

CAS EE328 Australian Points of View towards Global Environmental Challenges



Course Title: Australian Points of View towards Global Environmental Challenges

Instructor/s Name: Dr Frederick Osman, Ph.D., B.Sc (Hons), Grad. Dip. Ed. Cert. Career Development Practice, Cert. IV, Training & Assessment, Cert. School Marketing (CMS), FTGN, FRSN, FACE, FAIP, HFTGN, JP and Julianna Kadar, MSc, MRes, PhD

Course Dates: Spring and Fall

Office Location: BU Sydney Programs, Australia, a division of BU Study Abroad. 15-25 Regent Street, Chippendale, NSW

Course Time: This course runs for 40 hours across a 7-week teaching session (intensive delivery) and meets twice per week

Location: Classrooms, BU Sydney Academic Centre, Sydney, Australia

Course Credits: 4 BU credits and 2 Hub units including:

Capacity: Diversity, Civic Engagement, and Global Citizenship
Area: Ethical Reasoning

Capacity: Scientific and Social Inquiry
Area: Social Inquiry II

Contact Information: Dr Frederick Osman, BU Sydney Associate Director (Academic); email: fosman@bu.edu

Office Hours: 10 minutes prior to and following class; or via a scheduled appointment

Guest Lecturers:

Chels Marshall – Gumbaynggirr woman, knowledge keeper, and leading indigenous systems ecologist

John Seed – Deep ecology researcher and communicator, began the Rainforest Information Centre

Michelle Sheather – The first Campaigns Director for Greenpeace International and also for Greenpeace Australia

Field Visit:

Taronga Zoo is Sydney's city zoo and contributes to conservation through research, action and advocacy. Taronga Conservation Society supports wildlife, habitats and communities around the globe.

Focus questions:

What can zoos contribute to conservation initiatives?

Why are public perspectives on captive animals changing?

How can zoos be adapted to address current societal and ethical concerns, in other words, what is the future of zoos?

Question-driven Course Description:

The proposed course explores the way people form viewpoints toward the environment and how this thinking manifests in practice. The current, urgent challenges that face our environmental systems require exploration of these attitudes through the lens of individual, community, corporate, non-government organisations and government levels as well as through indigenous perspectives. To explore these issues further, this unit focuses on environmental ethics by examining the role of the individual and resulting environmental policies that are formed from the basis of ecophilosophies. This is put into a global context and related to local examples in Sydney, Australia and Oceania. At every stage, students are encouraged to consider the nuanced and diverse perspectives of multiple stakeholders involved in the global environmental debate.

Through questioning students are exposed to a wide range of views. For example:

- What are the ethical differences between the conservation and preservation ecophilosophies? How can we examine nature from both intrinsic value and development perspectives?
- How can early life experiences affect attitudes towards the natural world later in life?

- How does Australian ocean culture and public opinion affect environmental policy regarding shark nets?
- What are the links between biodiversity loss, climate systems and public health globally?
- How much does individual diet choice and specifically meat production impact climate change and sustainable long-term use of land?
- How can indigenous cultures provide models for natural resource management through traditional ecological knowledge? How might indigenous values further environmental justice in this area?
- What are the environmental impacts and ethical concerns surrounding emissions? What government initiatives in Australia at the local, state and federal levels support the reduction of carbon emissions? What is the current success of these initiatives?
- Why did activists protest mining expansions near Australia's Great Barrier Reef and how did these efforts encourage conversation and impact Australian conservation efforts and the mining industry?
- What is your own personal environmental perspective/attitude and how might this be relevant to daily decision making?

Students will employ a variety of strategies in answering all above questions. These include: attending lectures, classroom discussions and debates, undertaking ungraded collaborative exercises in class and presenting and writing analytical commentary on texts and case studies based on both research and reading. Additionally, students will construct verbal and written arguments that both align with and are opposed to their own environmental point of view as informed by varied ecophilosophies.

