



PHIL 332 ADE
ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS
Late Fall 8-Week 2025/2026

10-20-2025 - 12-13-2025

Course Information

Location: Online

Credit Hours: 3.00

Catalog Description: Investigation and discussion of ethical issues that concern the environment. Emphasis will be on recognition of moral problems and their resolution.

Proctored Exams: Midterm/Final

Required Materials

Environmental Ethics: What Really Matters, What Really Works

Authors: Schmidtz/Shahar

Publisher: Oxford University Press

Format: e-Text no POD (VS)

Edition: 3

Required (R) or Optional (O): R

Textbook Information

Columbia College provides required textbooks and supplies for undergraduate and graduate courses through [Columbia College's Textbook Program](#). Most textbooks are provided either as an eText linked in the course or as a physical text shipped directly to you. Other instructional materials may be provided in the course Content area.

eText Information: If a course uses an eText, it will be available directly in the course on or before the first day of class. More information about how to use the VitalSource platform, including offline access to eTexts, can be found in the course.

Physical Course Materials: If your course requires a physical textbook or other course materials such as a lab kit, it will be shipped automatically to the address on file with the College. The delivery date will depend on your registration date and shipping location. Please refer to confirmation emails sent from Columbia College for more details on the shipping status.

Returns: If you drop the course or the course is canceled, you are responsible for returning any physical course materials shipped to you. To initiate a return, visit [MBS Bookstore](#) to generate a free return label. You must return materials from dropped courses before 21 days of the package shipped date or 14 days after the class start date, whichever is later. All items must be received in original condition with shrink wrap intact. Bundled items must be returned with all components. Failure to return items from a dropped or cancelled course will result in a charge to your account for all unreturned items.

Note: If you opt out of having your books provided as part of Columbia College's Textbook Program, you are responsible for purchasing your own course materials. You are expected to have the required textbooks and supplies; failure to do so may impact your ability to successfully complete coursework.

Recommended eTexts are available for purchase directly from VitalSource.com.

Technology Requirements

Participation in this course will require the basic technology for all online classes at Columbia College:

- A computer with reliable Internet access
- A web browser
- Acrobat Reader
- Microsoft Office or another word processor such as Open Office
- Access to a webcam and microphone is required to complete any exams proctored virtually. Additionally, a current Chrome or Edge browser is required to complete any virtual proctored exams through Integrity Advocate.

You can find more details about standard [technical requirements](#) for our courses on our site.

Course Learning Outcomes

- Student critically evaluates philosophical arguments dealing with environmental ethics for soundness and validity.
- Student formulates sound and valid philosophical arguments relating to environmental ethics.
- Student critically analyzes philosophical arguments, issues, and problems in environmental ethics.
- Student draws upon a broad familiarity and understanding of philosophical literature in environmental ethics in order to pose compelling philosophical questions.
- Student cogently expresses both philosophical problems and plausible solutions to to issues in environmental ethics in accord with best philosophical practices.

Grading Scale

Grade	Points	Percent
A	900 - 1000	90 - 100%
B	800 - 899	80 - 89%
C	700 - 799	70 - 79%
D	600 - 699	60 - 69%
F	0 - 599	0 - 59%

Grading Weights

Assignment Category	Points	Percent
Ethical Reflections (2)	50	5%
Discussions (10)	250	25%
Essays (3)	300	30%
Exams (2)	400	40%
Total	1000	100%

Schedule of Due Dates

Assignment	Points	Due
Week 1		
Course Opening Introduction / Ethical Reflection	25	Friday
Discussion 1	25	Thursday/Sunday
Week 2		
Discussion 2	25	Thursday/Sunday
Discussion 3	25	Thursday/Sunday
Week 3		
Discussion 4	25	Thursday/Sunday
Essay 1	100	Sunday
Week 4		
Discussion 5	25	Thursday/Sunday

Assignment	Points	Due
Midterm Exam	200	Sunday
Week 5		
Discussion 6	25	Thursday/Sunday
Essay 2	100	Sunday
Week 6		
Discussion 7	25	Thursday/Sunday
Discussion 8	25	Thursday/Sunday
Week 7		
Discussion 9	25	Thursday/Sunday
Essay 3	100	Sunday
Week 8		
Course Conclusion / Ethical Reflection	25	Friday
Discussion 10	25	Thursday/Saturday
Final Exam	200	Saturday

