PHILOSOPHY AND THE ENVIRONMENT
2020-21
PHIL 10064 (MA Honours)

Course Organiser
Pauline Phemister
Dugald Stewart Building, room 6.04
Tel: 0131 651 3747
Email: p.phemister@ed.ac.uk

Course Secretary
Anne-Marie Cowe
PPLS Undergraduate Teaching Office
Dugald Stewart Building, room G.06
Tel: 0131 650 3961
Email: Philinfo@ed.ac.uk

Times and Locations
Semester 2
Information about class timing and format will be on the LEARN page for the course.

Assessment
Mid-term essay (30%) to be submitted by 12 noon on Thursday 25th February 2021. Word limit: 1,500 words

Final essay (65%) to be submitted by 12 noon on Thursday 15th April 2021. Word limit: 3,000 words

Participation (5%) will be assessed by seminar attendance and Learn Discussion Board participation

Course Outline
In this course, we examine the deep ecological philosophy of Arne Naess that takes its inspiration from the monist philosophy of Benedict de Spinoza and will contrast with the ecophilosophy of Phemister inspired by the pluralist philosophy of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz. We will explore issues of interconnectedness of living and nonliving entities, the relational identities of living beings, Naess’s notions of Self-realisation and Wide-identification, as well as questions concerning intrinsic, instrumental, relational, moral, aesthetic and spiritual values. We will also consider moral and aesthetic issues relating to bio- and onto-egalitarianism, biodiversity and variety, progress and the ideal of perfection.
Lecture/Seminar Content: Provisional Outline

Week 1
Shallow and Deep Ecology Movements, Ecophilosophy and Ecosophy
Core Reading
Naess, *Ecology, Community and Lifestyle*, pp. 21-47
Video
Arne Naess and the Deep Ecology Movement (short version)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GJz2zVW9WHM

Week 2
Deep Ecosophies: Naess/Spinoza, Phemister/Leibniz
Core Reading
Naess, ‘Spinoza and Ecology’, *Philosophia*, 7:1, 45-54
Naess, ‘Spinoza and the Deep Ecology Movement’. In *Selected Works*, pp. 2662-2687

Week 3
Naess: Gestalt Ontology, Qualities and Relations
Core Reading
Naess, ‘The World of Concrete Contents’. In *Selected Works*, pp. 2714-2726
Naess, ‘Gestalt Ontology and Gestalt Thinking’. In *Selected Works*, pp. 2727-2733

Week 4
Naess: Values and Norms
Core Reading
Naess, *Ecology, Community and Lifestyle*, pp. 68-86
Naess, ‘Notes on the Methodology of Normative Systems’. In *Selected Works*, pp. 2751-2766
Naess, ‘The Place of Joy in a World of Fact’. In *Selected Works*, pp. 2371-2383

Week 5
Naess: Technology, Progress and Lifestyle

Core Reading
Naess, Ecology, Community and Lifestyle, pp. 87-103
Naess, ‘Deep Ecology and Lifestyle’. In Selected Works, pp. 2366-2370
Naess, ‘An Example of a Place: Tvergastein’. In Selected Works, pp. 2604-2625

Video
Jonathan Safran Foer, ‘We are the Weather – What will it take for things to Change?’
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s4ao27K8KiU

Week 6
Naess: Self-Realisation and Wide Identification

Core Reading
Naess, Ecology, Community and Lifestyle, pp. 84-86, 163-196

Week 7
Phemister: Natural World, Activity and Beauty

Core Reading
Phemister, Leibniz and the Environment, chapter 4

Video

Podcast
‘Were my atoms once your atoms?’, CrowdScience, BBC World Service https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/w3cszv5r

Week 8
Phemister: Relational Values

Core Reading
Phemister, Leibniz and the Environment, chapter 5
Week 9
Phemister: Space and Place

Core Reading
Phemister, *Leibniz and the Environment*, chapter 6

Week 10
Phemister: Communication and Empathy

Core Reading
Phemister, *Leibniz and the Environment*, chapter 7

Week 11
Phemister: Temporality

Core Reading
Phemister, *Leibniz and the Environment*, chapter 8

Video
Alastair McIntosh (2012). ‘The Importance of Hope’, DO Lectures https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Ue-lAtEygo

Readings

*Essential Set Texts*

You will also at points be required to read papers from:
These papers and other essential readings are listed as ‘core readings’ in the Lecture schedule.

*(Optional) Primary texts* of Spinoza and Leibniz are not required reading for this course, but if you do wish to follow up references in the literature, you can access many of their writings here:


Further recommended (optional) secondary (and some primary) texts


