "Restoration and 'novel ecosystems': Priority or paradox?," 217-224  
THREE QUESTIONS CLASS
- 2-27 Presentations
- 2-29 Presentations
- 3-5 Presentations
- 3-7 Presentations
- 3-8 Analytical essay due in Google folder by 4PM

**3-11-3-17 SPRING BREAK**

**PART 2: ANIMALS: OUR WORLD, THEIR WORLD, AND THE ONE WE MAKE TOGETHER**

**A: On the moral considerability of animals**

- 3-18 Using the capabilities approach to make the case for the animals and against human injustice  
Nussbaum, *Justice for Animals*, xi-xxvi; 1-39
- 3-20 Utilitarians, Kantians, and the Aristotelian capabilities response  
Nussbaum, *Justice for Animals*, 39-79  
THREE QUESTIONS CLASS
- 3-35 What about insect and plant communities? Why not ecological biocentrism?  
Callicott, "Animal liberation: A triangular affair," 29-59
- 3-27 An argument for stopping at "striving sentience"  
Nussbaum, *Justice for Animals*, 118-153
- 4-2 The ecological preservationist instinct defended  
Rolston, "Duties to endangered species," 60-75
- 4-4 ***class debate: Should environmentalists stop at striving sentience?***  
Nussbaum, *Justice for Animals*, 173-192
- 4-8 Micro-essay #3 due in Google folder by 4PM

## **B: How should environmentalists think about pain?**

- 4-9 The *Umwelt* as an immense world of animal sensation: Smell and taste  
Ed Yong, *An Immense World*, 3-52
- 4-11 Light and Color  
Ed Yong, *An Immense World*, 53-116  
THREE QUESTIONS CLASS
- 4-16 The varieties of animal pain experience and the hidden pain caused by light and noise pollution  
Ed Yong, *An Immense World*, 117-134; 335-355
- 4-18 Can we use the reality of different *Umwelten* to create a species-sensitive environmental ethic?  
Kowalsky, "Toward an Ethic of Animal Difference," 239-268
- 4-23 *class debate: Is animal pain an acceptable signal (wild and evolutionary) or a moral evil?*  
Nussbaum, *Justice for Animals*, 223-254
- 4-24 Micro-essay #4 due in Google folder by 4PM
- 4-26 FINAL EXAM 1:15-3:15 PM

### **Course reading**

The following required books will be available at the IWU Bookstore.

Nussbaum, Martha. 2022. *Justice for Animals* (New York: Simon & Schuster)  
Watts, May Theilgaard. 1957. *Reading the Landscape of America* (Rochester, N.Y.: Nature Study Guide)  
Yong, Ed. 2022. *An Immense World* (New York: Random House)

The following book will be handed out on the first day of class:

McDonough and Braungart, *Cradle to Cradle*, 2002. (New York: North Point Press)

The following articles or selections from books will be kept on our class Canvas page.

Cahen, "Against the moral considerability of ecosystems."  
Callicott, "Animal liberation: A triangular affair."  
Kowalsky, "Toward an ethic of animal difference."  
Elliot, "Faking nature."  
Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*, (New York: Ballantine Books, 1990)  
Miene, "The utility of preservation and the preservation of utility,"  
Meine, "Restoration and 'novel ecosystems': Priority or paradox?"  
Norton, *Why Preserve Natural Variety?* (Princeton" Princeton University Press, 1986)  
Norton, *Toward Unity among Environmentalists* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991)  
Rolston, "Duties to endangered species."  
Smith, "Managing wolves in the Yellowstone area."  
Stenmark, "The relevance of environmental ethical theories for policymaking."

## **Social contract**

Students are required to complete four micro-essays (750-950 words each), a class presentation, an analytical essay, and a final exam. All assignments and the final exam will be posted on my homepage: <http://sun.iwu.edu/~jsimeone>.

Students can revise essays to improve their grade, but they must: (1) visit me during office hours with the graded paper to discuss how to improve it; (2) visit me again with the new draft (which may need further revision); (3) make sure the revised version of the paper is turned in with the original and all other drafts; and (4) do all this by the last day of class (April 23). Grades on revised papers will be averaged with the original grade to create a final composite grade.

40% micro-essays (10% each)

20% analytical essay and presentation (15% essay; 5% presentation)

25% final exam

15% class participation (including the King Day teach-in, five three questions classes, and four class debates)

This is a discussion-oriented, flipped classroom. You are expected to have read the reading for the class session in which it appears on the syllabus. Attendance is important to build an intellectual community and sustain the dialog needed to make sense of the issues presented. Students may take as many as three absences, excused or unexcused, without impacting their class participation grade. However, there is a limit to the number of absences you may have and still pass; no student who misses as many as **eight** class sessions, for whatever reasons, shall receive a passing grade.

Use of artificial intelligence tools like ChatGBT or other large language models to assist with class assignments is prohibited, unless specifically approved ahead of time by me. Use of tools like JSTOR to locate peer reviewed articles for your presentation topic and analytical essay is specifically encouraged.

*Illinois Wesleyan University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on a disability (including mental health and chronic or temporary medical conditions), it is your responsibility to register with Disability Services. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and accommodations cannot be provided until I receive an email from Disability Services. Once the email is sent, please make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations confidentially so they may be implemented in a timely fashion. For more information contact Disability Services by visiting 110 Holmes Hall, calling [309-556-3231](tel:309-556-3231), or emailing [jhowe@iwu.edu](mailto:jhowe@iwu.edu)*

## **Office hours**

Jim Simeone

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TH 4-5; W 9-11 or by appt.

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