

Syllabus: Aldo Leopold's Land Ethic – Appraisals

(Advanced Topics in Ethics)

PHI 531.001

MWF 11:00 – 11:50am
Enoch Grehan Journalism Bldg, Rm.115

Fall 2016

Contact Information	Required Texts and Documents
<p>Bob Sandmeyer, Ph.D. ph. (859) 257-7749 bob.sandmeyer@uky.edu</p> <p>Canvas: http://uk.instructure.com/</p> <p>Office: 1429 Patterson Office Tower</p> <p>Office Hours: Mon/Wed: 10:00am – 10:50pm Mon/Wed: 1:00pm – 1:50pm <i>I'm also available by appointment, if these times are inconvenient to you. Contact me by email to arrange a time convenient to us both.</i></p>	<p>1. Books</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Leopold, Aldo. <i>A Sand County Almanac & Other Writings on Ecology and Conservation</i>. Library of America, 2013. [ISBN: 9781598532067]➤ <i>Companion to A Sand County Almanac: Interpretive and Critical Essays</i>, ed. by J.B. Callicott et. al. University of Wisconsin Press, 1987. [ISBN: 9780299112349]➤ Leopold, Estella B. <i>Stories from the Leopold Shack: Sand County Revisited</i>. Oxford University Press, 2016. [ISBN: 9780190463229] <p>2. Articles placed in the Canvas Library (Files: Library)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ See the "Daily Schedule" for the day-by-day schedule of readings. (Pages: Daily Schedule) <p>3. Handouts in the Canvas (Files: Handouts)</p>

Course Description

Aldo Leopold was not a philosopher. He was a trained forester and during his career founded the science of wildlife management. For this reason it is somewhat odd to devote an advanced ethics class to his work. While not a philosopher, though, his influence in the field of environmental ethics cannot be overestimated. So our aim in this class is to comprehend the philosophical conception of his land ethic, as this conception is central to much done in environmental ethics after his death. During the first half of so of the semester we will read extensively from [Leopold's full body of writing](#). In addition to reading his most influential and last published work, *A Sand County Almanac*, and *Sketches Here and There*, we will read a substantial selection of earlier writings. These earlier writings contextualize his last published work as well as illustrate a fascinating development of views underlying his ecological ethic. Leopold is often thought simply as a wilderness preservation advocate and forester. Our readings will show that while his enthusiasm for wilderness is important to his worldview, other concerns dominate his writings as well. Consequently, it is no accident that there exists today the [Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute](#) as well as a [Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture](#). Our focus in this class is the whole cloth of Leopold's thinking.

Where in the first unit we center our attention on primary source materials, in the second we take up a representative selection of secondary sources assessing and critiquing the Leopoldian ethic. Specifically, we examine the conceptual foundations of the land ethic, the idea of an evolutionary ethics as such, the sense of Leopold's pragmatism as it defines his ethical worldview, ecological critiques of his biotic pyramidal conception of land, feminist appraisals of his ethics, the importance and place of animals in an ecological ethic,

as well as assessments from indigenous thinkers, his importance for sustainable agriculture, and the future of a land ethic as such.

The schedule of readings and homework can be found in Canvas (**Pages: Daily Schedule**). We will read both from books (see above for ordering information) and articles in PDF format. All PDF documents are available via the class **CANVAS** site (**Files: Library**). Handouts, such as this syllabus, are also all posted in Canvas (**Files: Handouts**).

The graded elements in this class are four. You will take two exams: (1) a midterm 5-7 page thesis paper, (2) a final 10-15 page thesis paper, and (3) 11 reflection papers. (Since you will be allowed to drop the lowest of these grades, you are required to write 10 reflections papers in all.) There are no exams in this course. Rather, this course is a writing course. Good writing is rewriting. So the midterm and final papers will develop from your reflection papers. The central skill you will work to develop this semester is your ability to write coherently, precisely, and elegantly. Additionally, (4) given that the course succeeds to the degree that students prepare for each class and participate on a regular basis, active class participation comprises the fourth graded element. Consistent attendance is a necessary condition to passing the class. A breakdown and explanation of these four graded elements is indicated below.

Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of this class, students will be able to:

- comprehend Leopold's land ethic both as it stands alone and in the context of his body of writing
- explain the significance and coherence of an ecological ethic
- discriminate and assess criticisms of the land ethic from a variety of points of view
- articulate and evaluate alternative ethical stances from traditionally underrepresented groups
- understand and evaluate one's own concrete interaction to their surrounding world

Grading

Students will be provided with a cumulative Midterm Evaluation of course performance (soon after midterm exam) based on criteria laid out below.

