

HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF SUSTAINABILITY
PHI 322/HST 308/SOS 309
SPRING 2017
T & TH 3:00-4:15 PM in Tempe Art 220

PROFESSORS PAUL HIRT & TYLER DESROCHES

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Course Description:

Sustainability problems are complicated and require many disciplinary perspectives—humanities, sciences, and social sciences—to understand and address them. This course examines sustainability issues in a broadly interdisciplinary way, but with a special emphasis on humanities perspectives, focusing on human ideas, values, and institutions as they have evolved over time. Team-taught by a philosopher and a historian, the course will examine the human dimensions of sustainability challenges and efforts to address those challenges in a variety of places and times. In this course, we will provide students with substantive grounding in historical case studies of environmental challenges and philosophical frameworks within which to understand them.

Learning Outcomes:

Through readings (from classic texts to contemporary studies), lectures, in-class discussions, multiple writing assignments, research projects, films, and guest presentations, students will:

- Analyze philosophical arguments
- Interpret historical texts and materials
- Analyze the complex social foundations of environmental problems and problem-solving
- Develop intellectual tools for understanding and solving contemporary sustainability challenges.

Textbooks & Readings: There are two required texts for this class: Jeremy L. Caradonna, *Sustainability: A History* and Peter Singer, *The Ethics of What We Eat*. Both are required and can be purchased in the ASU bookstore or online. Additional readings will be posted on Blackboard.

Requirements and grading: Rather than traditional exams there will be eight in-class quizzes on the readings, two short analytical essays, one long analytical essay (with presentation) & two write-ups on extracurricular activities. You will also earn points for attendance and participation in discussions. A total of 100 points may be earned in the course. Because student involvement substantially enhances the learning process, this class will require attendance and encourage participation in the discussions. Class attendance and discussion is worth 28 points. A sign-up sheet will be passed around each day for taking roll.

Each of the eight quizzes is worth 2 points; only your best seven will count, totaling another 14 points. You can thus miss or bomb one quiz without penalty. There are no make-ups for quizzes. The quizzes will be unannounced and may occur on any day, but they will be based on the reading material for that day so if you come prepared to class you should do well. There are two short analytical essays, worth 10 points each and one long analytical essay. The draft version of the long essay is worth 10 points and the final version is worth 10 points. *Late essays will be penalized one point (10%) per day*. The presentation, which is to be based on

your long essay, is worth 10 points. You are required to attend two outside lectures or events on sustainability and turn in a written description and evaluation of each event, worth 4 points each, 8 points total.

For the final grade calculations:

97.5-100=A+
92.6-97.4=A
89.6-92.5=A-
86.6-89.5=B+
82.6-86.5=B
79.6-82.5=B-
78.-79.5=C+
70-77.9=C
60-69.9=D
59.9-below=E

Academic Integrity: Academic honesty is expected of all students in all examinations, papers, laboratory work, academic transactions and records. The possible sanctions include, but are not limited to, appropriate grade penalties, course failure (indicated on the transcript as a grade of E), course failure due to academic dishonesty (indicated on the transcript as a grade of XE), loss of registration privileges, disqualification and dismissal. For more information, see <http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity>.

Establishing Eligibility for Disability Accommodations: Students who feel they will need disability accommodations in this class but have not registered with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) should contact DRC immediately. Their office is located on the first floor of the Matthews Center Building. DRC staff can also be reached at: 480-965-1234 (V), 480-965-9000 (TTY). For additional information, visit: www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/ed/drc. Their hours are 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday.

Itinerary—Weekly Topics, Readings, and Assignments

Historical and Philosophical Foundations of Sustainability

Jan 10: Introduction to course.

Jan 12: Caradonna, *Sustainability: A History*, “Introduction.”

Jan 17: Caradonna ch. 1: “Loath This Growth: Sustainability in the Early Modern World.”

Jan 19: Caradonna, ch. 2: “The Industrial Revolution and Its Discontents.”

Jan 24: Roderick Nash, “The Ideological Origins of American Environmentalism,” in *The Rights of Nature* (1989). PDF is available on Blackboard.

Jan 26: Aldo Leopold, “The Land Ethic” and Caradonna, ch. 3 “Eco-Warriors: The Environmental Movement...”

