



**Environmental Ethics: HPL 380-A**  
*College of Arts and Letters*  
**Fall 2022**

**Instructor:** Professor Joyce Mullan  
**Meeting Times:** Mondays – Wednesdays, 1:00pm – 2:15pm  
**Classroom Location:** Peirce 218  
**Contact Information:** Peirce 109, [jmullan@Stevens.edu](mailto:jmullan@Stevens.edu)  
**Office Hours:** Mondays: 2:30 pm - 4:30 pm, Tuesdays: 5-6pm  
**Canvas address :** <https://sit.instructure.com/courses/59825>

**Course Description:**

This course is an examination of basic positions in the field of environmental ethics with emphasis on principles of sustainability, whether there are legal and moral rights for nature, humane treatment of animals, and environmental policy and decision-making.

In this class, we will ask the basic question of what does it mean to be natural? Further, we will inquire whether there are aspects of our non-human animal nature that we miss in our race towards a post-human future. Does nature have any intrinsic value aside from our use of it? Does it alienate us from our feeling for the cosmos? Has our technological and economic lifestyle made us devalue our attachment to the local and simple? What about sustainable development? Namely, how can we reconcile global poverty, with an eye to the environmental consequences of our efforts? Aren't we obligated to live our ideas in order to make the world a better place? How do we do that? Have we also lost our joy in communing with nature as it disappears slowly before our eyes? Is there any value in wildness or the wilderness that is worth preserving, if we want to remain sane? What about the sentient creatures we share our planet with? Is the world increasingly impoverished and are we impoverished by the degradation of their native habitats?

To explore these ideas, we will consider the most influential movements in Environmental thinking: Sustainability, Deep Ecology, Ecofeminism, and Social Ecology. We will also focus on important themes in environmental activism such as environmental justice, our unreflective embrace of technology, radical environmental activism, and the role that economics plays in our race to a livable future. We will challenge ourselves, as well, to consider ways to make our ideals real. Authors considered include: Aristotle, Immanuel Kant, Henry David Thoreau, Rachel Carson, Aldo Leopold, John Muir, Arne Naess, Donna Haraway, and Barbara Kingsolver.

**College of Arts and Letters Course Objectives:**

1. Students will demonstrate an awareness of ethical responsibility and the societal impact of their future professions.
2. Students will demonstrate a fuller understanding of the traditional humanities and social sciences through an understanding of their relation to the study of science and technology.
3. Students will demonstrate an awareness of cultures and societies other than their own.
4. Students will demonstrate writing and public speaking skills.

5. Students will demonstrate leadership and team skills.

### **Course Outcomes Phil 380A:**

1. Students will identify philosophical problems in Environmental Ethics and learn to apply the methods of critical analysis used by philosophers.
2. Students will identify evolving and devolving ideas about nature and the Environment.
3. Students will be able to distinguish between differing positions recognizing a multiplicity of philosophical perspectives.
4. This will allow students to build a foundation for their own intellectual development and expand their cultural understanding.

### **CAL Program outcomes**

1. Introduce Stevens' students to the disciplines and programs of study offered by CAL in a way that is structured, rigorous, and consistent for all students at the Institute.
2. Afford students the opportunity to reflect critically on important ethical and social questions and sharpen their analytical skills.
3. Provide students with an appreciation for the more "objective" aspects of traditional humanistic disciplines, while at the same time an awareness that all questions remain open-ended and all conclusions subject to revision.
4. Give Stevens students a wealth of opportunities for activities outside the classroom, especially as they reinforce and refine classroom experiences.
5. Allow students to benefit from innovative teaching techniques, interdisciplinary co-teaching, and a sense of camaraderie and community across CAL.
6. Provide students with the knowledge that all their fellow classmates across the Institute are grappling with the same questions, topics, ideas, and core seminal texts.
7. Make available to every student at Stevens an advisor and/or point of contact outside his/her major advisor in the form of a "Preceptor."

**Course Structure:** Instructor will provide background for the texts as well as guidance for focused class discussions.

### **Course materials:**

*Earthcare: An anthology in Environmental Ethics*, edited by David Clowney and Patricia Mosto (Rowman & Littlefield, 2009)  
ISBN: 978-0-7425

*Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life*, by Barbara Kingsolver, Steven L. Hopp, and Camille Kingsolver (Harper Perennial, 2007) ISBN: 978-0-06-085256-6 (pdf will be provided)

A few short readings online:

Henry David Thoreau, "Where I lived and what I lived for (Ch.2) *Walden*  
<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/walden/hdt02.html>

Donna Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto,"  
<http://people.oregonstate.edu/~vanlondp/wgss320/articles/haraway-cyborg-manifesto.pdf>

Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*, Selections  
<http://www.uow.edu.au/~sharonb/STS300/environment/history/carsonbook.html#ch1>

Film clips of: *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, *Avatar*, *An Inconvenient Sequel: Truth to Power*, *Fastfood Nation*

## **Course Requirements:**

There will be two papers, two essay exams, and an oral presentation required for the class.