Extended Papers

- Midterm thesis paper **20 %** (Date: October 2nd)
 - Undergraduates: 5-7 pages
 - Graduate Students: 7-10 pages
 - further details of this assignment will be provided at the conclusion of the first unit
- Final thesis paper **30 %** (Date: Wed, 12/14, at 12:30pm)
 - Undergraduates: 10-15 pages
 - Graduate Students: 15-20 pages
 - further details of this assignment will be provided at the conclusion of the second unit

Grading Scale

A = 100% - 90%
B = 89% - 80%
C = 79% - 70%
D = 69% - 60%
F = ≤59%

Short Reflection Papers **40 %** (see Daily Schedule)

- 11 reflection papers will be assigned over the course of the semester. The lowest paper grade will be dropped.

PHI 531 Syllabus – Fall 2016

- Papers will be submitted in person at the beginning of the class assigned. See the Daily Schedule for details of submission dates.
- Minimum size: one side of a single page, double spaced, 12 pt Times New Roman. Maximum size: two sides of a single page, single spaced, 12 pt Times New Roman. No submission longer than one single sheet of paper will be accepted. (If printing is a problem, let me know asap.)
- Each paper will address a single philosophical theme or problem in the relevant reading. The aim of these assignments is develop writing skills. Consequently, the aim of each paper is present the theme or problem precisely, coherently, and elegantly.
- Papers will be scored on a 10 point scale, paralleling the grading scale indicated herein. Each paper will be graded using a rubric of five criteria: (i) precision of presentation, (ii) coherence of argument, (iii) elegance of writing, (iv) philosophical merit, and (v) sufficiency of explanation.
- Choice of theme or problem is determined by the student. Consultation with the professor is encouraged.

Active Participation

10 % (ca. 5% per half semester)

- Student participation is essential to the success of the class. Students should come prepared to answer basic questions about the scheduled reading each class.
- You'll be assessed twice on class participation, once at midterm and once at the end of the semester. Your participation grade will be calculated on the average of these two assessments.
- Class participation is determined by:
 - clear and apparent preparation for each class by each student
 - the quality of classroom discussion to questions poses by the teacher
 - fruitful and respectful interaction with peers, visitors, and the professor during the entire semester.
 - Mere physical presence is not considered satisfactory participation. I'll be tracking in-class participation. If you have any questions about your participation at any point during the semester, don't hesitate to ask. .
- Expectations within the classroom:
 - Students are encouraged and, in point of fact, required to critique the views expressed in the readings, by the professor, or by their peers in class or online. This critique requires, however, respectful engagement. Uncivil and disrespectful discourse or behavior contradicts the very requirement of critique and, as such, will not be tolerated. If after a first warning, any student continues such behavior, expulsion from the class may result.
 - Electronic devices, e.g., cellphones, computers, tablets, are allowed to be used in class. However, these devices may be used for only class related activities. If after a first warning any student continues to use an electronic device for non-classroom activities, the student may be banned from using any such devices in the class.

Attendance

- Regular attendance is required and a necessary condition to succeed in this class.
 - The professor will take roll regularly in class.

- Students are responsible for keeping track of their own attendance in class. The professor will provide attendance reports at midpoint and near the end of term during the semester, but lack of knowledge either of these attendance rules or of the student's own attendance status is no excuse.
- *Excused absences will not count against the student unless excessive (see below).*
 - Students need to notify the professor of absences prior to class when possible, or within one week after the absences. S.R. 5.2.4.2 defines the following as acceptable reasons for excused absences: (a) serious illness, (b) illness or death of family member, (c) University-related trips, (d) major religious holidays, and (e) other circumstances found to fit “reasonable cause for nonattendance” by the professor.
 - Either a [Tier 2 or a Tier 3 document](#) provided to the student by [University Health Service](#) is appropriate verification for an excused absence for illness.
 - Students anticipating an absence for a major religious holiday are responsible for notifying the instructor in writing of anticipated absences due to their observance of such holidays no later than one week *before* the absence. Information regarding dates of major religious holidays may be obtained through the religious liaison, Mr. Jake Karnes (859-257-2754).
- *If any student misses 4 or more classes unexcused (i.e., more than one week of classes unexcused), then he/she will receive a 50% deduction and automatically fail the class.*
 - Tardiness, especially if repeated, may result in a 5% deduction of the total grade.
- Students are expected to withdraw from the class if more than 20% of the classes scheduled for the semester are missed (i.e., with excuse) per university policy SR 5.2.4.2.

Academic Integrity

If the professor determines that a student or group of students has cheated on any exam or has plagiarized any part of any assignment, at a minimum he/she/they will receive a grade of zero for the assignment without the possibility of redoing the assignment. *Typically, though, evidence of cheating results in course failure.* If the case is especially egregious, the issue will be directed to the appropriate University Dean and the student will receive a grade of XE/XF for the course.