Hub Learning Outcomes

Ethical Reasoning:

Students will develop the ability to identify the core ethical and philosophical assumptions that underlie dominant and alternative approaches to nature. Following this, students will be able to reflect on and develop personal environmental attitudes and specify their relevance to practice and policy. This context will allow for focus on the impacts of their own citizenship on both a personal and professional level.

Learning Outcome 1:

Students will analyse contemporary environmental issues from a variety of ethical standpoints in order to identify conflicts. This will allow them to demonstrate and

communicate ethical solutions to contemporary environmental challenges. Specifically, students will contend with contrasting perspectives on multiple issues including sustainability, human impact on ecosystems and the systemic processes and issues that link environmental policy and social justice.

Learning Outcome 2:

Throughout this process, students will demonstrate the knowledgebase, reasoning skills and vocabulary necessary to critically reflect on the ethical problems tied to sustainability, indigenous social justice, ecosystem management and climate change. By examining how ecophilosophies reflect moral principles that dictate fairness among species, between genders and for future generations, students will consider how their own attitudes towards the environment affect environmental movements and in turn environmental policy.

Social Inquiry II:

Student will develop a detailed understanding of the key principles of social constructionist approaches to nature and their relevance to environmental challenges. Students will read scholarly material and policy documents from the social sciences, addressing methods of data collection and potential biases. They will participate in debate and discussion in lecture to compare and evaluate individual and societal points of view that comprise the debates surrounding multiple environmental perspectives.

Through groupwork, students will hone the ability to work as a team and present ecophilosophical perspectives that both align with and are opposed to their own ecophilosophy. By completing reflections, exams and research-based assignments students will analyse contemporary environmental issues from a variety of ecophilosophical viewpoints in order to identify core challenges and evidence-based solutions that bring diverse viewpoints together. Through this process they will be able to demonstrate an advanced understanding of the importance of engaging with environmental attitudes in addressing environmental issues.

An ability to frame these global questions will allow them to engage with environmental issues that are globally debated. Critically reflecting on multiple stakeholder points of view will highlight the difficulties as well as the means for progress when it comes to these issues and ensure an understanding of the current workings of the world.

Learning Outcome 2:

Students will gain understanding of the varied disciplines that contribute to the public policies surrounding environmental development, protection and the conflicts resulting from inequality among stakeholders, namely indigenous rights and perspectives. The evidence for biodiversity loss as a result of climate systems change will be examined and connected to the larger issue of public health (i.e., zoonotic viral diseases developing as a direct result of human expansion into wild areas). The environmental policies answering these scientific claims and global environmental challenges will be examined for effectiveness.

Other Outcomes**Study Abroad Sydney Program Outcome:**

The student will demonstrate knowledge of Australian culture and society with respect to a combination of the following areas: Australian politics, industry, science and technology, economics, social policy and environmental policy.

Instructional Format: Lecture, Seminar, Field Trips and Guest Speaker Pedagogy

Our aim is to create engagement through the learning process where active participation occurs regularly. To achieve this, we create opportunities for seminar-style discussions during interactive lectures. To promote an inclusive and constructive environment we have created lectures, in-class activities and assignments that encourage participation from students with multiple learning styles. In addition to large and small group discussions, brief in-class reflection and writing exercises are used (e.g., one-minute essay). To further promote active learning, forced debate and role playing are employed during examination of case studies. To ensure that environmental viewpoints outside of a student's own environmental viewpoint are considered, blind picks of ecophilosophical viewpoints will be organized before specified open debate activities.

Courseware

www.bu.edu/learn

An active online link will be provided to all materials including the course outline, criteria sheets, due dates of assignments, secondary sources, online links, and announcements. From time to time, there is contemporary material posted on blackboard learn.

Assessment and Grading

Assignment 1: Critical Reflection – 15%

Write an essay of 1500 words that critically reflects on your own attitudes to nature. Why do you care about the environment? Discuss the ecophilosophies that most inform your attitudes and proenvironmental actions and practices. Draw from the ecophilosophical literature to inform your reflections.

