

## TECEP® Test Description for ETH-210-TE

### ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

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This exam explores the concept of environmental ethics, a philosophy that extends the ethical concepts traditionally applied to human behavior to address the entire natural world. Topics include: history of environmental ethics, the idea of environmental justice, and how our views about the natural world have changed over time. (3 credits)

- **Test format:**
    - 40 multiple choice questions (1 point each)
    - 4 essay questions (10 points each)
  - **Passing score:** 65% (52/80 points). Your grade will be reported as CR (credit) or NC (no credit).
  - **Time limit:** 2 hours
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### OUTCOMES ASSESSED ON THE TEST

- Describe the key concepts on which environmental ethics is based
  - Describe the main environmental ethics approaches and viewpoints
  - Relate ethical concepts about the environment to religious teachings/beliefs around the world
  - Explain how our moral attitude toward the natural world has changed over time
  - Identify key events and pioneers in the environmental ethics movement
  - Evaluate the impact of environmental justice on various social groups and the world
  - Identify the major environmental laws passed throughout the world, focusing on those implemented in the United States and the European Union countries
  - Discuss the development of international accords, such as the Copenhagen Accord
  - Identify non-governmental advocacy organizations, such as Greenpeace etc.
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## TOPICS ON THE TEST AND THEIR APPROXIMATE DISTRIBUTION

The table below indicates the main topics covered by this exam and the approximate percentage of the exam devoted to each main topic. Under the main topic heading is a list of related—but more specific—topics. It is important to review these topics to determine how much prior knowledge you have and/or how much additional study is necessary.

Topic	Percentage
<b>Overview</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ethical behavior</li> <li>● Environmental ethics perspectives               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Anthropocentric</li> <li>○ Biocentric</li> <li>○ Ecocentric</li> <li>○ Deep ecology and the Gaia hypothesis</li> <li>○ Speciesism</li> <li>○ Ethical egoism and utilitarianism (how they apply to environmental issues)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<b>(20-25%)</b>
<b>Approaches, Beliefs, and World Views</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Religious views about the environment</li> <li>● Utilitarian conservation vs. biocentric preservation</li> <li>● Anthropocentric vs. non-anthropocentric ethical approaches</li> <li>● Models of environmental sustainability and sustainable development</li> <li>● Instrumental or extrinsic values vs. intrinsic values</li> <li>● TEK (traditional ecological knowledge)</li> </ul>	<b>(20-25%)</b>
<b>History, Pioneers, Key Events</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● John Muir:Sierra Club, national parks</li> <li>● Gifford Pinchot:U. S. Forest Service</li> <li>● Aldo Leopold:Land Ethic, wildlife/wilderness ecology</li> <li>● Garrett Hardin:The Tragedy of the Commons</li> <li>● Rachel Carson:“Silent Spring”</li> <li>● Arne Naess: Deep Ecology</li> <li>● James Lovelock: Gaia hypothesis</li> <li>● Formation/role of the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)</li> <li>● Air and water quality issues</li> <li>● Energy</li> <li>● Climate change</li> </ul>	<b>(20-25%)</b>
<b>Environmental Justice</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Environmental justice definition</li> <li>● Environmental racism</li> <li>● Environmental injustice around the world</li> </ul>	<b>(20-25%)</b>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relationship between the human rights movement and environmental justice</li> <li>• Environmental rights litigation</li> <li>• Environmental management strategies</li> <li>• Goals of the environmental rights movement</li> <li>• Environmental effects on health</li> <li>• Community focus of environmental justice movement</li> <li>• Industrial and corporate interests</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Environmental Law</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key environmental laws in the U. S. and European Union</li> <li>• Impact of these environmental laws</li> <li>• Enforcement of current international environmental laws and accords</li> <li>• Areas for environmental law improvement</li> </ul>	<b>(5%)</b>

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## STUDY MATERIALS

Below is a list of recommended study materials to help prepare you for your exam. Most textbooks in this subject include the topics listed above and will prepare you for the test. If you choose another text, be sure to compare its table of contents against the topic list to make sure all topics are covered.