Cheating not only robs other students of a fair grade, it also fundamentally threatens the mission of this institution of higher education. Unfortunately, cheating and plagiarism – though not frequent – does exist here at UK. By taking this class, you accept the injunction not to cheat in any way and comport yourself with integrity and honor throughout the semester. You also agree to have all or some of your assignments uploaded and checked by anti-plagiarism or other anti-cheating tools.

Each student is advised to become familiar with the various forms of academic dishonesty as explained in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Complete information can be found at the following website: <http://www.uky.edu/Ombud>. A plea of ignorance is not acceptable as a defense against the charge of academic dishonesty. It is important that you review this information as all ideas borrowed from others need to be properly credited.

PHI 531 Syllabus – Fall 2016

Part II of Student Rights and Responsibilities (available online <http://www.uky.edu/StudentAffairs/Code/part2.html>) states that all academic work, written or otherwise, submitted by students to their instructors or other academic supervisors, is expected to be the result of their own thought, research, or self-expression. In cases where students feel unsure about the question of plagiarism involving their own work, they are obliged to consult their instructors on the matter before submission.

When students submit work purporting to be their own, but which in any way borrows ideas, organization, wording or anything else from another source without appropriate acknowledgement of the fact, the students are guilty of plagiarism. Plagiarism includes reproducing someone else's work, whether it be a published article, chapter of a book, a paper from a friend or some file, or something similar to this. Plagiarism also includes the practice of employing or allowing another person to alter or revise the work which a student submits as his/her own, whoever that other person may be.

Students may discuss assignments among themselves or with an instructor or tutor, but when the actual work is done, it must be done by the student, and the student alone. When a student's assignment involves research in outside sources of information, the student must carefully acknowledge exactly what, where and how he/she employed them. If the words of someone else are used, the student must put quotation marks around the passage in question and add an appropriate indication of its origin. Making simple changes while leaving the organization, content and phraseology intact is a form of plagiarism. However, nothing in these Rules shall apply to those ideas which are so generally and freely circulated as to be a part of the public domain (Section 6.3.1).

Accommodations

If you have a documented disability which requires academic accommodations, please contact the professor as soon as possible. In order to receive accommodations in this course, you must provide the professor with a Letter of Accommodation from the Disability Resource Center. If you have not already done so, please register with the Disability Resource Center (Suite 407 of the Multidisciplinary Science Building, 725 Rose Street, 859-257-2754, dtbeac1@uky.edu) for coordination of campus disability services available to students with disabilities.

Planned Reading Schedule

(This is no substitute for the **Daily Schedule** available on Canvas. Use the **Daily Schedule**!)

<i>Day</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Class</i>	<u>due on day listed</u> <i>Reading/Homework</i>
			"Handout" = Canvas:Files:Handouts "Library" = Canvas:Files:Library
8/24	Wed	First Day: Syllabus; Who is Leopold? Why Leopold today?	
8/26	Fri	Images of the land	Leopold: * Leopold: "Thinking like a mountain," 114-117 * Leopold: "Song of the Gavilan," 131-135 * "Biotic view of the land," 438-446 * "Lakes in Relation to Terrestrial Life Patterns,"

PHI 531 Syllabus – Fall 2016

			447-453 * "The Round River," 458-462
8/29	Mon	<i>A Sand County Almanac</i>	Leopold: <i>Almanac</i> , 3-46 Handout: Reflection Paper Guidelines
8/31	Wed	<i>A Sand County Almanac</i>	Leopold: <i>Almanac</i> , 47-83 Reflection Paper 01 Due in Class
9/2	Fri	<i>A Sand County Almanac</i>	Companion: Flader, "Aldo Leopold's Sand Country," 40-62
9/5	Mon	<i>Labor Day</i>	
9/7	Wed	<i>Sketches Here and There</i>	Leopold: <i>Sketches</i> , 85-142 Reflection Paper 02 Due in Class
9/9	Fri	Other Writings: Wildlife in American Culture	Leopold: * "Wildlifers vs. Game Farmers," 198-204 * "Goose Music," 218-223 * "Game and Wild Life Conservation," 292-297 * "A History of Game Management," 298-316 * "The Role of Wildlife in a Liberal Education," 466-470 * "The Outlook for Farm Wildlife," 407-511 * "Wherefore Wildlife Ecology," 522-523
9/12	Mon	Foreign Travels: A Turning Point	Leopold: * "Naturschutz in Germany," 381-393 * "Conservationist in Mexico," 394-400
9/14	Wed	Conservation Aesthetics	Oelschlaeger - Ecological Restoration, Aldo Leopold, and Beauty Estella Leopold, <i>Stories</i> - 176-214 (<i>recommended</i>) Reflection Paper 03 Due in Class
9/16	Fri	Other Writings: Wilderness	Leopold (in book except otherwise indicated): * Handout: "The Popular Wilderness Fallacy: an Idea that is Fast Exploding" * "The Wilderness and Its Place in Forest Recreational Policy," 212-216 * "Wilderness as a Form of Land Use," 277-288 * "Why the Wilderness Society," 369-370 * "Wilderness," 371-374 * "Wilderness," 375 * "Wilderness and a Land Laboratory," 454-456 * "Scarcity Values in Conservation," 519-520
9/19	Mon	<i>The Upshot</i> (minus "The Land Ethic")	Leopold: <i>Upshot</i> , 143-170
9/21	Wed	Other Writings: Collaborative Conservation	Leopold: * "Some Fundamentals of Conservation in the Southwest," 224-236 * "Conservation Economics," 340-351 * "The Arboretum and the University," 353-354 * "Coon Valley," 362-368 Reflection Paper 04 Due in Class

