

**PHIL 332: ENVIRONMENTAL PHILOSOPHY**  
**FALL 2024**  
**PRELIMINARY SYLLABUS**

**INSTRUCTORS, CONTACT INFORMATION, AND OFFICE HOURS**

*Email us directly and not through Canvas. Attend office hours through Zoom Canvas.*

John Beatty, [john.beatty@ubc.ca](mailto:john.beatty@ubc.ca), Zoom office hours Fri 2-4  
Kinley Gillette, [kinley.gillette@ubc.ca](mailto:kinley.gillette@ubc.ca), Zoom office hours TBA  
Erin Chiu, Undergrad Administrator, [phil.undergrad@ubc.ca](mailto:phil.undergrad@ubc.ca)

**GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

We will pursue two central issues having to do with nature: what *\*value\** does nature have, and what is it about *\*nature\** that makes it valuable? These are philosophical questions that are also informed by 1) ecology and conservation biology, and 2) environmental history (the changing natural environment and the changing ways in which humans have interacted with their environments).

**MECHANICS AND EXPECTATIONS**

Please familiarize yourself with the Canvas course website.

Lectures are “in person.”

The course is divided into two halves, roughly corresponding to the two questions above (and see “Preliminary Schedule of Topics and Readings” below). You will write 4 essays, each 5-6 pages (double-spaced). Two essays will be due midway through the course, and two will be due at the end. You’ll have one week to complete the first two essays, and one week to complete the last two. *Note well:* You are expected to bring the assigned readings, lectures, and other course materials to bear on the exam questions. These are the materials you are being examined on. Lectures and other materials supplement but do not take the place of the readings. John will say more in class about exam expectations.

Kinley will hold extra office hours before assignments are due. Come to these office hours if you have questions about the material/ content of the course. These hours are supplementary teaching or tutoring, but not for workshopping your essay writing. The dates, times, and location(s) for these extra office hours will be announced.

**READINGS**

Reading assignments are included in the “Schedule of Topics and Readings” below. You may choose to do the readings prior to the relevant lectures, or you may choose to use the lectures as introductions to the readings. But again, lectures, handouts, and other materials supplement, rather than take the place of the readings. There are two books available through the bookstore: T.C. Boyle, *When the Killing’s Done*, and John Vaillant, *The Golden Spruce*. All other readings will be available on the Canvas course website.

## **ADDITIONAL UBC STATEMENTS**

UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious observances. UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions.

Details of the policies and how to access support are available on the UBC Senate website, “Policies and Resources to Support Student Success”: <https://senate.ubc.ca/policies-resources-support-student-success>. There you will find the following principles and linked resources:

- UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual assault. (links provided on the website)
- UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. (links provided on the website)
- UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious, spiritual and cultural observances. (links provided on the website)
- UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions. (links provided on the website)

In connection with this last principle, academic honesty, UBC has the following policy regarding plagiarism that you should be aware of:

**PLAGIARISM**, which is intellectual theft, occurs where an individual submits or presents the oral or written work of another person as his or her own. Scholarship

quite properly rests upon examining and referring to the thoughts and writings of others. However, when another person's words (i.e. phrases, sentences, or paragraphs), ideas, or entire works are used, the author must be acknowledged in the text, in footnotes, in endnotes, or in another accepted form of academic citation. Where direct quotations are made, they must be clearly delineated (for example, within quotation marks or separately indented). Failure to provide proper attribution is plagiarism because it represents someone else's work as one's own. Plagiarism should not occur in submitted drafts or final works. A student who seeks assistance from a tutor or other scholastic aids must ensure that the work submitted is the student's own. Students are responsible for ensuring that any work submitted does not constitute plagiarism. Students who are in any doubt as to what constitutes plagiarism should consult their instructor before handing in any assignments.

## **PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS**

### **PART 1: WHAT \*VALUE\* DOES NATURE HAVE?**

Sept 4

#### **Introduction**

No readings for this week

Sept 11

#### **Basic Issues: What \*Value\* Does Nature Have?**

Leopold, "Thinking Like a Mountain"; Worster, "The Value of a Varmint"; Leopold, "The Land Ethic"

#### **Basic Issues: What Is It About \*Nature\* That is Valuable?**

Cronon, "The Trouble with Wilderness"; Kimmerer, "Skywoman Falling"

Sept 18

#### **Instrumental, Intrinsic, Economic, Aesthetic and Transformational Values**

Sagoff, "Zuckerman's Dilemma"; Rolston, "Beauty to Duty"; Sarkar, *Biodiversity and Environmental Philosophy*

Sept 25

#### **The Expanding Circle of Moral Concern: Evolutionary and Ecological Hierarchies**

Rolston, "Intrinsic Values on Earth"

#### **The Expanding Circle of Moral Concern: Non-Humans and Future Humans**

Stone, "Should Trees Have Standing?" Barry, "Sustainability and Intergenerational Justice"

Oct 2

**A Triangular Affair: Environmental Welfare, Animal Welfare, Human Welfare**

Sagoff, "Animal Liberation and Environmental Ethics: Bad Marriage, Quick Divorce"; Callicott, "Holistic Environmental Ethics and the Problem of Ecofascism"; Dowie, Conservation Refugees; Guha, "Radical American Environmentalism and Wilderness Preservation: A Third World Critique" and "The Authoritarian Biologist and the Arrogance of Anti-Humanism"

Oct 9

**A Triangular Affair, Revisited** [class participation session; details forthcoming]

Boyle, *When the Killing's Done*

Oct 16

**Can We Put a Price on Nature? What are You Willing to Pay?**

Baxter, *People or Penguins*

**Can We Put a Price on Nature? Should We?**

Sagoff, "We Have Met the Enemy and He is Us, or Conflict and Contradiction in Environmental Law"

**Midterm exam handed-out**

Oct 23

**No class** (exam period)

**Midterm exam due**, as per instructions

**PART 2: WHAT IS IT ABOUT \*NATURE\* THAT IS VALUABLE?**

Oct 30

**Nitobe Memorial Garden** [visit Nitobe Garden prior to class; details forthcoming]

**Nature vs Garden: Natural and Artificial**

Mill, "Nature"; Huxley, "Prolegomena to Evolution and Ethics"; Pollan, "Nature Abhors a Garden"; (and recommended only: Pollan, "Preface" to his book *Botany of Desire*)

Nov 6

**Nature as Garden: Indians, Colonists, and their Environments**

Cronon, *Changes in the Land*; Kimmerer, "Shkitagen: People of the Seventh Fire"

Nov 13

**Midterm break; no class**

Nov 20

**Nature as Garden: Environmental Restoration**

Pollan, "The Idea of a Garden"; Elliott, "Faking Nature"; Katz, "The Big Lie: Human Restoration of Nature"; Donlan et al., "Re-wilding North America"; Kimmerer, "Burning Cascade Head"

Nov 27

**Garden as Nature: Forestry and the Case of Grant Hadwin** [class participation session; details forthcoming]

White, "Are You an Environmentalist or Do You Work for a Living?" (abridged); Vaillant, *The Golden Spruce*

Dec 4

**Who Speaks for Nature? Whom Should We Believe? The Case of Climate Change**

Oreskes and Conway, "Challenging Knowledge"; Hardwig "Toward and Ethics of Expertise"

**Final exam handed-out**

Dec 11

**Final exam due**, as per instructions