Title
Pojman, P., & Pojman, L. <i>Environmental Ethics: Readings in Theory and Application</i> . Current edition. Boston, MA: Wadsworth/Cengage.
Schmidtz, D., & Willot, E. (eds.). <i>Environmental Ethics: What Really Matters, What Really Works</i> . Current edition. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

You may also wish to review the Saylor open online course below. This resource is openly licensed, which means that it is free to be [revised, remixed, reused, redistributed, and retained](#), so long as its unique terms are followed. You can learn more about open licensing [here](#).

Title	License
<a href="#">ENVS203: Environmental Ethics, Justice, and World Views</a> [Saylor course]. Washington, D.C.: Saylor Academy.	<a href="#">CC BY 3.0</a>



## SAMPLE QUESTIONS

The questions below are designed to help you study for your TECEP. Answering these questions does not guarantee a passing score on your exam.

Please note that the questions below **will not** appear on your exam.

### Multiple Choice

1. The ancient Greeks valued the environment, as evidenced by their
  - a. building architecture
  - b. recycling efforts
  - c. sleeping in the open air
  - d. having gods of nature
2. Why is A Sand County Almanac considered an important book in the environmental field?
  - a. It promotes the idea of a “land ethic.”
  - b. It has been taught in many colleges around the world.
  - c. It contains pragmatic conservation advice.
  - d. Its author was a highly-respected science writer and lecturer.
3. Much of the emphasis on clean water initiatives in the 1970s was prompted by the
  - a. water pollution of the Great Lakes
  - b. Cuyahoga River in Ohio catching on fire
  - c. disposal of radioactive wastes into rivers and the ocean
  - d. water pollution produced by the mining of coal
4. What important project helped John Muir and Gifford Pinchot articulate their ethical positions on preservation or conservation for the general public?
  - a. The declaration of Yosemite Valley as a national park
  - b. The preservation of the sequoia forests
  - c. The flooding of the Hetch Hetchy Valley
  - d. The designation of regions in the Sierra Nevada Mountains as wilderness areas
5. John Evelyn wrote a famous treatise that foreshadowed the detrimental effect of industrialization. What environmental issue did he highlight?
  - a. Air pollution
  - b. Water pollution
  - c. Soil contamination
  - d. Sewage disposal



6. Environmental justice is described as intergenerational, meaning that
  - a. both genders should enjoy the environment equally
  - b. international laws define general environmental laws
  - c. each generation is responsible for current environmental laws
  - d. the environment should be preserved for future generations
  
7. Product manufacturers accused of exposing the public to chemical concentrations in excess of “maximum contaminant levels,” in violation of The Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act, is an example of environmental
  - a. negotiation
  - b. toxic tort
  - c. inequality
  - d. impact assessment
  
8. The main opposition to Rachel Carson’s thesis in Silent Spring came from
  - a. the general public
  - b. the U.S. military
  - c. government agencies
  - d. chemical companies
  
9. What is the purpose of the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA)?
  - a. To provide an ethical framework for the state agencies that monitor environmental activity
  - b. To create a regional network of environmentally supportive policies that states may modify
  - c. To promote informed decision-making by federal agencies by providing detailed information concerning environmental impacts
  - d. To enact more effective but less stringent policies affecting specific areas of environmental concern

### Essay Questions

10. Define environmental justice and discuss the issues related to environmental justice with regard to the effects of pollution, land use and climate change on developing nations.
  
11. In the landmark 1992 case, Lucas v. South Carolina, the Supreme Court of the United States laid out precedent principles in the application of “regulatory taking.” Explain what this important environmental case was about and discuss the meaning of “regulatory taking.”
  
12. Can anthropocentric and non-anthropocentric environmental ethics be reconciled? Present arguments made by ethical theorists such as Aldo Leopold and Arne Naess that address this issue.