Assignment 2: Ecophilosophy Research Essay – 25%

Write an essay of 2000-2500 words which answers one of the following essay questions:

A. Do attitudes to nature matter? Draw on examples to illustrate your argument.

B. What is meant by the social construction of nature? Discuss the relevance of this concept by drawing from one or more contemporary environmental issues.

C. Provide an in-depth critical assessment of the arguments of one or two ecophilosophical arguments that most interest you.

D. Are alternative ecophilosophies likely to become influential in mainstream culture? Discuss the possibilities, and the difficulties, of empowering alternative ideas in your answer.

Assignment 3: Group Work Presentation – 20%

Environmental issues can be interpreted through a range of different ecophilosophical lenses. In this assignment you will work with other class members to develop a group presentation that demonstrates your understanding and ability to communicate ecophilosophies by analysing a contemporary environmental issue. You are welcome to choose any issue that interests your group (some suggestions are below). You are encouraged to be creative in your presentation and are welcome to use unconventional presentation techniques such as debates, role plays, audience interaction, skits etc. Your group presentation should be a minimum of 15 min and not exceed 20 minutes (depending on number of group members). Your grade will be influenced by an overall group mark weighted by peer assessment of your contribution.

Suggested topics include: fires, flooding, logging, genetically modified organisms, large dams, whaling, shark nets, climate change, factory farming, veganism, hunting,

indigenous rights and environmentalism, nuclear energy, perceptions of environmental crisis, mining, media reporting of environmental issues

Assignment 4: Field Reports – 10%

Critical reflection and evaluations during field trips and guest lectures. 200 words per outing and guest lecture. To be written in reflective/journaling style that details the presented viewpoint in comparison with those covered in class and your own.

Final Examination – 30%

Resources/Support/How to Succeed in This Course:

Most sessions will involve a lecture accompanied by tutorial-style activities. Outside of class students are expected to complete assigned readings and undertake research on topics to complete the assessment requirements. The sessions require active and informed student input.

There is the opportunity for students to meet professors face-to-face either ahead of or following class times; students can also make contact for longer meeting times via email or submit questions via email.

The way to succeed in this course is to keep reading along the timeline of required readings. Being prepared for each scheduled class will mean students reap more from lectures, modules, and interactive class discussions. Time management is crucial to such success, as is an open and enquiring mind.

There is also ample material on the BU Blackboard Learn site for students to expand their contextual knowledge and the BU Sydney library has books and visual material for research.

When writing or presenting, it is crucial that students are guided by the Grading Criteria Sheets and Guidelines provided as a means to successful navigation of requirements.

