

PHIL 306
Ethics
FALL 2017

Instructor: Daniel Skibra

Time and Location: T, Th; 09:40AM - 11:10AM, Old Main, Room 101

Contact: email: daniel.skibra@elmhurst.edu

Office Hours: Tuesday 11:30 - 12:30 (Hammerschmidt 004)

Course Description

An analytical and critical examination of classical and contemporary moral theories, supplemented by an examination of selected moral problems. Topics include the principles and methods of both ethical theory and moral choice.

ECIC Area of Knowledge (Inquiry into Ethics and Justice)

This course explores theories and instances of justice and injustice in current and historical human societies. Students will analyze different systems of values that inform how people interact as individuals as well as members of larger societal groups. The course examines ethical reasoning bearing on such principles as liberty, rights, dissent, moral status, equality, and justice.

- Understand several distinct systems of ethical reasoning and theories of value and justice;
- Evaluate in their contexts specific historical and contemporary theories or actions;
- Articulate and evaluate multiple perspectives on ethics and social justice.

Course Requirements

Assignments

Reading Quizzes/ small assignments: 10%

Paper 1 (Due **Oct 24**; Draft due **Oct 17**) (2-3 pages): 15%

Paper 2 (Due **Dec 7**; Draft due **Nov 30**) (4-5 pages): 25%

Mid-term Exam: 20%

Final Exam: 20%

Class discussion/ participation: 10%

Notes on assignments

Resources for writing a philosophy paper:

- <http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html>

Course Policies

Attendance

You are required to attend the class meetings; attendance will be taken. However, I understand that emergencies arise, people get sick, and other factors may legitimately prevent you from coming to a particular class. Therefore, I will adopt the following attendance policy. Your grade will not be affected by up to **3** absences. You do not need to provide any kind of written excuse or justification for these absences (although you are welcome to provide them). However, more than three absences will begin to have an effect on your final grade, bringing your average down by a third of a grade for each additional day missed. *If at some point in the term you expect to miss more than this (due to a serious illness, for example), let me know as soon as you can, **before** you accumulate the absences!* It will be your responsibility to distribute your absences however you see fit. My advice: try not to use them. You never know when something comes up.

Importantly, you are responsible for the material covered in class. Any slides presented in class will be made available on Blackboard, but class time will often not be devoted to lecture, and material will not always be on the slides. There is simply no substitute for being in class.

Access and Disability Services

Elmhurst College will make accommodations for students with disabilities based on the presentation of appropriate documentation. If you believe that you have a disability that may impact your work in this course, contact Dr. Corinne Smith, Access and Disability Services Coordinator, at corinne.smith@elmhurst.edu, (603) 617-6448.

Learning Center: Academic Support

The Learning Center offers services to support the academic performance of all Elmhurst College students. Sessions are structured to promote principles of effective, self-regulated learning and academic management. Areas of tutoring include math, biology, kinesiology, writing, reading, study skills, and special test preparation (i.e., ACT, SAT, GRE, TAP). For more information, contact Mrs. Emmi McAdams, Math Specialist, at emmim@elmhurst.edu, (630) 617-5376, or Mrs. Susan Roach, Learning Center Director, at susan.roach@elmhurst.edu, (630) 617-3155.

Both Access and Disability Services and the Learning Center are located in the Frick Center in Room 229.

Policy on Academic Integrity

Standards of academic conduct are set forth in the College's Academic Integrity Policy. By registering for this class, you have acknowledged your awareness of the Academic Integrity Policy, and you are obliged to become familiar with your rights and responsibilities as defined by it. Violations of the Academic Integrity Policy will not be treated lightly, and disciplinary actions will be taken should such violations occur.

Extension Policy and Incompletes

The due dates for the assignments are as they appear on the syllabus. Late assignments will not be tolerated, and will accumulate deductions of one third of a letter grade for every day the assignment is late. If you think you will need an extension for an assignment, you need to request one at least two days before the due date. Do not ask after the date has passed, or the night before the deadline.

In-class Technology Policy

In this class, we will regularly engage in small group instruction and activities, as well as discussions with the whole class. Technology such as cell phones, tablets, and laptops easily become a distraction and create an obstacle to engagement during class time. For this reason, the policy of the class will be as follows. Do not use these devices during class time. Any lecture slides will be made available on the online course site, and any notes you might need to make should be taken by hand. Of course, exceptions will be made for adaptive devices. If you have a need for such a device, please consult the instructor.

