South Central College

PHIL 210  PHIL 210: Environmental Ethics

Common Course Outline

Course Information

Description
This class explores the place of human beings within the broader ecosystem, focusing on the environmental impact of human behavior and sustainable alternatives to consumerist lifestyles. In addition to surveying the scientific evidence for the ecological problems humans cause, it addresses the political, economic, cultural, philosophical and religious dimensions of the current environmental crisis. The class also includes discussion and application of solutions to these problems, encouraging students to become involved in environmental activism and consider changes in their own behavior. (MNTC 6, 10: Humanities and Fine Arts, People and the Environment). Prerequisite: Any 100-level Philosophy course or any Biology course.

Instructional Level
380000

Total Credits
3.00

Total Hours
48.00

Types of Instruction

Instruction Type
Classroom Presentation

Pre/Corequisites

Prerequisite
Any 100-level Philosophy course or any Biology course.

Institutional Core Competencies

1. Analysis and inquiry: Students will demonstrate an ability to analyze information from multiple sources and to raise pertinent questions regarding that information.

2. Civic knowledge and engagement- local and global: Students will understand the richness and challenge of local and world cultures and the effects of globalization, and will develop the skills and attitudes to function as “global citizens.”

3. Ethical reasoning and action: Students will develop ethical and social responsibility to self and others, and will collaborate with others to address ethical and social issues in a sustainable manner.

External Standards

Title
MN Transfer Goals

Target Standards
GOAL 9. ETHICAL AND CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY To develop students' capacity to identify, discuss, and reflect upon the ethical dimensions of political, social, and personal life and to understand the ways in which they can exercise responsible and productive citizenship.

9.a Examine, articulate, and apply their own ethical views.
9.b Understand and apply core concepts (e.g. politics, rights and obligations, justice, liberty) to specific issues.
9.c Analyze and reflect on the ethical dimensions of legal, social, and scientific issues.
9.d Recognize the diversity of political motivations and interests of others.
9.e Identify ways to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship

GOAL 10. PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT To improve students' understanding of today's complex environmental challenges. Students will examine the inter-relatedness of human society and the natural environment.

10.a Explain the basic structure and function of various natural ecosystems and of human adaptive strategies within those systems.
10.b Discern patterns and interrelationships of bio-physical and socio-cultural systems.
10.c Describe the basic institutional arrangements (social, legal, political, economic, religious) that are evolving to deal with environmental and natural resource challenges.
10.d Evaluate critically environmental and natural resource issues in light of understandings about interrelationships, ecosystems, and institutions.
10.e Propose and assess alternative solutions to environmental problems.
10.f Articulate and defend the actions they would take on various environmental issues.

Course Competencies

1 Explain the fundamentals of the philosophical method.
   Learning Objectives
   The essential components of a philosophical approach to issues.
   The difference between philosophical methodology and everyday ways of thinking.

2 Comprehend the character of current environmental problems.
   Learning Objectives
   A science-based overview of major environmental issues (global warming, extinction, etc.)
   Human activities that cause or contribute to these problems.

3 Identify the environmental impact of human behavior.
   Learning Objectives
   The macro impact of anthropomorphic changes to the biosphere.
   The individual impact ("environmental footprint") of students.
   The effect of different levels of population, affluence, and technology.
   The disparate impact of developed and developing nations.

4 The disparate impact of developed and developing nations.
   Learning Objectives
   Alternatives to mass-produced, consumption-based lifestyles.
   Theories of sustainability and simple living.
   Practical applications of the principles of sustainability (green consumption, self-sufficiency, etc.)

5 Grasp the historical and cultural roots of current environmental problems.
Learning Objectives
A brief overview of the transitions from hunter-gathering to agriculturalism to industrialism.
The origin and development of the consumer society.
An analysis of advertising and the role of popular culture in promoting consumption

6 Recognize the political and economic dimensions of environmental issues.
Learning Objectives
The positions of political parties on environmental issues.
The status and prospects of Green politics.
The impact of corporate power and lobbying on environmental policies.

7 Explain the principal issues and perspectives in environmental ethics.
Learning Objectives
Basic approaches to eco-philosophy (utilitarianism, teleology, deep ecology, etc.)
Concepts and conflicts (instrumental vs. intrinsic value, individual vs. wholistic approach, etc.)

8 Explore religious perspectives on environmental issues.
Learning Objectives
Historical and contemporary positions taken by Christians, Buddhists, Muslims, Hindus, etc.
Environmental practices and policies of Christian denominations and other religious institutions.

9 Engage in service-learning that involves environmental issues.
Learning Objectives
The identity and activities of non-profit organizations that promote environmental values.
Opportunities to address environmental issues on a local level.

10 Identity lifestyle changes that would reduce environmental impact.
Learning Objectives
Specific behaviors and habits that contribute environmental harm.
Alternatives that promote frugality and responsibility.

SCC Accessibility Statement
If you have a disability and need accommodations to participate in the course activities, please contact your instructor as soon as possible. This information will be made available in an alternative format, such as Braille, large print, or cassette tape, upon request. If you wish to contact the college ADA Coordinator, call that office at 507-389-7222.

Disabilities page http://southcentral.edu/academic-policies/disability-rights.html