Professors are notified of students with documented disabilities or special needs ahead of first classes and offer assistance to these students in line with BU policy.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Week	Lecture/ Date	Topic/ <i>Hub Outcome</i>	Required Readings/Assignments
1	1	<p>Introduction: The social construction of nature and environment</p> <p><i>Ethical Reasoning</i> <i>Learning Outcome 2</i></p> <p><i>Social Inquiry II</i> <i>Learning Outcome 2</i></p>	<p>Bird, E. 1987. The social construction of nature: theoretical approaches to the history of environmental problems. <i>Environmental Review</i> 11:255-264.</p> <p>Elliot, R. (1990) Metaethics and environmental ethics. <i>Metaphilosophy</i> 16, 103-117.</p> <p>Harrison, C. & J. Burgess 1994. Social constructions of nature: a case study of conflicts over the development of Rainham Marshes. <i>Transactions: Institute of British Geographers NS</i> 19:291-310.</p> <p>Kidner, D.W. (2000) Fabricating Nature: A critique of the social construction of Nature, <i>Environmental Ethics</i> 22(4).</p>
	2	<p>Speciesism, Being non-human</p> <p><i>Ethical Reasoning</i> <i>Learning Outcome 1</i></p>	<p>Callicott, J.B. (1984) Non-anthropocentric value theory and environmental ethics. <i>American Philosophical Quarterly</i>. 21, 299-308.</p> <p>Rolston, H., 111. (1981) Values in nature. <i>Environmental Ethics</i> 3, 113-128.</p> <p>Horsthemke, K. (2019) Animal rights and environmental ethics in Africa: From anthropocentrism to non-speciesism? <i>African Environmental Ethics</i>. 239-253.</p> <p>Almiron, N. and M. Tafalla. (2019). Rethinking the ethical challenge in the climate deadlock: anthropocentrism, ideological denial and animal liberation. <i>Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics</i> 32.2. 255-267.</p> <p>Bielefeldt, Heiner. 2021. Moving Beyond Anthropocentrism? Human Rights and the Charge of Speciesism. <i>Human Rights Quarterly</i> 43.3: 515-537.</p>
2	3	<p>Indigenous Natures</p> <p>Guest speaker: Chels Marshall</p> <p><i>Ethical Reasoning</i> <i>Learning Outcome 2</i></p> <p><i>Social Inquiry II</i> <i>Learning Outcome 2</i></p>	<p>Assignment 1 Due – Critical Reflection</p> <p>Marshall, C. A. (2020). The Role of Indigenous Paradigms and Traditional Knowledge Systems in Modern Humanity’s Sustainability Quest–Future Foundations from Past Knowledge’s. In <i>Designing Sustainable Cities</i> (pp. 17-28). Springer, Cham.</p> <p>Tuck, E., and McKenzie, M (2014) <i>Place in research: Theory, methodology, and methods</i>. Routledge.</p> <p>Rowe, A. C., and Tuck, E. (2017) <i>Settler colonialism and</i></p>

			<p>cultural studies: Ongoing settlement, cultural production, and resistance. <i>Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies</i>, 17(1), 3-13.</p> <p>Curnow, J., & Helferty, A. (2018) Contradictions of solidarity: Whiteness, settler coloniality, and the mainstream environmental movement. <i>Environment and Society</i>, 9:145-163.</p> <p>Chisholm Hatfield, S., et al. (2018) Indian time: time, seasonality, and culture in Traditional Ecological Knowledge of climate change. <i>Ecological Processes</i> 7.1:1-11.</p> <p>Proulx, M., Ross, L., Macdonald, C., Fitzsimmons, S., & Smit, M. (2021) Indigenous traditional ecological knowledge and ocean observing: A review of successful partnerships. <i>Frontiers in Marine Science</i>.</p>
	4	<p>Environmental Justice</p> <p><i>Ethical Reasoning Learning Outcome 1</i></p> <p><i>Social Inquiry II Learning Outcome 2</i></p>	<p>Paden, R. (1990) Moral metaphysics, moral revolutions and environmental ethics. <i>Agriculture and Human Values</i> Summer-Fall 1990 pp.70-80.</p> <p>McGregor, A. 1998. Ruralness, development and democracy: media, myths and meaning at Lake Cowal, New South Wales. <i>Australian Geographer</i> 29:191-203.</p>
3	5	<p>Western natures: a historical perspective</p> <p><i>Social Inquiry II Learning Outcome 2</i></p>	<p>White, L. 1967. The historical roots of our ecological crisis. <i>Science</i> 155:1203-1207.</p> <p>Hutton, D. & L. Connors. (1999) A history of the Australian environmental movement. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.</p> <p>McPhee, J. (1987) The control of nature. Pimlico Press, London.</p>
	6	<p>Anthropocentric environmentalism</p> <p><i>Ethical Reasoning Learning Outcome 2</i></p>	<p>Hayward, T., (1997) Anthropocentrism: a misunderstood problem, <i>Environmental values</i> 6, pp. 49-63.</p> <p>Regan, T. (1976) What sort of beings can have rights? <i>Southern Journal of Philosophy</i> 14, 485-498.</p> <p>Routley, V. (1975) Critical notice of Passmore's 'Man's responsibility for nature'. <i>Australasian Journal of Philosophy</i> 53, pp171-185.</p>
4	7	<p>Intrinsic values and animal rights</p> <p><i>Ethical Reasoning</i></p>	<p>Singer, P. (1975) <i>Animal liberation: A new ethics for our treatment of animals</i>. Routledge, New York.</p>

