



**I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course introduces students to ethical theories and practices through the examination of environmental issues. The purpose of this course is to cultivate an understanding of the relationship between the natural environment and its impact on both humans and other living systems. Students will examine environmental issues from a variety of traditional and contemporary ethical frameworks. Emphasis will be placed on both theoretical and practical exploration of such issue as: ecological well-being, increasing/decreasing population, global warming, climate change, world water crisis, deforestation, animal rights and welfare.

Here are a few quotations that set the tone for study of Environmental Ethics ...

*“Only when I saw the Earth from space, in all its ineffable beauty and fragility, did I realize that humankind's most urgent task is to cherish and preserve it for future generations.”*

— Sigmund Jahn

*“Our choices at all levels—individual, community, corporate and government—affect nature. And they affect us.”*

— David Suzuki

*“A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.”*

— Aldo Leopold

*“The fundamental principles of ecology govern our lives wherever we live, and...we must wake up to this fact or be lost.”*

— Karin Sheldon

*“For the first time in the history of the world, every human being is now subjected to contact with dangerous chemicals, from the moment of conception until death.”*

— Rachel Carson

*“The right of all forms [of life] to live is a universal right which cannot be quantified. No single species of living being has more of this particular right to live and unfold than any other species.”*

— Arne Naess

*“Only when the last tree has been cut down,  
Only when the last river has been poisoned,  
Only when the last fish has been caught,  
Only then will you find that money cannot be eaten.”*

— Cree Indian Prophecy

**II. LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ELEMENTS OF THE PERFORMANCE:**

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will demonstrate the ability to:

**1. Identify and explain basic concepts and terminology relating to environmental ethics and philosophy.**Potential Elements of the Performance:

- Define key ethical terms, such as, value, norms, moral status and agency
- Describe the difference between the concepts of ethics and morals
- Recognize how moral responsibility applies to the natural world
- Discuss different cultural systems, values and worldviews

**2. Identify and analyze different environmental and ecological philosophies.**Potential Elements of the Performance:

- Describe various ethical systems, frameworks and practices
- Differentiate between anthropocentric, nonanthropocentric and holistic systems of ethics
- Discuss radical ecological and non-western ethical approaches to the natural environment
- Debate environmental issues and controversies using different philosophical theories and principles

**3. Evaluate both environmental and ecological controversies from a variety of perspectives.**Potential Elements of the Performance:

- Apply traditional and contemporary philosophical theories and methodologies to environmental problems
- Examine environmental issues through individual case studies and current events
- Assess traditional and contemporary ethical responses to a variety of environmental issues

**4. Defend and promote the environment's right to security.**Potential Elements of the Performance:

- Identify strategies that promote environmental welfare
- Assess the role public policy plays in environmental protection and welfare
- Justify extending moral standing and rights to the natural world
- Consider the stewardship role of human beings to the planet
- Argue the environmental responsibilities human beings have toward the natural world and to our future generations

5. **Discuss the relationship between a sustainable environment and its impact on both human and other living systems.**

Potential Elements of the Performance:

- Discuss how the separate parts of the ecosystem (including humans) function as a whole
- Explain the importance of environmental awareness in relation to ecological well-being
- Outline the ramifications of disrupting the ecological balance of the planet

**III. TOPICS MAY INCLUDE:**

Note: These topics sometimes overlap several areas of skill development and are not necessarily intended to be explored in isolated learning units or in the order below.

1. Moral Standing/Rights
2. Responsibility/Obligation
3. Preservation/Conservation
4. Environmental Welfare/Justice
5. Unsustainable/Sustainable Development
6. Deep-Ecology/Environmental Holism
7. Depletion/Pollution of Natural Resources
8. Endangered/Vanishing Species
9. Animal Rights/Welfare

**IV. REQUIRED RESOURCES/TEXTS/MATERIALS:**

Desjardins, J. R. (2006). *Environmental Ethics: An Introduction to Environmental Philosophy*. Boston, MA: Wadsworth Publishing. (ISBN: 978-0534520847)

**Recommended:**

Derr, P., & McNamara, E. (2003). *Case studies in environmental ethics*. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield. (ISBN: 978-0742531376)

**V. EVALUATION PROCESS/GRADING SYSTEM:**

In-Class Activities	20%
Quizzes	20%
Major Project	30%
Exam(s)	30%

For such reasons as program certification or program articulation, certain courses require minimums of greater than 50% and/or have mandatory components to achieve a passing grade. It is also important to note, that the minimum overall GPA required in order to graduate from a Sault College program remains 2.0.

**The following semester grades will be assigned to students in postsecondary courses:**

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Grade Point Equivalent</u>
A+	90 – 100%	
A	80 – 89%	4.00
B	70 - 79%	3.00
C	60 - 69%	2.00
D	50 – 59%	1.00
F (Fail)	49% and below	0.00
CR (Credit)	Credit for diploma requirements has been awarded.	
S	Satisfactory achievement in field /clinical placement or non-graded subject area.	
U	Unsatisfactory achievement in field/clinical placement or non-graded subject area.	
X	A temporary grade limited to situations with extenuating circumstances giving a student additional time to complete the requirements for a course.	
NR	Grade not reported to Registrar's office.	
W	Student has withdrawn from the course without academic penalty.	

If a faculty member determines that a student is at risk of not being successful in their academic pursuits and has exhausted all strategies available to faculty, student contact information may be confidentially provided to Student Services in an effort to offer even more assistance with options for success. Any student wishing to restrict the sharing of such information should make their wishes known to the coordinator or faculty member.

## **VI. SPECIAL NOTES:**

### Attendance:

Sault College is committed to student success. There is a direct correlation between academic performance and class attendance; therefore, for the benefit of all its constituents, all students are encouraged to attend all of their scheduled learning and evaluation sessions. This implies arriving on time and remaining for the duration of the scheduled session.

## **VII. COURSE OUTLINE ADDENDUM:**

The provisions contained in the addendum located in D2L and on the portal form part of this course outline.