Philosophy of Ecology Spring 2021

Core Professor:
Dr. Ricardo Rozzi, conservation biologist & philosopher, UNT (Dept. Philosophy, Sub-Antarctic Biocultural Conservation Program) http://philosophy.unt.edu/people/faculty/ricardo-rozzi

Collaborating & Invited Lecturers:
Dr. Roy May, environmental theologian and philosopher, Ecumenical Research Department, Costa Rica
Dr. María Teresa La Valle, Universidad Tres de Febrero, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Course Catalogue Information:
PHIL 5010.001

Class Schedule:
Spring semester; Tuesdays, 6:00-8:50 pm (Central Daylight/Standard Time); Remote Course via Zoom

Office Hours:
R. Rozzi: Video conference appointments by request to email: rozzi@unt.edu

Academic Dishonesty Policy:
Students are responsible for reading, understanding, and knowing UNT’s Academic Dishonesty Policy that can be found at: http://facultysuccess.unt.edu/academic-integrity. Academic dishonesty in this class is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in any form.

Disability Accommodation (ODA Statement):
The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of accommodation by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at http://www.unt.edu/oda. You may also contact them by phone at 940-565-4323.

Drop/Withdrawal Information:
Last day to drop the course is April 2 2021. Before dropping the course, please come and discuss this with me. Other Drop/Withdrawal Information and other important Academic Dates can be found at http://catalog.unt.edu/content.php?catoid=24&navoid=2609
INTRODUCTION TO SUB-ANTARCTIC BIOCULTURAL CONSERVATION

Course Description:

Currently we confront not only global climate change, but more broadly global, rapid, and massive, environmental, economic, and cultural changes. Philosophy of ecology can help to better understand the proximate and ultimate causes (direct and indirect drivers) of this global crisis. Confronted with global environmental change, the academic community still labors under a tradition of strong disciplinary dissociation that hinders the integration of ecological understanding and ethical values to comprehensively address the complexities of current socio-ecological problems. To reorient this trend, it is essential to overcome the narrow economic and technical-scientific approach that dominates much of the discussion in academic research, education, and decision making.

The need to strengthen the linkage between understanding human values and ecological science has been pointed out by a growing number of scientists for at least half a century. In the 1980s, ecologist Frank Golley concluded that the ecosystem concept has provided a basis for “a dialogue about how humans value nature,” and for “moving beyond strictly scientific questions to deeper questions of how humans should live with each other and the environment” (Golley 1993, p. 205). In the 1990s, marine biologist Jane Lubchenco emphasized that many of the choices faced by society are ethical ones, for which ecological sciences provide essential understanding to inform responsible societal decisions. During the 1990s and 2000s, a transdisciplinary integration of ecology with social disciplines, especially economics, has been institutionalized via interdisciplinary societies, research programs, and mainstream journals. Work at this interface has produced novel techniques and protocols for assessing monetary values of biodiversity and ecosystem services, as illustrated by the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment. At the beginning of the 2010s, however, an equivalent integration between ecology and philosophy still remains elusive. In this context, this Philosophy of Ecology course undertakes the task to develop crucial theoretical and practical linkages between ecology and ethics.

The first half (Unit I) of the semester will provide an introduction the state of the planet, through the lenses of planetary boundaries, direct and indirect drivers of global change, extinction of experience, and current global assessments as well as initiatives to revert the unsustainable and unjust paths. Current assessments show a clear need to more comprehensively address indirect drivers of global change and to better incorporate an understanding of the values of nature, and particularly to link ecology and ethics.

The second half (Unit II) of the semester will explore the early roots the philosophy of Aldo Leopold and other seminal thinkers who linked ecology and ethics. Despite the fact that Leopold’s Land Ethic was published about 70 years ago, Lynn White’s seminal article The Roots of our Ecological Crisis, Garrett Hardin’s Tragedy of the Commons, and Arne Naess’ Deep Ecology were published circa 50 years ago, we still face the a general lack of understanding of the ethical roots of socio-ecological problems. For this reason, in this Philosophy of Ecology course we will revisit these foundational articles with the goal of developing renewed understanding about the crucial theoretical and practical linkages between ecology and ethics.
Course Evaluation:

1) Remote, in class Group-Presentations and Research Papers (50%). 30% of the grade will be based on two written papers (15% each), and 20% on two in class group PowerPoint presentation (10% each).