Email/ Communication

The best way to reach me outside class is via email. However, give me 24-48 hours to respond during the week. If you email me after 5pm on Friday, don't expect a response until Monday morning. Most of the time, I will be able to respond to you sooner than this, but please plan your emails accordingly. When there is a paper due, get all of your questions to me 48 hours before the due date.

I will answer *simple, specific* questions over email pertaining to the course material or the logistics of the course. I can also address simple interpretive questions you have with the material, or arguments you are trying out for your papers. To address anything more involved, you'll need to meet with me in office hours. (I highly encourage you to come to office hours in any event.)

Participation

Participation in class discussion constitutes a significant part of your grade. You will be expected to attend class having done the readings and thought about them enough to discuss the arguments they make, to ask informed questions about them, and to engage with the

other members of the class on these matters. Two expectations in service of these aims are worth making explicit. First, you'll need to be well-prepared, having read and thought about the assigned readings before class. Secondly, we will all need to foster a respectful, open environment where we can clarify, interpret and critically engage the philosophical issues dealt with in readings. Maintaining a respectful classroom atmosphere is crucial, and part of your responsibility.

Required Texts

- Russ Shafer-Landau - *The Fundamentals of Ethics, Third Edition*, Oxford University Press, 2015 (ISBN:978019999723)
- Other texts will be posted to the course's Blackboard site.

Reading Schedule*

*The readings should be completed by the date indicated. When a reading assignment is listed more than once, we will continue talking about this reading. It is *not* a new assignment.

Day	Date	Assignment	Length
TUES	Aug 29	S-L: Introduction	17 PAGES
THURS	Aug 31	S-L: Chapter 5: Morality & Religion	10 PAGES
TUES	Sept 5	Plato: Euthyphro	16 PAGES
THURS	Sept 7	S-L: Chapter 1: Hedonism: It's Powerful Appeal	6 PAGES
TUES	Sept 12	S-L: Chapter 9: Consequentialism: Its Nature & Attractions	15 PAGES
THURS	Sept 14	S-L: Chapter 10: Consequentialism: Its Difficulties	19 PAGES
TUES	Sept 19	Mill: Chapter 2 of <i>Utilitarianism</i> : What is Utilitarianism?	20 PAGES
THURS	Sept 22	S-L: Chapter 2: Is Happiness All That Matters?	10 PAGES
TUES	Sept 26	S-L: Chapter 11: the Kantian Perspective: Fairness & Justice	11 PAGES
THURS	Sept 28	S-L: Chapter 12: the Kantian Perspective: Autonomy & Respect	16 PAGES
TUES	Oct 3	Kant: Section I of <i>Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals</i>	11 PAGES
THURS	Oct 5	O' Neil: A Simplified Account of Kant's Ethics (Also recommended: Ebels-Duggan: Kantian Ethics)	7 PAGES
TUES	Oct 10	Mid Term Exam	
THURS	Oct 12	S-L: Chapter 13: the Social Contract Tradition: the Theory & Its Attractions	11 PAGES
TUES	Oct 17	S-L: Chapter 14: the Social Contract Tradition: Problems & Prospects (Paper 1 draft due)	15 PAGES
THURS	Oct 19	Rawls- Justice as Fairness	30 PAGES

Day	Date	Assignment	Length
TUES	Oct 24	Rawls continued; no new reading (Paper 1 final draft due)	0 PAGES
THURS	Oct 26	S-L: Chapter 3: Getting What You Want	5 PAGES
TUES	Oct 31	S-L: Chapter 4: Problems for the Desire Theory	7 PAGES
THURS	Nov 2	S-L: Chapter 17: Virtue Ethics	18 PAGES
TUES	Nov 7	Aristotle: Nicomachean Ethics, Book 2	21 PAGES
THURS	Nov 9	Aristotle: Nicomachean Ethics, Book 3.1 - 3.2	7 PAGES
TUES	Nov 14	S-L: Chapter 18: Feminist Ethics	14 PAGES
THURS	Nov 16	Feminist ethics continued; no new reading	0 PAGES
TUES	Nov 21	Callicot- the Land Ethic	14 PAGES
THURS	Nov 23	Thanksgiving; no class	
TUES	Nov 28	Matthews- Deep Ecology (Paper 2 draft due)	15 PAGES
THURS	Nov 30	S-L: Chapter 21: Eleven Arguments Against Moral Objectivity	18 PAGES
TUES	Dec 5	Chapter 21 Continued; no new reading	0 PAGES
THURS	Dec 7	Review (Paper 2 final draft due)	
THURS	Dec 14	Final Exam: 8:00 - 10:00AM (sorry)	