

NRM F303X, Environmental Ethics and Actions

Course Syllabus, Spring Semester 2021

FXA 9:45-11:15 AM Tuesdays & Thursdays, Zoom [Link](#)

FXB 2:00-3:30 PM Tuesdays & Thursdays, Zoom [Link](#)

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COVID-19 Statement: Students should keep up-to-date on the university's policies, practices, and mandates related to COVID-19 by regularly checking this website: <https://sites.google.com/alaska.edu/coronavirus/uaf/uaf-students?authuser=0>. Further, students are expected to adhere to the university's policies, practices, and mandates and are subject to disciplinary actions if they do not comply.

Office Hours: To stem the spread of COVID-19, I am only available to meet virtually (Zoom, telephone, etc.). Please use my contact information to schedule time with me.

Textbooks:

DesJardins, Joseph R. 2013. Environmental Ethics: An introduction to environmental philosophy, 5th edition. Wadsworth, Boston, MA. 282 p.

Brown, Marvin T. 2003. The Ethical Process: An approach to disagreements and controversial issues, 3rd edition. Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, NJ. 88 p.

Additional readings will be posted on the course Blackboard site.

Top Hat: In order to maximize the quality of your online learning experience, I have decided to use Top Hat Pro (www.tophat.com) to improve engagement and learning. All students will be required to register for a Top Hat account by the beginning of the 2nd week of class (i.e., January 19). You will be able to submit answers to in-class questions using Apple or Android smartphones and tablets, laptops, or through text message.

Subscriptions to purchase: Top Hat Pro

For instructions on how to create a Top Hat account and enrol in our Top Hat Pro course, please refer to one of the following resources:

- 1) The invitation sent to your school email address OR
- 2) Consult [Top Hat's Getting Started Guide](#) OR
- 3) Get started with this [2 minute video walkthrough](#)

If you already have a Top Hat account, go to [URL] to be taken directly to our course. If you are new to Top Hat, follow the link in the email invitation you received or

- Go to <https://app.tophat.com/register/student>
- Click "Search by school" and input "University of Alaska Fairbanks"
- Search for our course with the following join code: **099205**

If a paid subscription is required, it will be listed at checkout when you enrol in our Top Hat Pro course.

Should you require assistance with Top Hat at any time please contact their Support Team directly by way of email (support@tophat.com), the in-app support button, or by calling 1-888-663-5491. Specific user information may be required by their technical support team when troubleshooting issues.

NRM 303 is an upper division class. While you will be expected to learn some facts and ideas, the emphasis will be on exploring, thinking, and reflection based on assigned readings. These will be developed through class discussions in which active student participation is expected.

Disabilities: If you have a physical or learning disability, please advise the instructor in writing of any necessary special consideration by the beginning of the 2nd week of class. We will do everything reasonable possible to accommodate you in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and university policy.

Email: I occasionally may need to contact you between class periods via email. If you prefer to use an email address other than your UA address, you will need to set up email forwarding.

Description: Exploration of the history of modern Western views of the relationship between people and nature, alternative foundations for an environmental ethic (utilitarianism, spiritual activity, rights-based and respect-based ethics) and practices of such ethics in business, profession and general lifestyle today.

Course goals: Through exploration of the breadth of environmental ethics as a discipline and its application to environmental issues, students will learn:

- to identify and be able to describe the major principles, values, and assumptions underlying alternative positions on environmental issues and ethical approaches.
- to consider/develop/and present arguments for one's own view of environmental ethics and engage in ethical analysis of public and private issues.
- to explore the relationship between ethical theory and ethical action: as a basis for individual behavior, public policy and professional codes for environmental and resource managers.

Instructional Objectives as part of the UAF Core Curriculum

- to develop understanding of how individuals come to hold the values they proclaim

- to gain appreciation of the method by which these values influence practical activity of different peoples.
- to gain an understanding of the differences in value systems, both within the Western tradition and between it and non-Western cultures.
- to gain an understanding of the dilemmas of moral choice affecting individuals in complex societies.

Blackboard: This course will make extensive use of Blackboard (<http://classes.alaska.edu>) for archiving class notes and reading materials, submitting assignments, taking quizzes, retrieving grades, and updating your course progress. Please check it regularly for announcements and updates, paying particular attention to the Assignments link as I update it week by week to help you keep track of readings and assignments.

Top Hat: As indicated above, we will use Top Hat primarily for in class work. Depending on how well it works for us, we may shift some quizzes, homeworks, and exams there, too.

Assignment submission: Unless specifically stated otherwise, all assignments should be turned in using Blackboard's assignment submission feature. Please DO NOT use any other means of submission (e.g., e-mail). Late assignments will be penalized 10% of the assignment value per day, up to a maximum of 50%.

Grading: Letter grades will be assigned based on the fraction of total points obtained in the class: 90-100 = A, etc. Modifiers (+ or -) typically will be assigned for scores within 3 points of the letter grade cutoffs.

Course grade will be based on the following components:

Points	Component
100	Class participation (Attendance + Engagement)
100	Midterm Exam
100	Final Exam
~200	Quizzes & Homework
100	Term Paper
600	Total

Incomplete grades: We will follow the UAF Incomplete Grade Policy: “The letter “I” (Incomplete) is a temporary grade used to indicate that the student has satisfactorily completed (C or better) the majority of work in a course but for personal reasons beyond the student’s control, such as sickness, has not been able to complete the course during the regular semester. Negligence or indifference are not acceptable reasons for an “I” grade.”

Class Participation accounts for ~1/6 of your grade, reflecting the importance I place on both your presence in class and your engagement with the topics. Absences occasionally are necessary, so you may miss up to two class sessions without penalty. Each additional absence,

for whatever reason, will incur a ~4 point penalty from the total points available for your class participation grade.

Class sessions are primarily an opportunity to discuss the assigned readings in a thoughtful, informed manner. It is only through such dialogue that ideas can be fruitfully explored. The terms "informed" and "thoughtful" are emphasized. To this end, it will be imperative that students read and, equally important, ponder the assigned reading material prior to each class. To guide (coerce) you to do this, I will employ two strategies. First, I will at times randomly call on students to offer their thoughts on or analysis of the assigned readings. Beginning in about the 3rd week, I will ask students to introduce and summarize each of the readings for class in order to get discussion going. Together with your general engagement in class discussions, these will comprise the engagement quality of your class participation grade.

Example: If you miss four classes and I evaluate the quality of your engagement in class as a mid "B", your class participation grade would be $(100 - 8) * 85\% = 78/100$ points.

I reserve the right to exercise judgment in final grading in light of individual student circumstances and notable changes in progress and performance. Students will be penalized for late assignments (10% per day) or missed exams. Students dissatisfied with their progress or performance should initiate contact with the instructor

Ethical Expectations: Plagiarism and other serious violations of the UAF honor code will earn a failing grade for the course. Please go to Assignments for week 1 in Blackboard, read the "Ethical Expectations" document, and then complete the survey indicated.

Student protections and services statement: Every qualified student is welcome in my classroom. As needed, I am happy to work with you, disability services, veterans' services, rural student services, etc to find reasonable accommodations. Students at this university are protected against sexual harassment and discrimination (Title IX), and minors have additional protections. As required, if I notice or am informed of certain types of misconduct, then I am required to report it to the appropriate authorities. For more information on your rights as a student and the resources available to you to resolve problems, please make use of the student handbook available at www.uaf.edu/handbook/