PHI 531 Syllabus – Fall 2016

9/23	Fri	Other Writings: Conservation and Land Health	Leopold: * "Conservation Blueprints," 401-404 * "Engineering and Conservation," 405-410 * "Conservation: In Whole or In Parts," 496-506 * "The Land-Health Concept and Conservation," 512-518
9/26	Mon	"The Land Ethic"	Leopold, 171-189
9/28	Wed	Open - Discussion of Writing Exercise	Handout: Midterm Paper Guidelines
9/30	Fri	Open - Discussion of Writing Exercise	
10/2	Sun	5-7 page Midterm Paper Due (11:59pm)	
10/3	Mon	Conceptual Foundations	Library: Callicott - The conceptual foundations of the land ethic
10/5	Wed	Conceptual Foundations	Library: Millstein - Re-Examining the Darwinian Basis for Aldo Leopold's Land Ethic
10/7	Fri	Open Discussion	Reflection Paper 05 Due in Class
10/10	Mon	Evolutionary Ethics	Library: * Darwin - On the Development of Intellectual and Moral Faculties * Ruse - Evolutionary Ethics, p. 59-67
10/12	Wed	Evolutionary Ethics	Library: Ruse - Evolutionary Ethics, p. 67-85 (link above)
10/14	Fri	Open Discussion	Reflection Paper 06 Due in Class
10/17	Mon	Which Leopold?	Library: Meine - The Secret Leopold
10/19	Wed	No class: SPEP Conference	
10/21	Fri	No class: SPEP Conference	
10/24	Mon	Leopold as Pragmatist	Library: Norton - Leopold, Hadley, and Darwin
10/26	Wed	Leopold as Pragmatist	Library: Callicott et. al. - Was Aldo Leopold a Pragmatist?
10/28	Fri	Open Discussion	Reflection Paper 07 Due in Class
10/31	Mon	Leopold's Ecology	Library: Yu - The Land Ethic and Gleason's Individualistic Concept
11/2	Wed	Leopold's Ecology	Library: Roelofs - There is No Biotic Community
11/4	Fri	Open Discussion	Reflection Paper 08 Due in Class
11/7	Mon	Leopold's Ecology	Library: McCoy & Shrader-Frechette - Community Ecology, Scale, and the Instability of the Stability Concept
11/9	Wed	Leopold's Ecology	Library: Shrader-Frechette - Individualism, Holism, and Environmental Ethics
11/11	Fri	Open Discussion	Reflection Paper 09 Due in Class
11/14	Mon	Feminist Appraisals	Library: Davis - Thinking Like a Chicken: Farm Animals And The Feminine Connection
11/16	Wed	Feminist Appraisals	Library: Curtin - Toward An Ecological Ethic of Care
11/18	Fri	Feminist Appraisals	Library: Norlock - Building Receptivity: Leopold's Land Ethic and Critical Feminist Interpretation
11/21	Mon	Open Discussion	Reflection Paper 10 Due in Class
11/23	Wed	Thanksgiving Break	

PHI 531 Syllabus – Fall 2016

11/25	Fri	<i>Thanksgiving Break</i>	
11/28	Mon	Animals	Library: Nelson - Holists and Fascists and Paper Tigers...Oh My
11/30	Wed	Animals	Library: King - Environmental Ethics and the Case for Hunting
12/2	Fri	Open Discussion	Reflection Paper 11 Due in Class
12/5	Mon	Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK)	Library: White - How Similar are Indigenous North American and Leopoldian Land Ethics
12/7	Wed	Sustainable Agriculture, and beyond	Library: Meine - The Farmer as Conservationist Library: Meine - The Once and Future Land Ethic Handout: Final Paper Guidelines
12/9	Fri	Last Day: Discussion of Final 10-15 page Writing Exercise	
12/14	Wed	10-15 page Final Paper Due (12:30pm)	