### **Attendance:**

This is a course that requires active class participation. Attendance is therefore, essential. Attendance will be taken every class. Students should come to all classes. Students absent for more than two classes without a documented emergency will lose one half grade. You should bring the text or reading with you for each class and read the required material beforehand. Borderline grades will be positively or negatively affected by your attendance and participation in class, as well.

**Papers:** Students will write two short papers. Detailed instructions and possible paper topics will be provided before the due dates under the assignments section of Canvas.

**Oral Presentation:** Starting the week after the midterm exam, most students will choose a chapter from Kingsolver's *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle* and explain major environmental issues discussed in that chapter as well as their own take on them. Students will email and submit a hard copy of their presentation before presenting via Canvas. There will be a few additional readings from the *Earthcare* Reader included as an alternate option, as well. A Sign-up sheet will be posted before the second class.

**Exams:** There will be midterm and final exams. Exams will consist in short answer questions, identification questions, and a choice of two out of three or four essay questions. Students are encouraged to form study groups to strengthen their memories. But study guides will also be made available.

**Writing and communications center:** Students are encouraged to take advantage of the free professional assistance regarding any difficulties or questions concerning writing or orally presenting. Their location is the second floor of the Morton building. Here is a link to their website:

<https://www.stevens.edu/academics/undergraduate-studies/writing-communications-center>

**Personal electronic information and communication devices:** Students do have permission to take notes on their laptops during class. They are requested not to use their laptops for any other purpose during class time, except maybe to look up an unfamiliar word or topic. These devices can be an obstacle to an effective classroom environment, though. They often do inhibit one's full and serious participation in class.

**Grade breakdown:** (First paper = 20% of grade, Second paper = 20% of grade, Exams = 20% each, Oral Presentation = 20%).

Grading scale: 93-100=A, 90-92=A-, 86-89=B+, 80-85=B, 76-79=C+, 70-75=C, 60-69=D, 59 and below=F.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

### **Undergraduate Honor System**

Enrollment into the undergraduate class of Stevens Institute of Technology signifies a student's commitment to the Honor System. Accordingly, the provisions of the Stevens Honor System apply to all undergraduate students in coursework and Honor Board proceedings. It is the responsibility of each student to become acquainted with and to uphold the ideals set forth in the [Honor System Constitution](#). More

information about the Honor System including the constitution, bylaws, investigative procedures, and the penalty matrix can be found online at <http://web.stevens.edu/honor/>

The following pledge shall be written in full and signed by every student on all submitted work (including, but not limited to, homework, projects, lab reports, code, quizzes and exams) that is assigned by the course instructor. No work shall be graded unless the pledge is written in full and signed.

*“I pledge my honor that I have abided by the Stevens Honor System.”* And then your ‘signature’.

### **Reporting Honor System Violations**

Students who believe a violation of the Honor System has been committed should report it within ten business days of the suspected violation. Students have the option to remain anonymous and can report violations online at [www.stevens.edu/honor](http://www.stevens.edu/honor).

### **EXAM ROOM CONDITIONS**

The following procedures apply to exams for this course. As the instructor, I reserve the right to modify any conditions set forth below by printing revised Exam Room Conditions on the exams. Students may NOT use the following devices during exams. Any electronic devices that are not mentioned in the list below are also not permitted.

Device	Permitted?	
	Yes	No
Laptops	X	
Cell Phones		X
Tablets		X
Smart Watches		X
Google Glass		X
Other		

Students are also NOT allowed to communicate with other students during exams or look up answers elsewhere. They are, however, encouraged to form study groups beforehand to prepare for them.

### **LEARNING ACCOMODATIONS**

Stevens Institute of Technology is dedicated to providing appropriate accommodations to students with documented disabilities. Student Counseling and Disability Services works with undergraduate and graduate students with learning disabilities, attention deficit-hyperactivity disorders, physical disabilities, sensory impairments, and psychiatric disorders in order to help students achieve their academic and personal potential. They facilitate equal access to the educational programs and opportunities offered at Stevens and coordinate reasonable accommodations for eligible students. These services are designed to encourage independence and self-advocacy with support from SCDS staff. The SCDS staff will facilitate the provision of accommodations on a case-by-case basis. These academic accommodations are provided at no cost to the student.