Assignment Overview

Ethical Reflections

Course Opening Ethical Reflection

In Week 1, you will reflect on your awareness of ethical issues at this point. To generate ideas for topics to consider, you may consult news headlines at the local, national, or international level; industry related or professional blogs or periodicals; websites or publications of environmental organizations or humanitarian charities; the table of contents of our text; etc. For some issues, you will no doubt already have opinions formed; for other issues, you may see multiple views that a reasonable person could take but be undecided about which view is correct. For this assignment, choose a mix of views: include two or three that you have a fairly settled opinion on and two or three that you are uncertain about, for a total of five topics. Compose a paragraph for each explaining your thoughts, including the basic issue, why it seems to matter morally, and why you hold a certain view or why you are uncertain what to

think. Your set of paragraphs should total about 400 words. For this assignment, you do not need to unify the five topics into a single essay with a thesis.

You may cite sources as long as the quoted texts are not excessive in length or number (e.g. more than 15% of your post). If you refer to a source in our text (whether assigned or not), you may use a parenthetical citation of the author's name and the page number after the paraphrased or quoted sentence in this format:

- Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. (Singer, p. 119)

These parenthetical citations of textbook readings are permitted in lieu of writing full footnotes. **This applies only to the Ethical Reflections and Discussions.**

However, if you refer to another publication, a source on the internet, or some other resource, you must prepare a full citation (which will not count toward achieving your assignment 'scope' or word count). In this case, where your assignment is to be entered in a discussion post, enter a superscript number for the citation after the sentence containing the reference, then at the close of your composition include a numbered footnote line with the full citation. In philosophy papers, Chicago style is preferred.

You may include a personal introduction of whatever amount of detail you like, but be aware that your personal introduction does not contribute toward satisfying the assignment guidelines. Your peers' posts will become visible to you only after you post your own original composition. I do encourage you to read your classmates' work and ask questions, as it is likely each of you will have different local and regional environmental issues on your minds. But you are not required to comment on one another's work for these ethical reflections.

Your original post is due in the Course Opening Reflection and Introduction discussion board by **11:59 p.m. C.T. Friday of Week 1** and is worth 25 points.

Course Closing Ethical Reflection

In Week 8, you will revisit the topics you considered in your course opening ethical reflection of Week 1. At that time, you were making note of opinions you had that were mostly pre-theoretical. Now, having studied ethical theory as it applies to environmental issues, you are in a position to test your views to see whether you still see things the same way, what moral reasons you find most compelling, and whether those reasons form the framework of a coherent ethical code that you can apply to other issues.

Your assignment in Week 8 is to prepare another composition of 400 words. This Closing Ethical Reflection should be more technical, applying the concepts and views we have studied in this class. Likewise, where your course opening reflection was a set of five distinct paragraphs, this reflection should be a unified essay with a clear thesis uncovering the themes in your views at the close of the course.

As with the reflection in Week 1, you may make references to sources so long as they are few and brief. For any paraphrase or quotation drawn from a reading in the textbook, whether assigned or not, you may use a brief parenthetical notation after the sentence that. Outside sources must be footnoted as numbered citations.

Your course closing ethical reflection is due by **11:59 p.m. C.T. Friday of Week 8** and is worth 25 points. You will need to post your original composition before your peers' work becomes visible to you. Replies to one another are encouraged, but not required for this assignment.

Discussions

Each week, you will participate in one or two discussions on the assigned materials or relevant practical issues. [On occasion, you will have a choice between two prompts for one of your assigned discussions.] These discussions will include both original posts and replies to your classmates, detailed below.

Original Discussion Posts

For each assigned prompt, you will first submit a formal original composition of 300 words or more. Your writing should clearly and carefully address all parts of the prompt and should remain on topic. It should be well-edited and carefully proofread before submission; it should employ concepts and skills of thought encountered by that point in the assigned readings and course lectures, and it should not include any misunderstandings of materials included in the course to that point.

