Texts:

Required
- Essays on BBLearn
- Two blue books

Recommended
- *Writing Philosophy* by Lewis Vaughn and Jillian Scott McIntosh (Oxford 2009)

Description:
The field of Environmental Ethics is driven by the recognition that we are in an environmental crisis. The main questions of the field ask how we got into this crisis, and how we can get out of it. In this course, we use philosophical tools to ask practical, urgent questions, including: What makes nature valuable, and how should we understand our place in the natural world? Is restoration ecology actually self-contradictory? Should we actively manage wilderness areas or leave them alone? How can we balance human, animal, and ecosystems' interests; when do these conflict, when do they converge? How might non-Western, feminist, and justice-based ethics reveal hidden assumptions and point toward alternative solutions?

This course is well suited for students interested in engaging critically and passionately with these sorts of environmental ethics questions.

Requirements:

Lecture response 5% 3/5 (Attend Dr. Waring’s lecture 2/29 7pm)
First essay 30% 3/12 on BBLearn by 11:30am
Second Essay or Research Project 35% 5/14 on BBLearn by 11:30am
Final Exam 15% 5/22 1pm
In-class participation and presentations 15% Everyday, and especially 5/14 & 5/15!

“Exceptions to the Final Examination Schedule may be allowed by the Student Policies Committee in response to student or faculty petitions. Petitions must be submitted no later than Friday, April 20, 2012.” – Office of the Registrar

*Environmentalism might not be what you’d expect: Taking a Second Look*

*Ivy is a pretty plant, but Pieter Bohen of the Cascade Land Conservancy estimates that without human intervention, ivy would take over Discovery Park in Seattle, Washington in twenty years, eliminating native species in the park and creating an "ivy desert." (Seattle PI, June 16, 2004)*

*It can be emotionally difficult to see animals in captivity. However, this fence is helping to protect an endangered species. This baby elephant is living in the Chitwan Breeding Center in Nepal, designed to protect and foster elephants. (Photo by Gemma Dickens, June 2006)*
Grading of Participation
Participation is primarily about active participation in class discussions and presentations. This means: listening to each other, keeping an open mind, and responding to their comments thoughtfully and respectfully. It also involves demonstrating your familiarity with the readings, and asking questions, and adding to the discussion with examples, objections, and responses. Your goal should be to improve the quality of conversation on the whole, not necessarily the quality of your individual comments per se. To achieve this, it can be good to wait and listen to your colleagues; then make comments directly related to what they just said. Your thoughtful responses can take the form of talking during class or writing comments on BB Learn, or both. Participation also includes satisfactory completion of all in-class activities and group activities. To successfully participate in group activities, you must ensure that all members of your group understand the material. This requires you to teach to and learn from your colleagues and actively include everyone. Frequent absences, dominating the discussions, being late, leaving early, disruptive behavior, or being disrespectful towards fellow students can lower your participation grade.

Disability Statement: “Students with disabilities are protected by the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If you are a student with a disability and feel you may require academic accommodations contact Cheri White, Program Director of Learning Support Services (LSS), within the first two weeks of the semester to request accommodations. LSS is located in Walker 126, lsup@linfield.edu, (503) 883-2562. We also recommend students communicate with faculty about their accommodations and any special needs of which an instructor should be aware.” If you have a disability requiring academic accommodation, I encourage you to bring me a letter from LSS early in the semester, so that we can work together to create a learning environment that fosters success.

Academic Integrity: You are required to follow the Linfield College policy regarding academic integrity, as described in the Linfield College Course Catalog on page 17. It is considered a serious offense to present someone else’s words or ideas as if they were your own. All quotations, paraphrasing, and references must be properly cited. This means that if you refer to any materials or people when preparing the assignment (including the textbook), you must provide a list of these materials with your assignment. For any words that you did not write, you must put quotation marks around them (“ ”) and cite them (write down who wrote them). Failure to properly cite may result in a zero for the assignment, and possibly an F for the course. Breaches of Academic Integrity will be reported to the Dean of Students.