### ***Disability Services Confidentiality Policy***

Student Disability Files are kept separate from academic files and are stored in a secure location within the office of Student Counseling, Psychological & Disability Services. The Family Educational Rights Privacy Act (FERPA, 20 U.S.C. 1232g; 34CFR, Part 99) regulates disclosure of disability documentation and records maintained by Stevens Disability Services. According to this act, prior written consent by the student is required before our Disability Services office may release disability documentation or records to

anyone. An exception is made in unusual circumstances, such as the case of health and safety emergencies. For more information about Disability Services and the process to receive accommodations, visit <https://www.stevens.edu/sit/counseling/disability-services>. If you have any questions please contact: Philip Gehman, Student Counseling and Disability Services at Stevens Institute of Technology at [pgehman@stevens.edu](mailto:pgehman@stevens.edu) or (201) 216-8728.

Students requiring special accommodations before exams should notify instructor within a week before each exam, so that accommodations can be made in a timely manner.

## INCLUSIVITY STATEMENT

Stevens Institute of Technology believes that diversity and inclusiveness are essential to excellence in education and innovation. Our community represents a rich variety of backgrounds, experiences, demographics and perspectives and Stevens is committed to fostering a learning environment where every individual is respected and engaged. To facilitate a dynamic and inclusive educational experience, we ask all members of the community to:

- be open to the perspectives of others
- appreciate the uniqueness their colleagues
- take advantage of the opportunity to learn from each other
- exchange experiences, values and beliefs
- communicate in a respectful manner
- be aware of individuals who are marginalized and involve them
- keep confidential discussions private

## Changes in the syllabus

This syllabus is a contract. By taking this course you agree to abide by the rules of the HPL 380-A Environmental Ethics class, the College of Arts and Letters, and Stevens Institute of Technology.

The course will proceed at the pace of the class, except the dates for papers and exams are fixed. However, the instructor and/or the College of Arts and Letters may modify or alter the syllabus to make up for unexpected events, to better attain course goals, or for any similar significant reasons. Students will be notified as soon as possible if there are changes made to the syllabus.

## Tentative Schedule

9/7	Introductory lecture
9/12- 9/14	Historical and Religious accounts <i>Earthcare</i> , Chapters 1: Genesis, Qur'an, Francis of Assisi
9/19- 9/21	Philosophical accounts <i>Earthcare</i> , Chapter 2: Aristotle, Descartes, (Rousseau), Kant Film Clip: <i>The Day the Earth Stood Still</i>
9/26 - 9/28	Asian and Native American views <i>Earthcare</i> , Chapter 3: <i>Upanishads</i> , Ahimsa, Taoism, Eagle Man
10/3 – 10/5	Valuing Nature Thoreau (online reading)

*Earthcare*, Chapter 4: Sylvan, Macshane, Hargrove  
Film clip: *Avatar*

- 10/11 -10/12    Deep Ecology  
*Earthcare*, Chapter 5: Arne Naess, Taylor  
**(no class Monday, Tuesday is a 'Monday' schedule)**  
**First Paper due, Wednesday, October 12<sup>th</sup>**
- 10/17 – 10/19    Ecofeminism  
*Earthcare*, Chapter 6: Warren, Shiva  
Donna Haraway: *Cyborg Manifesto*  
**Midterm Exam, October 19<sup>th</sup>**
- 10/24 – 10/26    Social Ecology and Environmental Justice  
*Earthcare*, Chapter 7: Bookchin, Guha and Martinez-Alier
- 10/31 – 11/2     Human and non-human animals  
*Earthcare*, Chapter 13: Singer, Regan, Kheel  
Film Clip: *Fastfood Nation*
- 11/7 – 11/9     Living and the Land  
*Earthcare*, Chapter 10: Leopold, Hardin
- 11/14 – 11/16    Biodiversity  
*Earthcare*, Chapters 12: Russow
- 11/21            Pollution and Climate Change  
Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*  
*Earthcare*, Chapter 8: Baxter  
Film Clip: *An Inconvenient Sequel: Truth to Power*  
**No Class Wednesday, November 23<sup>rd</sup> for Thanksgiving break**
- 11/28-11/30     Water Resources and Water Pollution  
*Earthcare*, Chapter 11  
Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha, *What the Eyes don't see*  
**2<sup>nd</sup> paper due, Wednesday, November 30<sup>th</sup>**
- 12/5 – 12/7     Sustainability  
*Earthcare*, Chapter 15: Sagoff
- 12/12 – 12/14    Remaining presentations and Review
- Final Exam, as posted on Stevens Final Exam Schedule, December 15<sup>th</sup> – December 22<sup>nd</sup>**