PHILOSOPHY 329  
*Environmental Ethics*  
Spring 2020  
*Mid-term Essay Exam*  
Due Monday, March 2

Write a 4-6 page essay per on one of the following topics. The paper should be double-spaced with proper 1 inch margins and then uploaded to Laulima by the due date.

**Anthropocentrism vs Nonanthropocentrism**  
Many environmental philosophers consider the underlying cause of the ecological crisis we are facing to be the result of the anthropocentric world-view that is part of the legacy of the Western tradition. Review some of the main influences that shaped that anthropocentric view as well as some of the critiques of anthropocentrism that are presented in the readings we have covered. To what extent do you think the modern world today can overcome this anthropocentric view?

**The Sphere of Moral Consideration**  
It is generally accepted among environmental philosophers that the sphere of moral consideration must be expanded to include more than human beings. Take up this issue while reflecting on some of the readings we have covered. How wide should the sphere of moral consideration be extended? Should it include only some animals or all of them, or all living things, or even non-living features of the natural world such as rivers and streams, rocks and mountains?

**Biocentrism**  
Explain the four key beliefs of the biocentric outlook as proposed by Paul Taylor and then the four basic rules of conduct that he thinks follows from this biocentric view. Explain also how Taylor’s view is an example of a deontological approach to environmental ethics. To what extent would you agree with Taylor’s biocentrism?

**The Treatment of Animals**  
Why does Peter Singer think that the treatment of animals in our society today is wrong? What does he recommend should be the determining factor in our treatment of animals and what conclusions does he draw regarding our behavior toward animals? Explain how Singer’s view is an example of a utilitarian approach to ethics. How does Singer’s argument differ from the animal rights approach put forward by Tom Regan? To what extent do you find either of these arguments persuasive?

**The Land Ethic**  
Explain what Aldo Leopold meant by the “Land Ethic” and how this ‘holistic’ approach challenges the traditional Western approach to ethics. What problem does Frederick Ferré find with this holistic approach and how does Baird Callicott attempt to meet this objection? To what extent would you agree with the “Land Ethic” as proposed by Leopold and developed by Callicott?

**Grading Rubric**

1) **Writing** (20%): An A paper will be well-written.
2) **Content** (50%): An A paper will reflect a good understanding of the texts and include some citations from the texts.
3) **Reflection** (30%): An A paper will include some thoughtful reflection on the topic.