You may cite sources as long as the quoted texts are not excessive in length or number (e.g. more than 15% of your post). If you refer to a source in our text (whether assigned or not), you may use a parenthetical citation of the author's name and the page number after the paraphrased or quoted sentence in this format:

- Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. (Singer, p. 119)

These parenthetical citations of textbook readings are permitted in lieu of writing full footnotes. **This applies only to the Ethical Reflections and Discussions.** However, if you refer to another publication or a source on the internet, standard citation is required in numbered footnote formatting at the end of the composition.

Your original composition is due by **11:59 p.m. C.T. Thursday** of the week it is assigned. It is worth 15 points.

Peer Replies

Return to the discussion forum to read the work of your peers and reply to at least two classmates' compositions. Your reply should be of at least 100 words length, carefully edited and proofread, and substantive: it must provide more than agreement or congratulation on a good post. Rather, your reply should ask follow up questions, offer criticisms or counterexamples (politely), provide additional reasons for agreeing with your classmate that were not included in the original post or other replies, propose a way that your classmate could defend the original post from someone else's criticism,

etc. Note well: the replies you make to your peers' work should also go beyond reiterating the view in your own original post.

The same guidelines for references apply here as with the original posts.

Your peers' posts will become visible to you only after you post your own original composition. Complete your replies to your peers by **11:59 p.m. C.T. Sunday except for Week 8, when your replies are due at 11:59 p.m. C.T. Saturday**. Your replies are worth 10 points together.

Essays

Essay Overview

Three essays are assigned during this course (Weeks 3, 5, and 7). For each assignment, you will be provided with several prompts grounded in the moral concepts and theories studied in the previous weeks. If you would like to write on a topic other than one of the suggestions, you are strongly encouraged to contact your instructor by email to ask whether it is an appropriate topic and of a manageable scope.

You must formally compose your essay with a clear thesis and argument structure that stays on topic throughout. The writing should be clear, well-edited, and carefully proofread before submission. It should employ the moral concepts and skills of argument and objection that have been encountered by that point in the assigned readings and lectures of the course. And it will avoid including any misunderstandings or misapplications of concepts or arguments from the readings or lectures. Review the rubric for this assignment during the writing process for more details on the desirable features of an essay.

You may cite sources as long as the quoted texts are not excessive in length or number (e.g. more than 10% of your essay). **In addition to standard references in a bibliography at the end of a composition, you are required to add numbered footnotes throughout the composition as you refer to sources. Chicago style is the preferred format for philosophy. Do not mix formatting styles (i.e., Chicago style footnotes with APA parentheticals).**

Each essay should achieve 1,200 words. Each original composition is due 11:59 p.m. Central Time Sunday of the week it is assigned in its Dropbox folder and is worth 100 points.

Essay 1

You must develop a thesis grounded in the concepts, principles, and topics of the first three weeks of the course.

You may choose from the following topics:

- Hardin argues that every human being who is using the commons at all will feel the compulsion of rational self-interest to use the commons more than her share. Is he mistaken?
- Is there a defensible principle to tell us how much or what kinds of things it's permissible to consume?
- We live an era where there are high quality photos and recordings on the internet of every kind of place one could ever want to visit – there are even GoPro videos of adventurous activities like whitewater canoeing, skydiving, and mountain climbing. As these technologies continue to improve, might it no longer be morally permissible to visit faraway places when that involves burning resources (fossil fuels) and bringing more traffic into fragile ecosystems?
- Is there a defense of medical experimentation for the benefit of human beings on non-human animals that is not essentially anthropocentric? Is Singer right that we

should be willing to experiment on developmentally disabled human beings at the same time as (or even sooner than) we experiment on non-human animals?

Additional topics may be provided by the instructor; if you wishes to write on a thesis not offered among these suggestions or by the instructor, then you should email the proposal to the instructor for approval.

Essay 2

You are encouraged to develop theses grounded in the concepts, principles, and topics of the past two weeks of the course.

