“Applied Ethics” is the attempt to apply philosophical thinking to the contemporary issues that we find most difficult and vexing in our personal and communal lives. The field is often driven by the worry that academic philosophy has a tendency to become overly abstract and cut-off from the real issues that affect our lives as the academic retreats into the ivory tower of arcane knowledge, and the desire to find ways that academic pursuits can make a difference to our lives. In this course, inspired by that desire, we will attempt to engage contemporary issues that matter to us. Hopefully this will allow us to see that philosophical thinking has practical relevance as it is “put to use.” Equally important, however, we will also see that looking at particular concrete experiences and contemporary issues can guide and shape our wider philosophical thinking. Thus, we will hope to cultivate a praxis oriented wisdom in which deep thinking has the ability to guide and shape our concrete decisions, but also in which our deepest beliefs about reality are informed and shaped by our concrete experiences. It is to be hoped that through this dialectical interplay of theory and action, both will be enriched in truth and goodness and beauty.

**Required texts**

**Online Texts** (All available on Blackboard)
4. Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*, selections
5. Annie Dillard, “Living like Weasels” from *Teaching a Stone to Talk*,
6. Wendell Berry, “The Whole Horse.”
8. Godfrey Diekmann, “Two Approaches to Understanding the Sacraments”
11. Hobbes, De cive. II
14. Hayak
15. Von Mises
16. Marx
Optional Online Texts:
1. Homes Rolston III, “Naturalizing Value”
2. Rolston, “From Fact to Value”
3. Lynn Margulis, What is Life Ch. 1-2

Assessment:
Students will make one 50 minute presentation to the class in the area of his or choice (ungraded).
Students will turn in one 10-20 page (3200-6500 word) paper in December.

Tentative Schedule

I. Introduction: Normative and Applied Ethics
II. Environmental Ethics
   1. Wilderness: Our relation to the wild creatures
      -- Muir
      -- Leopold
      -- Dillard
      -- Abram
   2. Natural Resources: Our relation to the things we use
      -- Berry
   3. The Sacred Earth: Our relation to God
      -- Francis
      -- Nasr
      -- Diekmann
      -- Toland
   4. Case Study: Peone Prairie

III. Private Property
   1. European Modernity
      -- Locke
      -- Hume
      -- Hayek
      -- Von Mises
   2. Critics of Liberalism
      -- Marx
   3. Traditional Catholic view
      -- Bede Jarrett on Thomas Aquinas
   4. Case Study: Priest Lake

IV. Student-Led. Topics and readings TBA
V. Student-Led. Topics and readings TBA