

Eco-Phenomenology
MW 4:00 - 5:50, Friendly 214

Instructor: Dr. Ted Toadvine
Office Hours: MW 2:00 - 3:30 and by appointment, PLC 319
Phone: 346-5554 (office); 346-5547 (Philosophy Program Manager)
Email: toadvine@darkwing.uoregon.edu

TEXTS

Brown & Toadvine, eds., *Eco-Phenomenology: Back to the Earth Itself* (SUNY Press, 2003)

COURSE PACKET (individual volumes also on library reserve)

Husserl, *The Essential Husserl*, ed. Donn Welton (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), pp. 60-85, 163-185, 337-378.
Heidegger, "Memorial Address," in *Discourse on Thinking*, trans. Anderson & Freund (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), pp. 43-57.
Heidegger, "The Thing," in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), pp. 165-186.
Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," in *The Question Concerning Technology*, trans. William Lovitt (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), pp. 3-35.
Merleau-Ponty, "The Thing and the Natural World," in *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Colin Smith (New York: Routledge, 1962; rev. 1981), pp. 299-345.
Merleau-Ponty, "Eye and Mind," in *The Merleau-Ponty Aesthetics Reader*, ed. Galen Johnson (Evanston: Northwestern U. Press, 1994), pp. 121-149.
Abram, "Maurice Merleau-Ponty and the Participatory Nature of Perception," *The Spell of the Sensuous* (New York: Vintage, 1996), pp. 44-72.
Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1969), pp. 109-174 and 187-219.

ONLINE RESERVE:

Kohák, "Varieties of Ecological Experience," *Environmental Ethics* 19 (Summer 1997)
Melle, "Ecology," in *Encyclopedia of Phenomenology*, ed. Embree et al. (Kluwer, 1997)
Zimmerman, "Toward a Heideggerian *ethos* for Radical Environmentalism," *Environmental Ethics* 5, no. 3 (1983)
Foltz, "On Heidegger and the Interpretation of Environmental Crisis," *Environmental Ethics* 6, no. 4 (1984)
Schalow, "Who Speaks for the Animals? Heidegger and the Question of Animal Welfare," *Environmental Ethics* 22, no. 3 (2000)
Langer, "Merleau-Ponty and Deep Ecology," in *Ontology and Alterity in Merleau-Ponty* (Northwestern, 1990)
Toadvine, "The Limits of the Flesh: Toward an Ecological Phenomenology" (unpublished)
Levinas, "The Name of a Dog, or Natural Rights," in *Difficult Freedom* (Johns Hopkins, 1990).
Levinas, "The Paradox of Morality: An Interview with Emmanuel Levinas," in *The Provocation of Levinas* (Routledge, 1998)
Llewelyn, "Am I Obsessed by Bobby? (Humanism of the Other Animal)," in *Re-Reading Levinas* (Indiana, 1991)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will examine the intersection of phenomenology and environmental philosophy, with particular attention to the writings of four phenomenologists—Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and Levinas—and the recent appropriation of their work for environmental thinking. We will begin by briefly examining primary writings by each of the four main figures, exploring such topics as the critiques of naturalism and technology, the relationship between science and everyday life, our perceptual and embodied relations with the surrounding world, and the ethical encounter with alterity. We will then explore the ways that these philosophical positions have been applied to gain a better understanding of the relationship between humans and the natural world, and consider current work in the field of eco-phenomenology that extends the insights of traditional phenomenology.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

	<u>Undergraduate</u>	<u>Graduate</u>
1. participation & attendance	20%	20%
2. average of best 6 weekly response papers, 2 pages each	30 %	30%
3. two short essays (1500 - 2500 words each)	50 %	
4. final term paper (4000 - 6000 words)		50%