You may choose from the following topics:

- Are zoos unethical? Why or why not? What about efforts to track, trap, measure, photograph, video, and otherwise study wild individuals? Do similar or different principles apply to these cases than individuals in zoos? Why?
- In the U.S., many policies at a variety of levels of government protect endangered species (often by protecting their preferred habitats or migration routes). Given that our resources are not finite, are these policies justifiable? What is the best justification, particularly when many human beings suffer without relief both domestically and around the world, and when many more common animals suffer terribly as well (such as cattle and fowl in CAFOs)?
- Is the preservation of wilderness an elitist concern and privilege? Should wilderness remain completely unmanaged (including when forest fires light naturally, etc.), or should it be managed? Is it permissible to attempt to control natural changes to coastlines and other areas affected by storms and other weather patterns?
- Are there moral distinctions between fishing or hunting for food and doing so for sport?

Additional topics may be provided by the instructor; if you wish to write on a thesis not offered in the course or by the instructor, then you should email it to the instructor for approval.

Essay 3

Consider Leopold again, having read Budolfson's criticism of Singer and other utilitarians. You might recall that Leopold lamented the presence of so many "middle men" between people and the origins of the food they find in the supermarket, although for slightly different reasons.

Is there an ethical implication for all of us as consumers or as citizens arising from Leopold's concerns and Budolfson's observations? Should we reshape our food production and economy? In what ways should that be done? Who should shoulder the costs of that project first or primarily? Does Budolfson's criticism only mean that utilitarianism is wrong altogether, and if so, what view is correct instead? Or is the view only wrong in this application regarding food, and if so, what is the right ethics of food, particularly regarding animals?

Exams

You will take **two proctored exams** during this course, one in Week 4 and one in Week 8.

These exams will assess your mastery of the moral concepts, arguments, and objections encountered in the readings and lectures, as well as the ways they apply to practical issues. Each exam is comprised of six essays (5-7 sentences, worth 20 points each), six short essays (about three sentences, worth 10 points each) and four short answers (one or two sentences, worth 5 points each) for a total of 200 points possible per test. Each exam is to be completed within 120 minutes (and within a single log-in attempt) using no additional resources (no text, notes, internet references, etc.).

The midterm exam is available from **12:01 a.m. Wednesday through 11:59 p.m. C.T Sunday of Week 4**; it covers all material from Weeks 1 through 4.

The final exam is available from **12:01 a.m. Wednesday through 11:59 p.m. C.T. Saturday of Week 8**; it is not cumulative, but covers only the material from Weeks 5 through 8.

After your exams, you will be able to review the questions you were asked and your answers. You will receive limited feedback on your individual answers with your exam grades; you are welcome to request more specific feedback by email if there are answers for which you would like more information.

Columbia College Policies and Procedures

The policies set forth in the [Policy Library](#) are the current official versions of College policies and supersede and replace any other existing or conflicting policies covering the same subject matter. For more information on policies applicable to students, see Student Policies. For more information on policies applicable to the entire Columbia College community, see College-Wide Policies.

Students are expected to read and abide by the College policies. Policies of particular interest to students include, but not limited to the following:

- Graduate Grading Policy
- Undergraduate Grading Policy
- Registration Policy and Procedures
- Withdrawal Policy
- Alcohol and Other Drugs Policy
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Students are responsible for knowing and abiding by the [Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures](#) and may not plead ignorance of this policy as an excuse for academic

misconduct. To ensure academic integrity, all papers submitted to this course are subject to review by Turnitin for textual similarity and detection of AI-generated writing. By taking this course, students agree that all submitted papers may be included in the [Turnitin.com](https://turnitin.com) reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. This service is subject to the Terms and Conditions of Use posted on the [Turnitin.com](https://turnitin.com) site.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Usage

Students are allowed to use advanced automated tools on assignments in this course if instructor permission is obtained in advance. Unless given permission to use those tools, each student is expected to complete each assignment without substantive assistance from others, including automated tools.

Disability Resources

If you have a disability that requires an accommodation, please speak with the instructor and consult the [Student Accessibility Resources](#) office. Student Accessibility Resources staff will determine appropriate accommodations and will work with your instructor to make sure these are available to you. To find additional information, see our [ADA and Section 504 Policy for Students](#).

Notice of Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity

The College has a process through which students, faculty, staff and community members who have experienced or witnessed incidents of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation on the basis of protected status, can report their experiences to a College official. For more information, see our [Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity Policy and Complaint Resolution Procedure](#).

