



**UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY**  
FACULTY OF ARTS  
Department of Philosophy

**PHIL 525.5 W18**  
**“Advanced topics in Philosophy of Law: Theory of Environmental Sustainability”**  
**Winter Term 2018**

**Course Outline**

**Lectures:** Thursdays 15:30-18:15 in SS 1253

**Instructor:** Dr. Ron Wilburn

**Office:** SS 1226

**Office Phone:**

**Email:** ron.wilburn@ucalgary.ca

**Office Hours:** Thursdays 14:30-15:30

**Course Description**

A seminar in environmental philosophy focusing on the theory of environmental sustainability and obligations to future generations. We will canvas the history of these ideas, from early philosophical foundations in Malthus, Mill and others, to contemporary debates in environmental philosophy, using climate change for the purposes of extended case study and application.

**Prerequisites:**

Two previous courses in Philosophy, one of which must be Philosophy 249, 397, 425, 449 or 453 and at least one of which must be at the 400 level, or higher.

**Course Learning Outcomes**

- Broad knowledge of pertinent moral theories of rights and obligations;
- Deep knowledge of one central area of philosophical inquiry (i.e., issues concerning environmental obligations to future generations);
- Ability to critically digest, interpret, and analyze complex sources;
- Ability to write a convincing argument that takes adequate account of alternative positions;
- Ability to engage in constructive, respectful, oral and written argumentation.

**Required/Recommended Texts (including electronic resources):**

*Reasons and Persons*, Parfit

*Fairness and Futurity: Essays on Environmental Sustainability*, Dobson (ed.),

Various TBD public access online resources

**Course Assessment**

This course will be graded using a “contract system” designed to give students maximum control over their own grades.

- 3 short essay exams (to be taken on D2L).
- 3 paper assignments (8-10 pages each).

Note: a pass or “P” = 75% or above available point credit for an assignment.

- To achieve a D in the class, students must complete all three essay exams satisfactorily (P/F).
- To achieve a C in the class, students must complete all three essay exams satisfactorily (P/F) and complete one paper satisfactorily (P/F).
- To achieve a B in the class, students must complete all three essay exams satisfactorily (P/F) and complete two papers satisfactorily (P/F)
- To achieve an A in the class, students must complete all three essay exams satisfactorily (P/F) and complete three papers satisfactorily (P/F).

“Pluses” and “Minuses” are determined as a function of student class participation. This is necessarily a somewhat intangible grading factor. But the more you contribute to conversation, the more brownie points you get. The less you contribute, the fewer brownie points you get. This includes class presentations, which will consist in short summary oral reports on the readings. I expect a maximum of two such summaries per student.

There is no final exam. Computers are allowed in class. All course work is to be submitted through D2L. Late or missing work is only allowed with advance permission from the professor.

## **IMPORTANT DEPARTMENTAL, FACULTY AND UNIVERSITY INFORMATION**

### **Academic Honesty**

Cheating or plagiarism on any assignment or examination is regarded as an extremely serious academic offense, the penalty for which may be an F on the assignment, an F in the course, academic probation, or requirement to withdraw from the University. See the relevant sections on ‘Academic Misconduct’ in the current University Calendar. Intellectual honesty requires that your work include adequate referencing to sources. Plagiarism occurs when you do not acknowledge or correctly reference your sources. If you have questions about correct referencing, consult your instructor.

### **Academic Accommodation**

The student accommodation policy can be found at: [ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy](http://ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy).

Students needing an Accommodation because of a disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities <http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>.

Students needing an Accommodation based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to their instructor.

### **D2L Help**

Desire2Learn is UCalgary’s online learning management system. Important information and communications about this course may be posted on D2L. Go to <https://ucalgary.service-now.com/it> for help.

### **General Academic Concerns and Program Planning**

Have a question but not sure where to start? The Arts Students Centre is your information resource for everything in the Faculty of Arts. Drop in at SS102, call 403-220-3580, or email [ascarts@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ascarts@ucalgary.ca) . Advisors in the ASC can also provide assistance and advice in planning your program through to graduation. Visit the Faculty of Arts website at <https://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate> for detailed information on common academic concerns

### **Advice on Philosophy Courses**

You may find answers to your more specific questions about a philosophy degree on the Department of Philosophy's website <http://phil.ucalgary.ca> , or contact one of Philosophy's Undergraduate Advisors. Jeremy Fantl ([jfantl@ucalgary.ca](mailto:jfantl@ucalgary.ca)), Allen Habib ([anhabib@ucalgary.ca](mailto:anhabib@ucalgary.ca)), Megan Delehanty ([mdelehan@ucalgary.ca](mailto:mdelehan@ucalgary.ca)).

### **Registration Overload/Prereq Waivers**

If you are seeking to register in a Philosophy course that is full or to get permission to waive the prereqs for a course, email the Department Manager, Tram Nguyen ([tram.nguyen1@ucalgary.ca](mailto:tram.nguyen1@ucalgary.ca)). Include the specific course information and your UCID number in your request.

### **Writing**

This course will include written assignments. Faculty policy directs that all written assignments (including, although to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) but also general clarity and organization. Research papers must be properly documented. Students are also encouraged to use Writing Support Services and other Student Success Centre Services, located on the 3rd floor of the Taylor Family Digital Library. Writing Support Services assist with a variety of assignments, from essays to lab reports. Students can book 30-minute one-on-one appointments online, sign up for 15- minute drop-in appointments, and register for a variety of writing workshops. For more information on this and other Student Success Centre services, please visit [www.ucalgary.ca/ssc](http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc) .

### **Protection of Privacy**

The University of Calgary is under the jurisdiction of the provincial Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act. The Department of Philosophy ensures the student's right to privacy by requiring all graded assignments be returned to the student directly from the instructor or teaching assistant.

### **Internet and Electronic Communication Devices**

The instructor reserves the right to establish course policies regarding the use of devices such as laptops, tablets, and smartbooks. If allowed, these devices must be used exclusively for instructional purposes and must not cause disruption to the instructor or to fellow students. Cell phones and paging devices should be set to silent mode during lectures. Audio or video recording of lectures is not permitted without the written permission of the instructor. Students violating this policy are subject to discipline under the University of Calgary's Non-Academic Misconduct policy

### **Emergency Evacuation:**

In case of an emergency evacuation during class, students must gather at the designated assembly point nearest to the classroom. The list of assembly points is found at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints> . Please check this website and note the nearest assembly point for this course.

### **Other Helpful Contacts**

- Safewalk and Campus Security: 403-220-5333.
- Faculty of Arts Student Representatives: 403-220-6552, [arts1@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts1@su.ucalgary.ca) , [arts2@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts2@su.ucalgary.ca) , [arts3@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts3@su.ucalgary.ca) , [arts4@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts4@su.ucalgary.ca)
- Student Union: <https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/>; 403-220-6551.
- Student Ombudsman: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>
- Campus Mental Health Strategy: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/mentalhealth/>