	<i>Learning Outcome 2</i>	<p>Fox, M. (1978) Animal liberation: A critique. <i>Ethics</i> January 1978, pp. 107-121.</p> <p>Singer, P. (ed.) (1985) <i>Defense of animals</i>. Routledge New York.</p> <p>Jamieson, D., (1998) Animal Liberation is an environmental ethic, <i>Environmental Values</i> 7 (1).</p> <p>King, R.J. (1991) Environmental ethics and the case for hunting. <i>Environmental Ethics</i> 3 (1) 59-85.</p> <p>Taylor, P. W. (1981) The ethics of respect for nature. <i>Environmental Ethics</i> 3, 197-218.</p> <p>Thomson, J. (1987) A refutation of environmental ethics. <i>Environmental Ethics</i> 12, 147-160.</p> <p>Warren, M. A. (1983) The rights of the nonhuman world, in Elliot, R., & Gare, A. (eds) (1983) <i>Environmental philosophy: A collection of readings</i>. University of Queensland Press St. Lucia. pp109-133.</p> <p>Worster, D. (1980) The intrinsic value of nature. <i>Environmental Review</i> 4, 44-57.</p> <p>Regan, T. (1982) <i>All that dwell therein: Essays on animal rights and environmental ethics</i>. University of California Press, Berkeley.</p> <p>Regan, T., & Singer, P. (eds). (1976) <i>Animal rights and human obligations</i>. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey.</p>
8	<p>Field Visit</p> <p><i>Ethical Reasoning Learning Outcome 2</i></p> <p><i>Social Inquiry II Learning Outcome 2</i></p>	<p>Taronga Zoo, Sydney</p> <p>Complete field journal and question prompts</p> <p>Norton, B. G., Hutchins, M., Maple, T., & Stevens, E. (eds.) (1996) <i>Ethics on the ark: zoos, animal welfare, and wildlife conservation</i>. Smithsonian Institution.</p> <p>Kagan, R., Allard, S., & Carter, S. (2018) What is the future for zoos and aquariums? <i>Journal of applied animal welfare science</i>, 21, 59-70.</p>
9	<p>Deep Ecology</p> <p>Guest speaker: John Seed</p> <p><i>Ethical Reasoning</i></p>	<p>Fox, W. (1983) Deep ecology: A new philosophy for our time? <i>Ecologist</i> 14, 194-200.</p> <p>Naess, A. (1980) The shallow and the deep, long-range ecology movement. <i>Inquiry</i> 16, 95-100.</p>

		<i>Learning Outcome 1</i>	<p>Sylvan, R. (1985) A critique of deep ecology. <i>Radical Philosophy</i>, 40-41.</p> <p>Cronon W. (ed.) (1996) <i>Uncommon ground: rethinking the human place in nature</i>. W. W. Norton and Company, New York</p> <p>Devall, B., & Sessions, G. (1985) <i>Deep ecology: Living as if nature mattered</i>. Peregrine Smith Books, Salt Lake City.</p>
5	10	<p>Eco-feminism</p> <p><i>Ethical Reasoning Learning Outcome 2</i></p>	<p>Warren, K. (1990) The power and promise of ecological feminism. <i>Environmental Ethics</i> 12, 125-147.</p> <p>Zimmerman, M. (1991) Feminism, deep ecology and environmental ethics. <i>Environmental Ethics</i> 9, 21-44.</p> <p>Merchant, C. (1980) <i>The death of nature: Women, ecology, and the scientific revolution</i>. Harper & Row, New York.</p> <p>Plumwood, V. (1993) <i>Feminism and the mastery of nature</i>. London and New York. Routledge.</p>
	11	<p>Attitudes and agency: Do attitudes matter?</p> <p><i>Social Inquiry II Learning Outcome 2</i></p>	<p>Assignment 2 Due – Ecophilosophy Research Essay</p> <p>Crook, S. & J. Pakulski 1995. Shades of green: public opinion on environmental issues in Australia. <i>Australian Journal of Political Science</i> 30:39-55.</p> <p>Vermeir, I., & Verbeke, W. (2006) Sustainable food consumption: Exploring the consumer “attitude–behavioral intention” gap. <i>Journal of Agricultural and Environmental ethics</i>, 19(2), 169-194.</p> <p>Ahteensuu, M. (2012) Assumptions of the deficit model type of thinking: Ignorance, attitudes, and science communication in the debate on genetic engineering in agriculture. <i>Journal of agricultural and environmental ethics</i>, 25(3), 295-313.</p>
6	12	<p>Environmental Movements</p> <p>Guest speaker: Michelle Sheather</p> <p><i>Social Inquiry II Learning Outcome 2</i></p>	<p>Dobson, A. (1995) <i>Green political thought</i> (2nd Ed.). Routledge, London</p> <p>Goodin, R. E. (1992) <i>Green political theory</i>. Polity Press, Cambridge.</p> <p>Beder, S. (1997) <i>Global spin: the corporate assault on environmentalism</i>. Scribe Publications, Melbourne.</p> <p>Greer, J. & K. Bruno (1996) <i>Greenwash: the reality behind corporate environmentalism</i>. Third World Network & The</p>

