Course aims and objectives
In this course we will focus on some of the central theoretical and practical ethical questions arising out of the distinctive relation human beings have to the natural environment. In particular, we will focus on the ethical implications of climate change. In the first part of the course, we will consider several theoretical topics in ethical theory of direct relevance to the ethics of climate change. In the second part of the course, we will explore several practical topics raised by the issue of climate change. James Garvey’s *The Ethics of Climate Change* (2008) is useful background reading for the course.

Intended learning outcomes
By taking this course, students will increase their understanding of some foundational issues in ethical theory. They will also gain familiarity with some of the specific ethical concepts crucial for thinking clearly about ethical aspects of our relationship to the natural environment. Students will improve their ability to think critically about and defend philosophical positions, and will improve their critical reading and discussion skills. Students will also develop as participants in the wider social discussion of important political and ethical issues.

Teaching
Teaching on this course takes the form of a structured seminar from 9:00 – 10:50am every Monday in LG.06, David Hume Tower. For each week, there are materials that you should have engaged with *in advance of the seminar* (with the exception of the first seminar of term, in which there will be a screening of Al Gore’s film, *An Inconvenient Sequel: Truth to Power*). These are always things to read and sometimes also videos or multimedia to have a look at. The point of the seminars is not for me to tell you what is said in these materials but for us to discuss questions, both interpretative and philosophical, arising from your prior engagement with this material. The required materials are listed below, under each week, as a dark bullet point. I have also listed supplementary readings that can deepen or broaden your education on a particular topic; these might also be relevant for writing an essay on the topic. These are listed below, under each week, as a light bullet point.

Assessment and feedback
In this course, there will hopefully be many opportunities to learn different kinds things and in diverse ways. I’ll endeavour to give you rolling feedback on how you are doing with respect to the learning outcomes.
To this end, the course will be assessed by 10% class participation, 30% in class assignments, and 60% take-home test.

Class participation will be assessed by your attendance at and participation in the weekly seminar, according to the participation feedback form (posted on Learn), which I will fill out each week. To calculate your final participation mark, the lowest week’s mark will be dropped. This is to account for the possibility of absence for whatever reason. If you are going to miss more than one week’s seminar/tutorial, please speak to me in advance, as the course might not be for you.

For both undergraduates and MSc students, the in-class assignments will be exercises intended to improve your writing/discussion skills and prepare you for the final exam. The first one, will be completed in week 7 of the course, the second one in week 9 of the course (more details will be posted on Learn.) The final will cover concepts from the entire course and involve an essay where you can draw on your previous work on the in-class assignments. Released Monday 8th April 2019, due Thursday 11th April 2019 by 12pm (mid-day) via Learn/TurnItIn. Please consult the PPLS Undergraduate Student Handbook for further information about general regulations and advice around coursework and assessments.

Syllabus
Required material is marked by a solid bullet point, like this: •. Additional material is marked by an outlined bullet point, like this: o.

Week 1: Introduction to Environmental Ethics and Climate Change (14th January)
In this seminar we will watch Al Gore’s film, An Inconvenient Sequel: Truth to Power. There will then be a discussion of the major themes of this film. There is also reading for this seminar, as follows:

Week 2: What is value, and how should it be distributed? Prisoners’ Dilemmas, and the Tragedy of the Commons, Types of Responsibility (21st January)
• Matthew Chrisman (2016) ‘Tragedy of the Commons’ University of Edinburgh Teaching Video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=15PVi7Y569g
• James Garvey (2008) The Ethics of Climate Change, ch. 3.

Week 3: What are rights? Where do they come from? Who has them? (28th January)
• Mary Robinson ‘Why Climate Change is a Threat to Human Rights’ TED Talk: https://www.ted.com/talks/mary_robinson_why_climate_change_is_a_threat_to_human_rights

Week 4: Cost-Benefit Analysis, Uncertainty vs. Risk, Expected Value Theory,
Externalities, Discount Rates (4th February)
• John Broome ‘Goodness’ (ch. 6) and ‘Uncertainty’ (ch. 7) from his (2012) Climate Matters (Norton).
  o Broome (2012) ‘The Future vs. the Present’ (ch. 8) also recommended

Week 5: Is there a viable and distinctive Land Ethic? (11th February)
  o Clare Palmer (2011) “Does nature matter? The place of the nonhuman in the ethics of climate change,” in Dennis Arnold, ed. The Ethics of Global Climate Change (Cambridge University Press)

Flexible learning week, no teaching 18-22nd February

Week 6: Moral Status of Distant People and Animals, Parfit’s “Non-identity Problem” and “The Repugnant Conclusion” (25th February)
• Derek Parfit, (1984) Reasons and Persons, (Oxford University Press), chs. 16-17

Week 7: What is the ethically fair distribution of rights to pollute? (4th March)
• Singer, ‘One Atmosphere’ from his One World (Yale University Press, 2004)
• Carbon Map Infographic: http://www.carbonmap.org/?lang=eng
• Estimate your carbon footprint:

Week 8: Who is more deserving distant needy or future generations? (11th March)
• Population Clock: http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/
• Hans Rosling, ‘Global population growth, box by box TED Talk:
  http://www.ted.com/talks/hans_rosling_on_global_population_growth

Week 9: Are destructive and/or violent protests against climate change morally
permissible, required? (18th March)
  o Matthew Humphrey, Democratic Legitimacy, Public Justification and Environmental Direct Action’ Political Studies 54, 2006.

Week 10: Should we be vegetarians? (25th March)
• Food Carbon Footprint Calculator: http://www.foodcarbon.co.uk/login_2.php

Week 11: Catch-up and Concluding Discussion (1st April)