- **Class Participation/Attendance:** You are expected to participate actively in this class, which includes attending class, reading all assigned material prior to class, and participating productively and professionally in class discussions. Missing THREE classes FOR ANY REASON will result in a full grade reduction. An additional full grade reduction will be made for each additional missed class after the third. Three late arrivals for class will count as one absence. Discussion is crucial to this class, and I will do my best to make you feel at ease and welcome to contribute to the class conversation. Please feel free to contribute any question, objection, or other thought about the topic at hand when such occurs to you. Although no relevant remark is out of bounds in this class, you will be expected to treat all members of the class respectfully and professionally. The quality and quantity of your participation in the class discussion will be evaluated in assigning 20% of your final grade. Obviously, failure to attend class will negatively affect your participation grade.
- **Weekly Response Papers:** Response papers are short (about 2 pages), informal reactions to material assigned for a particular class session. These papers may develop questions about the assigned readings, explore implications, draw comparisons with other works from within or outside the class, etc. The response papers are an informal opportunity to develop your own thoughts about the material under discussion. No particular format is required. Papers will be graded on the basis of the depth and originality of your thoughtful engagement with the assigned material. You have the opportunity to turn in one response paper per week, on either Monday or Wednesday (but not both in the same week). Papers must discuss the material assigned for the class during which they are submitted, and late response papers will not be graded. Your best 6 response paper grades will be averaged in calculating your final grade (and you may choose to turn in the minimum of 6).
- **Short essays:** Undergraduate students will complete two short essays for the course, one due on the Wednesday of week five, and the second on the day scheduled for the final exam. These essays should be 1500-2500 words (roughly 5-8 pages) and will address topics announced in class. Essays should be stapled, double-spaced, proof-read, and include a word-count on the first page. Essays will lose one letter grade for each calendar day that they are late.
- **Final Term Paper:** Graduate students will complete a final term paper of 4000-6000 words (roughly 12-18 pages). Final papers will explore a specific independently-chosen topic or theme from the course in detail and must include (a) examination of at least five scholarly secondary sources in addition to primary texts, and (b) the development of your own original position or critical response. A brief proposal of your paper topic (including a 1-2 page description of the topic and a bibliography of texts to be consulted) must be submitted for my approval by the start of week 8. Final papers are due on the date scheduled for the final exam, and extensions will be granted only in the case of genuine, documented emergencies. Late papers will lose one letter grade for each calendar day that they are late. Papers should be stapled, double-spaced, proof-read, and include a word-count on the first page.

PLEASE NOTE

- **Academic Dishonesty:** Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. Please review the university policy available at <http://www.uoregon.edu/~conduct/sai.htm> for an explanation of what constitutes academic dishonesty and how it will be dealt with in this course.
- **Disability Accommodations:** If you have a documented disability, please let me know as soon as possible so that appropriate accommodations can be made.

TENTATIVE ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE (changes will be announced in class)

Week 1:	Husserl, <i>The Essential Husserl</i> , pp. 60-85 (Course Packet)
Week 2:	Husserl, <i>The Essential Husserl</i> , pp. 163-185, 337-378 (Course Packet)
Week 3:	Melle, "Ecology" (Online Reserve) Kohák, "Varieties of Ecological Experience" (Online Reserve) Kohák, "An Understanding Heart" (in Brown & Toadvine) Brown, "The Real and the Good" (in Brown & Toadvine)
Week 4:	Heidegger, "Memorial Address" (Course Packet) Heidegger, "The Thing" (Course Packet) Heidegger, "The Question concerning Technology" (Course Packet)
Week 5:	Zimmerman, "Toward a Heideggerian <i>ethos</i> for Radical Environmentalism" (Online Reserve) Foltz, "On Heidegger and the Interpretation of Environmental Crisis" (Online Reserve) Schalow, "Who Speaks for the Animals? Heidegger and the Question of Animal Welfare" (Online Reserve) SHORT ESSAY (UG) DUE (Wednesday , 2/4)
Week 6:	Merleau-Ponty, "The Thing and the Natural World" (Course Packet) Merleau-Ponty, "Eye & Mind" (Course Packet)
Week 7:	Langer, "Merleau-Ponty and Deep Ecology" (Online Reserve) Abram, Ch. 2, Part II from <i>The Spell of the Sensuous</i> , pp. 44-72 (Course Packet) Toadvine, "The Limits of the Flesh: Toward an Ecological Phenomenology" (Online Reserve)
Week 8:	Levinas, selections from <i>Totality and Infinity</i> , pp. 109-174, 187-219 (Course Packet) TERM PAPER PROPOSAL (GRAD) DUE (Wednesday, 2/25)
Week 9:	Levinas, "The Paradox of Morality: An Interview with Emmanuel Levinas" (Online Reserve) Diehm, "Natural Disasters" (in Brown & Toadvine) Levinas, "The Name of a Dog, or Natural Rights" (Online Reserve) Llewelyn, "Am I Obsessed by Bobby? (Humanism of the Other Animal)" (Online Reserve)
Week 10:	Casey, "Taking a Glance at the Environment" (in Brown & Toadvine) Wood, "What is Eco-Phenomenology?" (in Brown & Toadvine)