			Apex Press, Malaysia.
	13	Presentations	Assignment 3 Due – Group Work Presentation
7	14	Presentations/ Future Nature Final Comments <i>Ethical Reasoning Learning Outcome 1</i> <i>Ethical Reasoning Learning Outcome 2</i>	Assignment 4 Due – Field and Guest Lecture Reports Light, A. (2012) Finding a Future for Environmental Ethics. In <i>Les ateliers de l'éthique/The Ethics Forum</i> 7(3) pp. 71-80. Centre de recherche en éthique de l'Université de Montréal.
8		Final Exam	2-hour written exam 5 short answer essay prompts will be provided with the choice to answer 2 short answer essay prompts A further 5 long answer essay prompts will be provided with the choice to answer 1 long answer essay prompt

This reading list will be posted on blackboard learn and the BU Library will cover and provide the required texts and online resources for this course

Community of Learning: Class and University Policies

1. Course members' responsibility for ensuring a positive learning environment (e.g. participation/discussion guidelines).

It is the responsibility of both the professor and all student members of the class to ensure a positive learning environment.

2. Attendance & Absences

Attendance at all designated sessions including those with Guest Speakers and field trips is expected. There are no optional absences from class sessions.

Any student missing class without verifiable extraordinary reasons will receive a grade penalty according to protocols set down for BU Sydney by the Program Academic Director.

3. Assignment Completion and Late Work

Completion of all reading/viewing/writing tasks is expected. All written work must be submitted in hard copy through the BU Sydney Library by the time set down in the course outline.

Our policy on late submission of work is that, unless there is a verifiable extraordinary reason, there is a grade deduction, imposed amounts to 5% of the assignment grade per day which will be processed by the Academic Director.

All written work must be submitted in hard copy with signed cover sheet through the BU Sydney Library by the time set down in the course outline.

All students are required to sit examinations (without exception) but special times and spaces are made available to those students with documented disabilities, and special needs such as Religious Observance, and any other verifiable extraordinary reasons.

BU Sydney Policy adheres to the general BU campus policy of Religious Observance, which would fall under “verifiable extraordinary reasons” as mentioned in various places above.

4) Academic Conduct Statement:

All students attending courses under the auspices of BU Sydney must have read BU’s policy on academic honesty and understand the consequences of cheating or plagiarism. Within this course, all submitted written work is expected to be that of the individual and only class exercises are collaborative efforts, as indicated. Please see BU’s Academic Conduct Statement:

<https://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/academic-conduct-code/>

Students on a BU Program are advised that the penalty for cheating on examinations or for plagiarism may be "...expulsion from the program or the University or such other penalty as may be recommended by the Committee on Student Academic Conduct, subject to approval by the Dean".

Grading

A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D	60-69
F	below 60