This course has 4 learning outcomes. Instruction, course material and grading will develop in the students:

1. The ability to critically evaluate ethical arguments and viewpoints with respect to environmental issues;
2. The capacity to apply ethical decision-making “tools” to environmental problem contexts;
3. Knowledge of the reasons and causes of ethical disagreement and collective action problems with respect to environmental issues;
4. Knowledge of the many environmental themes of the Faculty of Environment and an introduction to some of the key challenges facing environmental governance research and action.

Students will be evaluated as follows:

1. 25% for three 1-page (double-spaced) expository assignments based on assigned readings: due on Learn by 11:59 PM October 4th, October 25th, November 15th
2. 30% for a 5-page essay on an assigned theme: due date December 6th at 11:59 PM
3. 10% for attendance and participation, including use of in-class polls and exit slips (see note below)
4. 35% for final examination (2.5 hours, to be scheduled during exam period)

*Note there will be a penalty of 5%/day for late submissions.*

_Tentative Theme and Topic Schedule:_

(All course readings will be posted by week with full references on Learn.)

**Weeks 1 and 2: Ethics and the Environment in the Anthropocene**

The nature, character and importance of ethics in human life: is ethics related mostly to good outcomes or to good intentions, or neither? What is the relation of reason to ethical thinking and judgement? What is the relevance of widespread disagreement about ethics? What are some of the theories and tools for reaching greater ethical consensus?
Thursday, September 5th: Introduction: Spaceship Earth: Ethics in the Anthropocene; Classic moral dilemmas, and how to think about them

Tuesday, September 10th and Thursday, September 12th: Introduction to ethical theory; A brief history of environmentalism: Malthusianism, conservationism and preservationism; Introduction to the Land Ethic: A new ethic for the environment?

Assigned readings: Environmental Ethics: Introduction (available on LEARN); Excerpts from The Sand County Almanac: ‘The Land Ethic’; ‘Philosophical Problems for Environmentalism’

Week 3: Consideration and Moral Standing for Humans and Non-Humans


Tuesday, September 17th and Thursday, September 19th: Extending Moral Concern to non-humans: are our ethics and policies too anthropocentric?

Assigned readings: ‘Why Put a Value on Biodiversity?’; ‘All Animals are Equal’; ‘Animal Liberation and Environmental Ethics: Bad Marriage, Quick Divorce’; ‘The battle for the soul of biodiversity’

Week 4: Values and Priorities: A Challenge to the ‘Management’ Paradigm

Examining the interplay of ethics and economics: how should we negotiate tradeoffs?

Tuesday, September 24th and Thursday, September 26th: Environmental ethics in practice: stewardship or management?; The distinction between values and priorities: A South African case study

Assigned readings: ‘Headaches and Heartaches: The Elephant Management Dilemma’ (continued); ‘Natural Enemies: An Anatomy of Environmental Conflict’

Weeks 5 & 6: Business and Markets: Are Doing Good and Doing Well Compatible?

Do businesses have obligations to the environment, and if so, are they positive obligations? Who should be responsible for collective decision-making involving different sectors? What are the environmental obligations of transnational corporations, and how should we enforce them?

Tuesday, October 1st and Thursday, October 3rd: Business ethics and the social contract: do law and customer perception define social and ecological responsibility of directors?
Assignment readings for October 12th: ‘The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase Profits’ (Available on LEARN); ‘Stakeholder Theory of the Modern Corporation’; ‘The Tragedy of the Commons’

********** Thanksgiving holiday/study break Monday, October 14th-Friday October 18th **********

Weeks 7, 8 and 9: Ecological vs. Environmental Economics, Planetary Boundaries and Ecomodernism

Is unlimited growth compatible with sustainability? What can economics contribute to our understanding of environmental ethics and policy? Can environmental values be understood in economic terms? What role can artificial intelligence, social media, and technology play in building a sustainable future?

- **Tuesday, October 22nd and Thursday, October 24th**: The use of and limits to market-based economic tools of evaluation


- **Tuesday, October 29th and Thursday, October 31st**: The Market Mechanism, the Logic of Scarcity, and Ecological Economics

  Assigned readings: ‘Living on a Lifeboat’ (74); ‘Can the Supply of Natural Resources Really be Infinite? Yes!’; ‘Steady State Economics: A New Paradigm’

- **Tuesday, November 5th and Thursday November 7th**: Economic arguments for environmental ends: *Enlightenment Now*, ecomodernism, and the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment


**Week 10: Technology and the Environment: Big Data, Surveillance, Artificial Intelligence and Social Media**

What are some of the challenges and opportunities posed by Big Data, deep learning, automation and artificial intelligence? Industrial capitalism vs. surveillance capitalism and the logic of markets in the digital age; Does AI offer new prospects for dematerialization and decoupling?
**Weeks 11 and 12: Sustainable Development, ‘Doughnut Economics’ and Human Rights, Environmental Justice, and Climate Change**

How is environmental ethics connected to social justice? What are the cultural influences on our perception of the environment? Do different cultural perspectives have important contributions to make to our understanding of the environment in relation to human activity? Are different groups differentially affected by environmental and economic policy?

