

Philosophy 22: Introduction to Ethics
SYLLABUS

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:00a.m.-12:50p.m.
Dodd 175

Instructor: Eric Tracy
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Office Hours: T 2:30-4:30 p.m.

Course Overview

How ought we to live? What actions are morally obligatory, permissible, or wrong? What does the best sort of life look like for creatures like human beings? What do these questions have to do with our own interest, our natures, authority, and reason? Ethics is the attempt to systematically address these questions. In this class, we will be engaged in this project. We will proceed with a broadly historical orientation, beginning with Plato and Aristotle, followed by Boethius, Aquinas, and Abelard, through Henry of Ghent, Suarez, and Kant, concluding with more contemporary moral philosophers like Bernard Williams and Judith Jarvis Thomson.

Course Materials

Required: J.J.C. Smart and Bernard Williams (1976). *Utilitarianism: For and Against*.

Required: Plato, *Republic*. Trans: C.D.C. Reeve, (Third Edition) Hackett.

Required: Peter Abelard, *Ethical Writings*. Trans: Paul Vincent Spade. Hackett.

Required: Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*. Trans: Mary Gregor and Jens Timmerman (Second Edition). Cambridge.

Optional: Gilbert Harman and Judith Jarvis Thomson (1996). *Moral Relativism and Moral Objectivity*

All other readings will be made available on the course website.

Difficulty

This course assumes no prior background in philosophy. However, the material will be challenging. Doing well in the course requires sustained engagement with the ideas and arguments we discuss, careful and critical reading of challenging texts, and the development and exercise of the skills of philosophical writing. One cannot do well in a philosophy class without doing philosophy well.

In short, to excel in this course, you should expect to:

- Do all assigned readings *and engage* (take notes, evaluate, etc.)
- Attend lecture *and engage* (take notes, ask questions, etc.)
- Complete all of the online reading responses (see below)
- Work hard on papers (and submit them on time)

Course Requirements

1. Reading responses, to be completed **by 8pm** on Wednesdays.
2. One ungraded paper (1-2 pgs.) and two graded papers (3-4 pgs. and 5-6 pgs.).
3. Regular lecture attendance.

The final grade for the course will be determined as follows:

- *Participation:* 10%
 - *Reading responses:* 15%
 - *Short paper:* 20%
 - *Final Paper:* 35%
 - *Final Exam:* 20%
- Students needing an academic accommodation because of a disability should notify the UCLA Center for Accessible Education and the instructor within the first two weeks of the quarter.
 - The CAE is at A255 Murphy Hall; its phone number is (310) 825-1501.

- Late papers will be docked by **one-third of a letter grade**, and docked an additional third of a letter grade every twenty-four hours after the due date.
- Late papers will not be accepted after seven days beyond the due date.
- No extensions will be granted within 24 hours of a deadline or after the deadline has passed.

Electronics

This class has a no-electronics policy. Please do not use cell phones, laptops, tablet computers, etc. during lecture. Please be in touch with the instructor before the quarter begins if there is a special reason why you may need to use a laptop during our class. Violation of this policy may affect your participation grade as a form of negative participation, especially if it distracts other students.

Reading Questions

Due Wednesdays at 8pm, students submit one *brief* reading summary (one or two paragraphs) of one of the week's readings that have not already been covered in lecture, and one or two good questions about it, through the course website. 1/3 of the grade will be determined by completion. 1/3 will be determined by the quality of the summary. 1/3 will be determined by the quality of the questions. This is designed to be straightforward if you have done the readings. Late submissions are not accepted under any circumstances.

Papers

UNGRADED PAPER (1-2 pages)

SHORT PAPER (3-4 pages)

Due [] at 11:59 p.m. to Turnitin via CCLE.

FINAL PAPER (5-6 pages)

Due [] at 11:59 p.m. to Turnitin via CCLE.

Academic Integrity

Students are responsible for abiding by UCLA's policies regarding academic and intellectual integrity: <http://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/Academic-Integrity>

In accordance with these policies, any suspected plagiarism or academic dishonesty will be forwarded to the Dean of Students.

Course Schedule (subject to change)

UNIT 1: VIRTUE, GOODNESS, AND HUMAN NATURE

Week 1: Introduction, Plato's *Republic*

Read: *Republic* Book I (for first meeting)

Read: *Republic* Book II (for second meeting)

Week 2: Plato's *Republic*

Read: *Republic* Books III-IV

Read: *Republic* Books V-VI

Week 3: Concluding Plato, Beginning Aristotle

Read: *Republic* Book VII-X

Read: *Nicomachean Ethics* Book I, Chs. 1-6

****UNGRADED PAPER DUE [] AT 11:59 p.m. TO TURNITIN****

Week 4: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*

Read: *Nicomachean Ethics* Book II, Ch. 7-Book 2, Ch. 6

Read: *Nicomachean Ethics* Book X

Week 5: From Plato and Aristotle to Christian/Scholastic Ethics

Read: Boethius *Consolation of Philosophy* Book III Prose

Read: Abelard *Ethica* Selections

Week 6: Abelard, Aquinas

Read: Abelard *Dialogue Between a Philosopher and a Christian* Selections

Read: Aquinas Selections

UNIT 2: MORAL LAW AND RATIONALITY

Week 7: Goodness, Community, and Divine Law

Read: Henry of Ghent *Dying for the Commonwealth*

Read: Gouffier of Fontaines *Natural Reason, Love of God, and Love of Self*

Read: Suarez *On Laws and God the Legislator* Book I, Chs. 1&2

Week 8: Suarez, Introducing Kant

Read: Suarez *On Laws and God the Legislator* Book II, Chs. 5*6

Read: Kant, *Groundwork* Preface

SHORT PAPER DUE [] AT 11:59 p.m. TO TURNITIN

Week 9: Kant

Read: Kant, *Groundwork* Section I

Read: Kant, *Groundwork* Section II

Week 10: Kant, continued

Read: Kant, *Groundwork* Section III

Read: Herman, "On the Value of Acting from the Motive of Duty"

Read: Korsgaard, "Skepticism About Practical Reason"

UNIT 3: RULES, VALUE, AND OBJECTIVITY

Week 11: Utilitarianism I

Read: Mill, *Utilitarianism* Selections

Read: Smart, *Utilitarianism: For and Against* Part 1

Week 12: Utilitarianism II

Read: Williams, *Utilitarianism: For and Against* Part 2

Read: G.E. Moore, *Principia Ethica* Selections

Week 13: Moral Subjects

Read: Hume, *A Treatise on Human Nature* Selections

Read: Williams, "Internal and External Reasons"

Read: Blackburn, "How to be an Ethical Anti-Realist"

Read: Blackburn, "Must We Weep for Sentimentalism?"

**** FINAL PAPER DUE [] AT 11:59 p.m. TO TURNITIN ****

Week 14: Moral Relativism

Read: Harman, "Moral Relativism"

Read: Jarvis Thomson, "Moral Objectivity"

Week 15: Moral Realism, Human Nature (again)

Read: Harman and Thomson, Responses

Read: Street, "A Darwinian Dilemma for Realist Theories of Value"

Read: Parfit, *On What Matters*, Excerpt