

Philosophy 153B: The Nature of Value
SYLLABUS

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:00a.m.-12:50p.m.
Moore 1003

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

Course Overview

We all have beliefs about what is right or wrong, good or bad, obligatory or merely permissible. Ethics asks which of these beliefs are correct—it investigates which acts are right or wrong, good or bad, morally obligatory or forbidden, and so on, as well as which states of affairs are better or worse. Metaethics asks what sort of states these *normative* judgments are in the first place, as well as what facts about normative matters consist in, how we can come to know about them, whether they can fit into a scientific or naturalistic picture of the world and of ourselves, and what all of this has to do with facts about our own reasoning, attitudes, motivation, and sentiments. We will read many of the classic works in metaethics from the 20th Century, as well as more recent work on evolution and ethics, disagreement, and the meaning of normative terms.

Course Materials

Required: Darwall, Stephen, Gibbard, Allan, and Railton, Peter (1997). *Moral Discourse and Practice*. Oxford University Press.

Required: Korsgaard, Christine (1996). *The Sources of Normativity*. Cambridge University Press.

Required: Enoch, David (2011). *Taking Morality Seriously*. Oxford University Press.

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

Difficulty

This course is an upper-division class on an advanced topic. 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.

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)

There is a strictly enforced prerequisite of one prior philosophy course and a strict enrollment cap of 20 students. Students are expected to have this background and to participate actively in the class. Please contact the instructor if you have questions.

Course Requirements

1. Submitted questions, to be completed **by 8pm** on Wednesdays.
2. Two graded papers (4-5 pgs. and 6-8 pgs.).
3. Regular lecture attendance.

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

- *Participation:* 10%
 - *Submitted questions:* 15%
 - *Shorter paper:* 20%
 - *Final Paper:* 30%
 - *Final Exam:* 25%
- 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 CCLE 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.

Papers

SHORTER PAPER (4-5 pages)

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

FINAL PAPER (6-8 pages)

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

Exam

FINAL EXAM on [] at [].

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)

*=In *Moral Discourse and Practice*

Week 1: Introduction, The Open Question Argument

Read: Introduction, Toward *Fin de siecle* Ethics: Some Trends*

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

Read: Connie Rosati, "Naturalism, Normativity, and the Open Question Argument"

Week 2: The Argument from Queerness and Metaethical Theory

Read: J.L. Mackie, From *Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong**

Read: Charles Stevenon, "The Emotive Meaning of Ethical Terms"*

Read: Nicholas Sturgeon, "Moral Explanation"

Read: Richard Boyd, "How To Be a Moral Realist"*

Week 3: Expressivism, Projectivism

Read: Simon Blackburn, "How To Be an Ethical Antirealist"*

Read: Allan Gibbard, "Wise Choices, Apt Feelings"*

Read: John McDowell, "Values and Secondary Qualities"*

Read: John McDowell, "Projection and Truth in Ethics"*

Week 4: Subjectivism, Contractualism

Read: David Wiggins, "A Sensible Subjectivism?"*

Read: John Rawls, "Kantian Constructivism in Moral Theory"*

Read: T.M. Scanlon, "Contractualism and Utilitarianism"*

Week 5: Moral Matters, Moral Decisions

Read: Stephen Darwall, "Reasons, Motives, and the Demands of Morality: An Introduction"*

Read: Philippa Foot, "Morality as a System of Hypothetical Imperatives"*

Read: Thomas Nagel, From *The Possibility of Altruism**

Week 6: Reasons, Rationality, and Morality

Read: Warren Quinn, "Putting Rationality in its Place"
Read: David Gauthier, From *Morals by Agreement**

Read: Bernard Williams, "Internal and External Reasons"*

Week 7: Practical Reason, Constructivism

Read: Christine Korsgaard, "Skepticism about Practical Reason"*

Read: Korsgaard, *The Sources of Normativity* Chapter 1

Read: Sharon Street, "What is Constructivism in Ethics and Metaethics?"

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

Week 8: Kantian Constructivism

Read: Korsgaard, *The Sources of Normativity* Chapter 2

Read: Korsgaard, *The Sources of Normativity* Chapter 3

Week 9: Humean Constructivism

Read: Korsgaard, *The Sources of Normativity* Chapter 4

Read: Sharon Street, "Coming to Terms With Contingency: Humean Constructivism about Practical Reason"

Read: Ronald Dworkin, "Objectivity and Truth: You'd Better Believe It"

Read: Sharon Street, "Objectivity and Truth: You'd Better Rethink It"

Week 10: Objectivity, Evolution, and Value

Read: Gilbert Harman, "Ethics and Observation"*

Read: Richard Joyce, "The Evolutionary Debunking of Morality", from *The Evolution of Morality*

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

Week 11: Moral Realism I

Read: David Enoch, *Taking Morality Seriously* Chapter 2

Read: David Enoch, *Taking Morality Seriously* Chapter 3

Read: David Enoch, *Taking Morality Seriously* Chapter 4

Week 12: Moral Realism II

Read: David Enoch, *Taking Morality Seriously* Chapter 5

Read: David Enoch, *Taking Morality Seriously* Chapter 6

Read: David Enoch, *Taking Morality Seriously* Chapter 7

Week 13: Moral Realism III

Read: David Enoch, *Taking Morality Seriously* Chapter 8

Read: Michael Smith, Extract from *The Moral Problem*

Read: David Enoch, *Taking Morality Seriously* Chapter 9

Read: T.M. Scanlon, Extract from *Being Realistic about Reasons*

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

Week 14: Moral Disagreement

Read: Sarah McGrath, “Skepticism about Moral Expertise as a Puzzle for Moral Realism”

Read: Dustin Locke, “The Epistemic Significance of Moral Disagreement”

Read: James Dreier, “Relativism (and Expressivism) and the Problem of Disagreement”

Week 15: Moral Language

Read: John MacFarlane, *Assessment Sensitivity* Chapter 1

Read: Paul Horwich, “The Frege-Geach Point”

Read: James Dreier, “Metaethics and the Problem of Creeping Minimalism”