Group-Presentations and Research Papers I, based on one of the four parts of the Linking ecology and ethics for a changing world: Values, Philosophy, and Action book:

- Part I Integrating Philosophy and Ecology: Biocultural Interfaces
- Part II Ecological Worldviews: Aesthetics, Metaphors, and Conservation
- Part III Environmental Philosophy: Ethics, Epistemology, Justice
- Part IV Ecosystems: Science, Values, and Action

Group-Presentations and Research Papers II, based on one of the four foundational articles addressed in this course:


2) Quizzes (30%). At the beginning of each class, a short quiz will be given over the material covered the required readings for that week.

3) Midterm and Final Exams (20%). Two tests will be given during the semester, weighted at 10% for the midterm and 10% for the final.

The final grade earned will correspond to the following scores, weighted by each activity:

A = 90 – 100
B = 80 – 89
C = 70 – 79
D = 60 – 69
F = 0-59
## Tentative Schedule

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings / Assignments</th>
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<td><strong>UNIT 1: Liking Ecology and Ethics for a Changing World</strong></td>
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| **Session 1**  
12 January | Syllabus review, course outline, core concepts, rationale: *Indirect drivers of Global Change*  
*Johan Rockstroem: Planetary Boundaries*  
| **Session 2**  
19 January | Planetary Boundaries, Great Acceleration & Global Assessments  
Lecturer: R. Rozzi | Quiz 1  
Reading(s): *Linking Ecology and Ethics for a Changing World: Values, Philosophy, and Action: Foreword, Preface & Ch25*  
+ IPBES (2016) Summary for policymakers of the methodological assessment of scenarios and models of biodiversity and ecosystem services. IPBES, Bonn, Germany.  
| **Session 3**  
26 January | Global Assessment & Indirect Drivers  
Lecturer: R. Rozzi | Quiz 2  
Reading(s): *Linking Ecology and Ethics for a Changing World: Values, Philosophy, and Action: Part III Environmental Philosophy: Ethics, Epistemology, Justice* (Ch 15-21)  
+ Ethical perspectives on landscape stewardship, Bieling et al. (2020)  
+ Caring for nature matters, Jax (2018)  
+ Future environmental philosophies and their biocultural conservation interfaces, Rozzi (2007) |
| **Session 4**  
2 February | Extinction of Experience & Education  
Lecturer: R. Rozzi | Quiz 3  
Reading(s): *Linking Ecology and Ethics for a Changing World: Values, Philosophy, and Action: Part IV Ecosystems: Science, Values, and Action* (Ch 22-24, 26-28)  

Recommended for the week: Robert Michael Bob Pyle audio interview on Nature Deficit Disorder, Extinction of Experience  
[https://youtu.be/z_yCT-xxFG4](https://youtu.be/z_yCT-xxFG4)
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<th>Columbian Exchange &amp; Biocultural Homogenization</th>
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<th>Session 6</th>
<th>Global Biocultural Homogenization</th>
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<th>Session 7</th>
<th>Protected Areas, Wilderness &amp; Tourism</th>
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<th>Session 8</th>
<th>Student Presentations I</th>
<th>Students group presentations (ppt due Friday February 26)</th>
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<td>2 March</td>
<td>Lecturer: R. Rozzi</td>
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<th>Session 9</th>
<th>Student Presentations II</th>
<th>Students group presentations (ppt due Friday March 5)</th>
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<td>9 March</td>
<td>Lecturer: R. Rozzi</td>
<td>Individual papers I due</td>
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| Session 10 | 16 March | Historical Roots of our Ecological Crisis I  
Lecturers:  
R. Rozzi & R. May | Mid-Term  
Reading(s):  
| Session 11 | 23 March | Historical Roots of our Ecological Crisis II & Leonardo Boff  
Lecturers:  
R. Rozzi & R. May | Quiz 7  
Reading(s):  
+ Leonardo Boff, *Ecology and Liberation: A New Paradigm* |
| Session 12 | 30 March | Tragedy of the Commons  
Lecturers:  
R. Rozzi & MT La Vallee | Quiz 8  
Reading(s):  
| Session 13 | 6 April | The Land Ethic  
Lecturer: R. Rozzi | Quiz 9  
Reading(s):  
+ A history of the ecosystem concept in ecology: more than the sum of the parts by Frank Golley (1993), Yale University Press. |
| Session 14 | 13 April | Deep Ecology  
Lecturer: R. Rozzi | Quiz 10  
Reading(s):  
| Session 15 | 20 April | Student Presentations III  
Lecturer: R. Rozzi | Individual papers II due  
Students group presentations (ppt due Friday April 16) |
| Session 16 | 27 April | Final Exam  
Lecturer: R. Rozzi | In class exam |
REQUIRED ARTICLES


REQUIRED BOOKS


SOME SUPPLEMENTARY BOOKS


SOME SUPPLEMENTARY ARTICLES


