

UMBC UGC Change in Existing Course: enter current course number & title

Date Submitted: 9/25/2015

Proposed Effective Date: immediately

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COURSE INFORMATION: (please provide all information in the "current" column, and only the information changing in the "proposed" column)

change		current	proposed
<input type="checkbox"/>	Course Number(s)	454	354
<input type="checkbox"/>	Formal Title	Animals and the Environment: Moral Theory and its Application	Ethics, Animals, and the Environment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Transcript Title (≤30c)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Recommended Course Preparation		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Prerequisite NOTE: Unless otherwise indicated, a prerequisite is assumed to be passed with a "D" or better.	Two courses in Philosophy, at least one at the 300 level, with a grade of "C" or better, or permission of the instructor	One course in Philosophy with a grade of "C" or better, or permission of the instructor
<input type="checkbox"/>	Credits	3	3
<input type="checkbox"/>	Repeatable?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/>	Max. Total Credits		Max. Total Credits: This should be equal to the number of credits for courses that cannot be repeated for credit. For courses that may be repeated for credit, enter the maximum total number of credits a student can receive from this course. E.g., enter 6 credits for a 3 credit course that may be taken a second time for credit, but not for a third time. Please note that this does NOT refer to how many times a class may be retaken for a higher grade.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Grading Method(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Reg (A-F) <input type="checkbox"/> Audit <input type="checkbox"/> Pass-Fail	X <input type="checkbox"/> Reg (A-F) X <input type="checkbox"/> Audit X <input type="checkbox"/> Pass-Fail

CURRENT CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

Do we stand in moral relations to animals? Can we owe things to the environment? This is a moral theory course that focuses on the understanding and critical assessment of various philosophers' attempts to answer these questions. In the course of examining these theories, a number of more concrete questions will come up, for example, scientific questions about the natures of animals and of the environment and about the potential effects of human activities. In addition, a number of particular moral questions arise, such as: Is it acceptable to have animals for pets or to eat them? Are zoos morally permissible? Is the intentional (or negligent) extermination of a species ever morally justified? This is a seminar for students with a strong background in philosophy, environmental sciences or policy.

PROPOSED CATALOG DESCRIPTION (no longer than 75 words): leave blank if no changes are being proposed to the catalog description. NOTE: information about prerequisites should NOT appear in the catalog description.)

A survey of central issues concerning the moral status of non-human animals and the natural world, focusing on questions concerning the obligations, if any, that humans owe to the non-human world. Issues to be discussed include: the existence and nature of animals rights, membership of nonhuman animals in the social contract and in the moral community at large, the moral relevance of sentience, the ethics of animal experimentation, owning pets, and zoos, vegetarianism, whether the environment (or individual ecosystems) have independent moral value, justice and the allocation of natural resources and risk, climate change, and obligations to future generations. Readings will be drawn from classical and contemporary sources.

RATIONALE FOR CHANGE:

We have already converted two other courses (Philosophy of Mind and Philosophy of Language), which we had been offering at the 400 level, to the 300 level, because they are primarily survey courses rather than topic courses, and we believe that such courses serve our majors, and the university generally, better in an intermediate rather than advanced format. Offering “Ethics, Animals, and the Environment” at the 300 level will allow for larger enrollments because of fewer prerequisites, and will also provide a gateway survey course to prepare students for a more advanced course on a related, focused issue at the 400 level. PHIL 454 was already being taught as a survey course, so there will be no change in content, though the presentation will be altered to accommodate a larger audience who have less preparation. We expect this course to draw widely from across the university at the 300 level, given the pressing relevance of the topics.