

ENVIRONMENTAL PHILOSOPHY
Philosophy 255/Geography 283.03

OMAR DAHBOUR
Professor of Philosophy

Class: 407 TH; hours = 1:10-2:25 pm, Mon & Thu
Office: 1418A HW; hours = 3:30-4:30 pm, Mon & Thu, & by appointment
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Please note: USE OF COMPUTERS OR PHONES IS PROHIBITED DURING CLASS TIME. DAILY READINGS SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO CLASS IN PRINTED FORM (eg BOOKS, HANDOUTS, OR COPIES).

OUTCOMES

This course is designed to give students an introduction to: [1] what philosophers have thought about the connections between humanity and nature, [2] the basis of the environmental crisis in our time, and [3] some possible solutions to it. The course satisfies a requirement in the Philosophy, Politics, and Society track of the Philosophy major, as well as serving as an elective for other Philosophy, Geography, and Environmental Studies majors, as well as for students from other programs.

READINGS

All required readings will be made available either as handouts (in class), or on Blackboard. However, students with a particular interest in environmental studies are encouraged to obtain copies of some or all of the following books, from which many of the required readings will be drawn:

Aldo Leopold, *Sand County Almanac* (Ballantine)
Max Horkheimer & Theodor Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (Stanford)
Dale Jamieson, *Reason in a Dark Time* (Oxford)
Herman Daly, *Beyond Growth* (Beacon)
Eileen Crist, *Abundant Earth* (Chicago)
Ramachandra Guha & Joan Martinez-Alier, *Varieties of Environmentalism* (Earthscan)

They can be obtained through special order from Shakespeare & Co, or from other bookstores. Many are also available for loan from the Hunter College Library, or from public libraries.

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADES

The following assignments, with their corresponding weight in the determination of final grades, are required: a First Essay (20%), a Midterm Examination (in-class, 20%), a Second Essay (20%), & a Final Examination (take-home, 40%). The First Essay can be rewritten to improve your grade. Exam & due dates for all assignments (subject to change), are given in the Schedule, below. Make-up exams or late assignments, without an agreed-upon extension, will be penalized by 1 letter grade (eg B to C).

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION

Good attendance (missing no more than 4 classes, without valid excuses) is expected. Poor attendance may lower the final grade by 10%. Conversely, regular participation in class discussions may raise the final grade by 10%.

SCHEDULE (subject to change)

Mon, Jan 31 - INTRODUCTION: What is environmental philosophy?

HUMANITY & NATURE: Re-establishing the connection

Thu, Feb 3 - Life; reading: Ludwig Klages, "Man and Earth"

Mon, Feb 7 - Land; reading: Aldo Leopold, *Sand County Almanac*, excerpt

Thu, Feb 10 - Nature; reading: Michel Serres, *The Natural Contract*, excerpt

Mon, Feb 14 - Liberation; reading: Max Horkheimer & Theodor Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, excerpts

Thu, Feb 17 - Reading: Herbert Marcuse, "Ecology & the Critique of Modern Society"

Mon, Feb 21 - NO CLASS

ECOLOGICAL MODERNIZATION: climate, development, & sustainability

Thu, Feb 24 - Ecomodernism; reading: *The Ecomodernist Manifesto*, Breakthrough Institute
FIRST ESSAY DUE, in class

Mon, Feb 28 - Climate adaptation & mitigation; reading: Jamieson, *Reason in a Dark Time*, ch 6

Thu, Mar 3 - Reading: *Reason in a Dark Time*, ch 7

Mon, Mar 7 - Sustainable development; reading: Jeffrey Sachs, *Age of Sustainable Development*, excerpt

Thu, Mar 10 - Reading: Wolfgang Sachs, *Planet Dialectics*, excerpt

Mon, Mar 14 - Steady-state economy & ecology; reading: Daly, *Beyond Growth*, ch 1

Thu, Mar 17 - Reading: Callicott, "Ecological Sustainability"

Mon, Mar 21 - discussion/review class

Thu, Mar 24 - MIDTERM EXAMINATION (in-class)

ABUNDANT EARTH: extinction, population, & biodiversity

Mon, Mar 28 - Stabilizing population; reading: Brian Barry, "Sustainability and Intergenerational Justice"

Thu, Mar 31 - Reading: Roderick Nash, "Island Civilization"

Mon, Apr 4 - Reducing consumption; reading: Kate Soper, *Post-Growth Living*, excerpt

Thu, Apr 7 - Protecting biodiversity; reading: E O Wilson, Half-Earth, excerpt

Mon, Apr 11 - Rewilding; reading: Eileen Crist, *Abundant Earth*, chs 2-3

Thu, Apr 14 - Reading: *Abundant Earth*, ch 9

Mon, Apr 18 - NO CLASS

Thu, Apr 21 - NO CLASS

NATURE AS A COMMONS: poverty, land, & sovereignty

Mon, Apr 25 - Environmentalism of the poor; reading: Ramachandra Guha & Joan Martinez-Alier, "Environmentalism of the Poor"

** SECOND ESSAY DUE, in class **

Thu, Apr 28 - Reading: Martinez-Alier, *Environmentalism of the Poor*, excerpt

Mon, May 2 - Reading: Isabelle Anguelovski & Joan Martinez-Alier, "The 'Environmentalism of the Poor' Revisited"

Thu, May 5 - Protecting/reviving the commons; reading: George Caffentzis & Silvia Federici, "Commons Against and Beyond Capitalism"

Mon, May 9 - Reading: Vandana Shiva, *Reclaiming the Commons*, ch 6

Thu, May 12 - Food/life sovereignty; reading: TBA

Mon, May 16 - CONCLUSION: From theory to practice

Thu, May 19 - FINAL EXAMINATION DUE, by 3 pm, in the Philosophy Dept, 14th floor, HW

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The College is committed to enforcing the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedures.

DISABILITIES POLICY

In compliance with the American Disability Act of 1990 (ADA) and with Section 4 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Hunter College is committed to ensuring educational parity and accommodations for all students with documented disabilities and/or medical conditions. It is recommended that all students with documented disabilities (Emotional, Medical, Physical, and/or Learning) consult the Office of Access/ABILITY located in room E1124 to secure necessary academic accommodations. For further information and assistance, please call (212-772-4857)/TTY (212-650-3250).

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

In compliance with the CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct, Hunter College reaffirms the prohibition of any sexual misconduct, which includes sexual violence, sexual harassment, and gender-based harassment retaliation against students, employees, or visitors, as well as certain intimate relationships. Students who have experienced any form of *sexual violence* on or off campus (including CUNY-sponsored trips and events) are entitled to the rights outlined in the Bill of Rights for Hunter College. Such students are strongly encouraged to immediately report the incident by calling 911, contacting NYPD Special Victims Division Hotline (646-610-7272) or their local police precinct, or contacting the College's Public Safety Office (212-772-4444). Students experiencing *all other forms of sexual misconduct* are also encouraged to contact the College's Title IX Campus Coordinator, Dean John Rose (jtrose@hunter.cuny.edu or 212-650-3262) or Colleen Barry (colleen.barry@hunter.cuny.edu or 212-772-4534) and seek complimentary services through the Counseling and Wellness Services Office, Hunter East 1123. For more on the CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct, see:

<http://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/la/Policy-on-Sexual-Misconduct-12-1-14-with-links.pdf>