In many respects, environmental philosophy is a new area of study. Developing out of a concern that has grown over the past fifty years regarding the increasing and often negative impact of human action upon the earth, environmental philosophy has sought to help clarify and negotiate relations between the human and the non-human parts of the world. But the roots of environmental philosophy can traced back further than the past fifty years. Many of the concerns of environmental philosophy are rooted in age-old philosophical questions. And a good number of contemporary issues were first broached in the nineteenth century. In addition to this historical depth, environmental philosophy also manifests a broad range of theoretical concern. While the greatest amount of work in environmental philosophy has been in the area of ethics, epistemological and metaphysical questions have also been broached. In this course we will acquaint ourselves with many of the important issues in contemporary environmental philosophy—animal rights, ecofeminism, and political ecology. Furthermore, we will make a preliminary investigation of their historical antecedents and inquire into the future of this field of thought. As citizens of the world at a critical period in earth history, the study of environmental philosophy is vital to our thoughtful engagement with the challenges the confront us. It is my hope that our work in this class will provide us with an enhanced and enlightened ability to respond to these challenges.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- Environmental Philosophy 4e, ed. Michael Zimmerman et al. (Prentice Hall)
- The Wisdom of the World, Rémi Brague (University of Chicago Press)
- Basic Writings, Martin Heidegger (Harper San Francisco)
- The Maine Woods, Henry David Thoreau (Penguin Books)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Four 2-3 page précis—with one on Brague, one on Heidegger, and one on Thoreau. (40% of your final grade)

2. Critical Book Review (5-7 pages) selected from the list of recommended volumes. (20% of your final grade)

3. Course Term Paper/Essay dealing with issues related to the general topic of the course. 10-12 pages in length. (40% of your final grade)

4. You are expected to attend class regularly, read all the assigned material on time, and participate in class discussions. More than one unexcused absence may result in a lowering of our grade.
NOTE

MTU complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). If you have a disability and need a reasonable accommodation for equal access to education or services at MTU, please call Dr. Gloria Melton, Associate Dean of Students, 487-2212. For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, department chair, or the Affirmative Action Office (487-3310).

PROPOSED SCHEDULE

Week One: January 11th
1. Introduction

Week Two: January 18th
1. “All Animals Are Equal”
2. “Animal Rights, Human Wrongs”

Week Three: January 25th
1. “The Land Ethic”
2. “Challenges in Environmental Ethics”
3. “Holistic Environmental Ethics and the Problem of Ecofascism”

Week Four: February 1st

Week Five: February 8th
1. “Nature as Origin and Difference”
2. “What is Ecophenomenology”
3. “Naturalizing Phenomenology”

Week Six: February 15th
1. “Free Market vs. Political Environmentalism”
2. “A Declaration of Sustainability”

Week Seven: February 22nd
1. Wisdom of the World—Setting the Stage
2. Wisdom of the World—Four Models

Week Eight: March 1st
1. Wisdom of the World—The Medieval Model

***CRITICAL BOOK REVIEW DUE
SPRING BREAK

Week Nine: March 15th
1. Wisdom of the World—The New World

Week Ten: March 22nd
1. “Memorial Address”
2. “The Question Concerning Technology”

Week Eleven: March 29th
1. “Building Dwelling Thinking”
2. “Poetically Man Dwells”

Week Twelve: April 5th
1. RESEARCH DAY

Week Thirteen: April 12th
1. “Ktaadn”
2. “Walking”

Week Fourteen: April 19th
1. “Chesuncook”
2. “Allegash and East Branch”

FINALS WEEK: April 26th
1. FINAL PAPER DUE

***ABSTRACT OF FINAL PAPER DUE