Title IX and Sexual Harassment

The College is committed to addressing the issues of discrimination and sexual harassment in the educational and workplace landscape and will continue to modify policies, procedures and prevention efforts as needed. For more information, see the [College's Title IX and Sexual Harassment Policy](#).

Attendance Policy

Students are required to attend courses in the course delivery modality for the section they registered and participate in instructional activities. Location staff and instructors are required to record attendance by modality. Students are responsible for assuring accuracy. It is the students' responsibility to contact their instructor or location staff should they find any discrepancy in their records. Non-attendance may negatively impact a student academically and financially.

Course due dates are based on Central Time Zone. Requirements for each modality are detailed below. Students can see the modality of the course section they are registered for under Approved Course Locations on their course plan in MyPortal.

For Online courses, attendance includes:

1. Submitting an academic assignment
2. Taking or submitting an exam
3. Participating in an online forum about an academic matter.

For more information, please see [Student Attendance Policy](#).

Late Assignment Policy

An online class requires regular participation and a commitment to your instructor and your classmates to regularly engage in the reading, discussion and writing assignments. Although most of the online communication for this course is asynchronous, you must be able to commit to the schedule of work for the class for the next eight weeks. You must keep up with the schedule of reading and writing to successfully complete the class.

- Late discussion posts are not accepted for points.

- Late submissions of essays or exams will only be accepted for points in exceptional circumstances that could not have been anticipated and are beyond the student's control. What counts as an exceptional circumstance is at the discretion of the instructor and may require documentation.
- If you do experience an exceptional circumstance, contact your instructor in advance of the due date to request permission to submit the essay or exam with a specified extension.

Student Conduct Policy

All Columbia College students, whether enrolled in a land-based or online course, are responsible for behaving in a manner consistent with Columbia College's [Student Conduct Code](#) and [Acceptable Computing Use Policy](#). Students violating these policies or any other College policy will be referred to the office of Student Affairs and/or the office of Academic Affairs for possible disciplinary action. The Student Code of Conduct, the [Student Behavioral Misconduct Policy and Procedures](#), and the Acceptable Computing Use Policy can be found in the Policy Library at ccis.edu/policies. The adjunct faculty member maintains the right to manage a positive learning environment all students must adhere to the conventions of online etiquette when enrolled in a course with an online component.

Proctor Policy

Proctored exams must be taken online using Integrity Advocate. Private proctors are not permitted. There is no cost for using Integrity Advocate; however, a webcam, well-lit environment, and a current version of the Chrome or Edge browser are required. If you have a documented disability for which these policies, practices, or procedures are of concern, please contact Student Accessibility Resources at SAR@ccis.edu or 573-875-7626 to discuss accommodations.

Students are not allowed to access phones or flash drives, textbooks, external websites, or any other area of the course during the exam. Some math and science classes allow

the use of scratch paper and/or calculators. (See the exam description for more details.) Collaboration with other students is not allowed.

Stafford Library

Online databases are available at library.ccis.edu. You may access them using your CougarTrack login and password when prompted.

Technical Support

If you have problems accessing the course or posting your assignments, contact your instructor, the Columbia College Technology Solutions Center, or the D2L Helpdesk for assistance. If you have technical problems with the VitalSource eText reader, please contact VitalSource. Contact information is also available within the online course environment.

- Columbia College Technology Solutions Center: help.ccis.edu, 800-231-2391 ex. 4357
- D2L Helpdesk: helpdesk@d2l.com, 877-325-7778
- VitalSource: support@vitalsource.com, 1-855-200-4146

Tutoring Services

Free academic help in a variety of subjects is available to all Columbia College students on campus and online.

The Academic Achievement Center, including the Seabrook Writing Center, Bruce Math Center, and Tutoring Services, is available for academic help, both remotely for students from all locations and in person for students on the Columbia campus. Students can meet one on one with AAC staff virtually over Zoom for writing help in any subject, and for help with specific course content in math, chemistry, accounting, computer science,

biology, physics, finance, ASL, and more. Students can also submit writing content for review and comments by Writing Center staff.

Columbia College also provides real-time online tutoring and homework help for many course subjects, including Math, English and Writing. You are encouraged to take advantage of these free services provided by the College as needed. You can access these resources through the Resources menu in the navigation bar of your D2L Brightspace course.