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## ANSWERS TO SAMPLE QUESTIONS

### Multiple Choice

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|--------|--------|--------|
| 1. (d) | 4. (c) | 7. (b) |
| 2. (a) | 5. (a) | 8. (d) |
| 3. (b) | 6. (d) | 9. (c) |

### Essay Questions

10. There is an inequitable distribution of environmental hazards around the world. The rise of economic globalization, marked by liberalized trade rules and the dominance of multinational corporations, has played a key role in shifting environmental pollution from industrialized to developing countries. This shift can be seen most prominently in the export of polluting industries and hazardous wastes from developed countries to poor, developing countries in Africa, South America, and Asia. Weak environmental regulations and lax enforcement of laws foster this shift, supported by trade rules that force developing countries to make trade-offs between environmental protection and economic prosperity. Despite attempts to regulate the international waste trade by treaty, illegal exportation of hazardous wastes to developing countries continues to flourish.

In addition, the negative effects of widely recognized environmental degradation (ozone depletion, climate change, declining biodiversity, deforestation) are disproportionately borne by developing countries and poor populations across the globe. The United States is responsible for 25% of the world's greenhouse gases, even though it has only 4% of the world's population. In contrast, developing countries have only recently started down the path to industrialization, and their per capita emissions of greenhouse gases are comparatively low. Developing nations are especially vulnerable to climate change and other adverse impacts. They also have fewer resources to respond to these problems, and stand to lose the most ground in their development efforts, threatening to entrench existing global economic and social inequalities.

Scoring Rubric	
Criteria	Points
Definition of environmental justice	4 points
Appropriate discussion of issues	3 points
Acknowledgment of the limited power of developing nations	3 points



11. The Fifth Amendment states that private property shall not “be taken for public use without just compensation.” Federal courts have interpreted this clause to ban not only the literal taking of private property but also “regulatory taking.” Regulatory taking occurs when the government, by law or regulation, deprives a land owner of all or some economic uses of his or her property.

A builder named David Lucas bought two beach front lots on the South Carolina coast with the intent to build houses. Before he could build, South Carolina passed a law prohibiting building on critical areas or near beaches and denied him a building permit.

Lucas took the state agency that grants permits to court. Although the State said the denial was not a regulatory taking, a lower court ruled in the builder’s favor and awarded him a cash settlement. After the Supreme Court of South Carolina overturned the lower court’s decision, the case went to the Supreme Court of the United States, who decided that the Supreme Court of South Carolina had erred when they ruled that the case was not a regulatory taking. Lucas was allowed to build houses on his beachfront property.

This set the following precedent for environmental law: A regulation that deprives a land owner of all economically beneficial uses of land constitutes a regulatory taking.

<b>Scoring Rubric</b>	
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Points</b>
Definition of regulatory taking	5 points
Application to case	5 points

12. Anthropocentric ethics considers humans the sole possessors of moral consideration. Non-anthropocentric (ecocentric or biocentric) ethics believes that non-humans also deserve moral consideration. The closest approach to reconciliation between these schools of thought comes from Utilitarianism, which is largely anthropocentric in its approach, but believes that animal pain is a moral consideration.

The Land Ethic, by Aldo Leopold, was the first of the ecocentric theories and claimed that an act is good if it promotes the beauty, integrity and stability of the ecosystem, and bad if it harms it. According to this ethic, the ecosystem has the highest moral value and if necessary, human interests can be secondary.

Deep Ecology, by Arne Naess, is a holistic ethical theory that believes we need to reevaluate our notion of self in order to address the ecological crisis. It involves a sense of identification with the entire planet, in which the individual’s true self is recognized as identical with the cosmos. The “depth” of Deep Ecology lies in its rejection of the anthropocentric approach that believes the living environment exists to support human use.

The two theories cannot be reconciled when there is a conflict of interest between ecological preservation and human use. An example of this is whale hunting. A non-anthropocentric



approach would recognize that whales have been driven to near-extinction and regulation of their hunting should be enforced to prevent their disappearance for future generations. An anthropocentric perspective would claim that human benefits trump saving whales.

<b>Scoring Rubric</b>	
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Points</b>
Definition of anthropocentric, biocentric and ecocentric principles	4 points
Discussion of Leopold's approach	2 points
Discussion of Naess's approach	2 points
Answer to and defense of the question	2 points