LC Learning Objectives (UQ)
Exemplars: For students entering Linfield Fall 2010 or later, to earn a UQ Linfield Curriculum designation for this course, you must submit exemplar work and supporting descriptions to Taskstream by the last day of finals week, as discussed in the Linfield College Course Catalog, page 6, under “II. The Six Modes of Inquiry.” This course satisfies the Ultimate Questions (UQ) requirement. You will learn and demonstrate growth in the following broader areas:
1. “To articulate and evaluate unexamined assumptions and paradigmatic ways of acquiring knowledge.” We begin with Aldo Leopold’s classic criticism of Western perceptions of nature, which leads to entirely new debates.
2. “To analyze critically fundamental beliefs, cultural practices, and competing truth claims.” We navigate these many debates, discovering that a variety of (sometimes conflicting) views fall under the label “environmentalism.”
3. “To develop greater self-knowledge and wisdom, the ability for meaningful dialogue, social responsibility and understanding.” As a result of reading and thinking about these many different views, you will be able to recognize when someone holds one, or when they have a view about ethical human/land interaction that differs from yours. This will allow you to respect other people’s views and work with them to achieve common goals, since you will understand where they are coming from (or at least you will know which questions to ask in order to learn where they are coming from). Our emphasis on good reasoning, writing skills, and presentations will enable you to articulate and support your own ideas so that you can convince others. Also, you will be able to recognize and correct flaws in arguments of people on your “side” who share your conclusions.
4. “To appreciate questions that lead to deeper insights into our actions and the reasons for them.” Students learn that a particular action is “environmentalist” depends on many empirical factors, as well as moral views. So, for example, cutting down a tree in one situation might be anti-environmental (i.e., in an old growth forest with a thriving ecosystem), but in another case would be pro-environmentalist (if the tree is an invasive species thwarting an existing ecosystem, or if the tree casts shade on solar panels). You will learn how to evaluate proposed actions from a variety of environmental perspectives, which will in turn help you evaluate the right action for a given situation.
5. “To explore pre-cognitive and post-cognitive levels of people’s action (ethics) and ways of belonging (sociology) often associated with the sacred.” Through discussions about subjective and objective value, we explore what, if anything, makes plants, animals, and species valuable. Authors Rolston and Naess discuss connections between religion and the environment.
Environmental Ethics Reading Schedule (subject to change with advance notice)
Read each article before the lecture date listed. Use the outline tool to prepare for discussion.

Week 1
2/6 Introduction and Overview
Light and Rolston (Palmer for reference)
Views: Introduction to Ethics

Week 2
2/13 What is an Environmental Ethic?
Leopold, Sylvan
Anthropocentrism

Week 3
2/20 Who counts in an Environmental Ethic?
Singer, Regan
Individualism

Week 4
2/27 Who counts in an Environmental Ethic?
Katz, Varner
Holism

Wed. 2/29 Required: 7pm Lecture by Dr. Richard Waring in ICE
Friday 3/2 No Class (attend Dr. Waring talk instead)

Week 5
3/5 Is Nature intrinsically valuable?
Rolston, Norton, Hargrove
Objectivism v. Subjectivism

Week 6
3/12 What alternatives exist?
Fox, Naess
Deep Ecology

Wed. 3/14 First Essay Due on BBLearn by 11:30am

Week 7
3/19 What alternatives exist?
Gaard and Gruen, Warren (article on BBLearn)
Ecofeminism

Week 8
3/26 No Class – Spring Break

Week 9
4/2 Can and ought we restore nature?
Elliot, Katz
Application of Views: restoration

Week 10
4/9 Light
Friday 4/6 No Class: Research Second Essay at Library

Week 11
4/16 Should we preserve wilderness?
Callicott, Noss
wilderness

Week 12
4/23 Should we preserve wilderness?
Nelson, Guha (article on BBLearn)

Week 13
4/30 To be Determined by Class. See Options
(articles on BBLearn)

Week 14
5/7 To be Determined by Class.

Week 15
5/14 Reflections
Presentations of Student arguments (from your essays and projects)
Mon. 5/14 Second Essay/Research Project Due on BBLearn 11:30am

Final Exam, May 22 1pm

Options for discussion include:
1. Climate Change
2. Are Humans “Natural”? (Humans as Keystone Species, non-Western interactions with Land)
3. Farming, Globalization, and Genetically Modified Organisms
4. Environmental Justice
5. Logging
6. Your Suggestions
Outline Study Tool

“Completely passive reading is impossible; we cannot read with our eyes immobilized and our minds asleep.”
– Mortimer Adler, How to Read a Book, pg. 5

Make several copies of this form. Fill it out as you read each selection. Revise it during class, and then write up a final version for your notes.

Author:
Article title and year:

1. What is the question the author is trying to answer?

2. How does the author answer that question? What is the author’s Main Claim? (Pick one claim)

3. What reasons are given by the author in support of the Main Claim?

4. What is a possible objection? Does the author consider this objection?

5. How could the author respond to this objection?

6. Why does this argument matter? How does it fit into a broader discussion?