Jan 31: DeWeese-Boyd, “The Healthy City versus the Luxurious City in Plato’s Republic Lessons about Consumption and Sustainability for a Globalizing Economy”; and Joel Feinberg “The Rights of Animals and Unborn Generations” (both available on Blackboard)

Feb 2: Dale Jamieson, “Sustainability and Beyond”; Carolyn Merchant, “Nature as Female”; and Karen Warren, “The Power and Promise of Ecological Feminism” (all essays are available on Blackboard)

Feb 7: Caradonna ch. 4, “Eco-nomics” and Bryan Norton, “The Ignorance Argument”

Feb 9: Caradonna ch. 5, “From Concept to Movement” and David Orr, “The Four Challenges of Sustainability.”

Climate Change

Feb 14: William DeBuys, Introduction and chs. 1 & 2 of *A Great Aridness* (available on Blackboard as a PDF).

Feb 16: Doubters and their critics: Watch the PBS Frontline documentary “Climate of Doubt”: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/climate-of-doubt/> Read Heartland Institute, “Climate Change Reconsidered II—Summary”; and Naomi Klein, “Capitalism vs. the Climate” (both in PDF on Blackboard).

Feb 21: Stephen Gardiner, “Ethics and Global Climate Change”; Anil Agarwal and Sunita Narain, “Global Warming in an Unequal World” (both on Blackboard)

Feb 23: Rebecca Tsosie, “Climate Change, Sustainability and Globalization: Charting the Future of Indigenous Environmental Self-Determination” (on Blackboard)

Feb 28: Discuss documentary film *Before the Flood* and writing assignment 1 on climate change. (Watch the film on your own before class)

Water—Development, depletion, conservation, justice

March 2: DesRoches, Tyler: The Human Right to Water and Moral Limits to Water Markets; and ICA report *Global Water Security* (on Blackboard).

March 5-12: spring break

March 14: Hirt, Larson, and Gustafson, “Mirage in the Valley of the Sun”; and ADWR, *Arizona’s Next Century: A Strategic Vision for Water Supply Sustainability Executive Summary* (PDF on Blackboard)

March 16: Vandana Shiva, selection from *Water Wars*; Bruce Jennings, et. al. “Principles of Water Ethics” (both available on Blackboard); film: *Flow*

Energy—Fossil fuels, energy and equity, environmental racism:

March 21: Discuss the film: *Carbon Nation*. (Watch the film on your own)

March 23: Watch the short video on Alex Epstein’s “The Moral Case for Fossil Fuels” here: <http://www.moralcaseforfossilfuels.com/> then read Jody Freeman, “A Critical Look at ‘The Moral Case for Fossil Fuels’” (available on Blackboard).

March 28: Rocky Mountain Institute, *Reinventing Fire*, read the executive summaries and watch the video here: <http://www.rmi.org/reinventingfire>

March 30: Figueour and Mill “Environmental Justice”; Shader-Frechette “Equity and Duties to Future Generations—The Case of Yucca Mountain”; Moellendorf “Taking UNFCCC Norms Seriously”

Food—Sustainable and just food systems; the ethics of eating animals

April 4: Singer, *The Ethics of What We Eat*, Part 1 and Jonathan Safran Foer, “Eating Animals.”

April 6: Blake Hurst, “The Omnivore's Delusion: Against the Agri-intellectuals,” Cora Diamond, “Eating Meat and Eating People,” and Evelyn Pluhar, “Meat and Morality: Alternatives to Factory Farming.”

April 11: Singer, *The Ethics of What We Eat*, chs. 6-10.

April 13 Local foods: Mark Navin “Local foods and International Ethics”; McGregor, “Eating Right: Local or Global”

April 18: Industrial Agriculture, Worker’s Rights, and Global Justice: Wendell Berry, “The Ecological Crisis as a Crisis of Agriculture.” Film: *Food Inc.*; Schanbacher, “A human right to food” (articles available on Blackboard).

April 20: Student presentations

April 25: Student presentations

April 27: Wrap-up—Where do we go from here? Caradonna, ch. 6, “Sustainability Today: 2000-present”; Caradonna, ch. 7, “The Future: 10 Challenges for Sustainability”