- **Tuesday, November 12th and Thursday, November 14th:** Surveillance, rendition, big data and environmental monitoring

‘The Curated Wild’; ‘A View from Everywhere all the time’; Excerpts from Zuboff, S. ‘The Age of Surveillance Capitalism’; Podcast resource: The trouble with facebook

- **Weeks 11 and 12:** Sustainable Development, ‘Doughnut Economics’ and Human Rights, Environmental Justice, and Climate Change

- **Tuesday, November 19th:** Human Rights and the development imperative; The Safe Operating Space for Humanity


- **Thursday, November 21st:** Environmental justice, climate terror, and ecoterrorism


- **Tuesday, November 26th and Thursday, November 28th:** Autonomy, consent, and consultation: climate change as the ethical and development challenge of our time

Assigned Readings: ‘Ethics, Public Policy and Global Warming’; ‘A Perfect Moral Storm: Climate Change, Intergenerational Ethics and the Problem of Corruption’

**Exam Review**

- **Tuesday, December 3rd:** Summary and review for exam

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**Notes on participation, exit slips and attendance grade:**

The attendance and participation grade will be based on in-class participation in anonymous polls and exit slips, questions posed to students at the end of the class (but not necessarily every class) related to lecture content. At the end of the term, a participation and attendance grade will be calculated by tallying the total number of individual responses. Students will receive a pass-fail grade based on whether they attend and submit slips. Students will receive one ‘grace day’ for participation, but are asked to inform Dr. Tait if a grace day is being used via email.

Students should be aware that this course contains the intellectual property of their instructor, TA, and/or the University of Waterloo. Intellectual property includes items such as:

- Lecture content, spoken and written (and any audio/video recording thereof);
- Lecture handouts, presentations, and other materials prepared for the course (e.g., PowerPoint slides);
- Questions or solution sets from various types of assessments (e.g., assignments, quizzes, tests, final exams); and
- Work protected by copyright (e.g., any work authored by the instructor or TA or used by the instructor or TA with permission of the copyright owner).

Course materials and the intellectual property contained therein, are used to enhance a student’s educational experience. However, sharing this intellectual property without the intellectual property owner’s permission is a violation of intellectual property rights. For this reason, it is necessary to ask the instructor, TA and/or the University of Waterloo for permission before uploading and sharing the intellectual property of others online (e.g., to an online repository).

Permission from an instructor, TA or the University is also necessary before sharing the intellectual property of others from completed courses with students taking the same/similar courses in subsequent terms/years. In many cases, instructors might be happy to allow distribution of certain materials. However, doing so without expressed permission is considered a violation of intellectual property rights.

Please alert the instructor if you become aware of intellectual property belonging to others (past or present) circulating, either through the student body or online. The intellectual property rights owner deserves to know (and may have already given their consent).

**Mental Health:** The University of Waterloo, the Faculty of Environment and our Departments/Schools consider students’ well-being to be extremely important. We recognize that throughout the term students may face health challenges - physical and / or emotional. Please note that help is available. Mental health is a serious issue for everyone and can affect your ability to do your best work. Counselling Services [http://www.uwaterloo.ca/counselling-services](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/counselling-services) is an inclusive, non-judgmental, and confidential space for anyone to seek support. They offer confidential counselling for a variety of areas including anxiety, stress management, depression, grief, substance use, sexuality, relationship issues, and much more.

**Religious Observances:**

Students need to inform the instructor at the beginning of term if special accommodation needs to be made for religious observances that are not otherwise accounted for in the scheduling of classes and assignments.

**Unclaimed assignments:**

Unclaimed assignments will be retained for ... [period of time*; or: “until one month after term grades become official in quest”]. After that time, they will be destroyed in compliance with UW’s confidential shredding procedures.

**Communications with Instructor and Teaching Assistants:**

All communication with students must be through either the student's University of Waterloo email account or via Learn. If a student emails the instructor or TA from a personal account they will be requested to resend the email using their personal University of Waterloo email account.

**Academic Integrity:**

In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. [www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/)

* _Students who are unsure what constitutes an academic offence are requested to visit the on-line tutorial at [http://www.lib.uwaterloo.ca/ait/](http://www.lib.uwaterloo.ca/ait/)_

**Research Ethics:** Please also note that the University of Waterloo requires all research conducted by its students, staff, and faculty which involves humans as participants to undergo prior ethics review and clearance through the Director, Office of Human Research and Animal Care (Office). The ethics review and clearance processes are intended to ensure that projects comply with the Office’s
Guidelines for Research with Human Participants (Guidelines) as well as those of provincial and federal agencies, and that the safety, rights and welfare of participants are adequately protected. The Guidelines inform researchers about ethical issues and procedures which are of concern when conducting research with humans (e.g. confidentiality, risks and benefits, informed consent process, etc.). If the development of your research proposal consists of research that involves humans as participants, please contact the course instructor for guidance and see http://iris.uwaterloo.ca/ethics/

**Note for students with disabilities:** The AccessAbility Office located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AccessAbility Office at the beginning of each academic term.

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm. When in doubt please contact your Undergraduate Advisor for details.

**Discipline** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offence, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offense, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offenses (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71, Student Discipline, www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm. For typical penalties, check Guidelines for Assessment of Penalties, www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm

♦ **Appeals:** A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71 – (Student Discipline) may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to Policy 72 (Student Appeals) www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm

♦ **LEARN:** Users can login to LEARN via:
http://learn.uwaterloo.ca/

use your WatIAM/Quest username and password

Documentation is available at:
http://av.uwaterloo.ca/uwace/training_documentation/index.html