

# PHIL 268

## Ethics and the Environment

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M/W  
3:30-5:50



### Course Description:

What is the moral standing of your childhood pet? Is he or she the kind of thing to which we—human beings—have moral obligations? What about that tree in your backyard which you used to climb? Do we have moral obligations to it and other non-sentient parts of nature? How about future generations? Can they make any moral demands upon us? They don't even exist yet. These and other related questions pertaining to the moral relationship between humans, the environment, and its (sentient and non-sentient) constituents will be explored in this class. We will read and carefully consider some of the classics and more recent literature in environmental philosophy. Your grade will be determined by your performance on two in-class exams and a final paper. I hope that students will leave the course with deeper and more nuanced views about their relation to the environment and the moral standing of its constituents.