

1-2012

PHL 110E.03: Introduction to Ethics

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Philosophy 110E Ethics

MWF 11:10-12:00

Professor Armond Duwell

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office hours: MWF 8-9am

This course is an introduction to the major approaches to the study of ethics in the Western tradition. We will look at some classical texts from the history of philosophy as well as some of the most influential texts from the last 30 years. Our objectives are to get a sense of the major approaches to ethics, but most importantly learn how to critically evaluate the quality of moral arguments, even those whose conclusions we might agree with.

Required Texts:

Rachels and Rachels, *The Elements of Moral Philosophy* 7th Edition.

Grading:

There will be 5 exams. The first 4 exams will each be worth 15% of your grade. The first 3 exams are non-cumulative. They cover the material since the last exam, or in case of the first exam the material since the beginning of class. The questions on these exams will be multiple choice or short answer questions. The final exam will be worth 40%. It will be cumulative. As with the other tests, it will be multiple choice and short answer questions.

Make up exams will be given only in extreme circumstances, family death, severe illness, severe car accident, etc. *Proof of extreme circumstances is required in order to make up an exam.* Oversleeping is not an acceptable excuse, nor busses running late, stuck in detox, etc. Take extra precautions on exam days to avoid these problems. Exams not taken, for any reason, will receive a zero. *If you have a problem, contact me as soon as you know you have a problem!*

Attendance and Etiquette:

Attendance is crucial in this course. It is impossible to learn philosophy without doing it, i.e. engaging in philosophical discussion. You are expected to arrive on time, stay for the duration of class and participate in discussion. If you have to leave early, please tell me at the beginning of class and sit close to the exit to minimize the disturbance to the class. Cell phones should be turned off for the duration of class. You will be asked to leave if you are doing anything not relevant for class, e.g. reading the newspaper, sleeping, doing work for other classes, etc.

I will be making handouts of the lecture material available to you. It will be available through Moodle and you will be expected to bring a copy of the handout with you to class.

Academic Misconduct:

You are strictly held to the University of Montana Student Conduct Code (<http://www.umt.edu.SA>). The exams are closed-note: you may not consult anything but your own mind in order to answer questions on the exam. You may not use cell-phones, or any electronic devices to aid you, nor fellow students, nor fellow students' answers on exams, etc. You will receive no credit for any exam that you cheat on. Your conduct will also be reported to the Dean.

Special Needs:

Students with disabilities will receive reasonable modifications in this course related to those disabilities. Your responsibilities are to request them from me with sufficient advance notice, and to be prepared to provide verification of disability and its impact from Disability Services. Please speak with me after class or during my office hours to discuss the details. For more information, visit the Disability Services for Students website at www.umt.edu/dss/

Tentative Schedule:

This schedule is likely to fluctuate. This goes for content as well as for exams. For the most up to date class information, look on Moodle. You are held responsible for staying up to date in class even if you were absent.

Week 1 1/23-1/27

Introduction to course, topics, syllabus, etc.
Watch Open-mindedness: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T69TOuqaqXI>
Read Chapter 1
Start work on Arguments

Week 2 1/30-2/3

Read "Will Cloning Harm People?", with an eye towards arguments
Read Chapter 2 on Cultural Relativism

Week 3 2/6-2/10

Read "Morality as Based on Sentiment"
Read Chapter 3 on Subjectivism
Read "The Subjectivity of Moral Values" RTD 3

Week 4 2/13-2/17

Film: The Courage to Care.

Friday 2/17 Exam 1

Week 5 2/22-2/24

No Class 2/20

Chapter 4 Morality and Religion

``Ethics and Natural Law"

``Is Homosexuality Unnatural"

Week 6 2/27-3/2

Read Chapter 5, Ethical Egoism

Read "9/11 and Starvation", "The Singer Solution to World Poverty", "Is Racial Discrimination Arbitrary?"

Week 7 3/5-3/9

Exam 2 Monday 3/5

Film: A Death of One's Own

Week 8 3/12-16

Read "The Morality of Euthanasia", and "Assisted Suicide: Pro-Choice or Anti-Life?"

Read ``Utilitarianism"

Read Chapter 7 and 8 on Utilitarianism

Week 9 3/19-3/23

Read "Utilitarianism and Integrity", "The Experience Machine", and "The Immorality of SUVs and Trucks"

Read Chapter 9, Are There Absolute Moral Rules?

Week 10 3/26-3/30

Read "The Ethics of War and Peace" and "America's Unjust Drug War"

Read Chapter 10, Kant and Respect for Persons

Exam 3 Friday 3/30

Week 11

SPRING BREAK

Week 12 4/9-4/13

Film: Dead Men Walking

Week 13 4/16-20

Read "In Defense of the Death Penalty" and "The Case against the Death Penalty"
Read "The Social Contract"
Read Chapter 6 The Social Contract Theory
Read "Letter from the Birmingham City Jail"

Week 14 4/23-4/27

Read "The Virtues"
Read Chapter 12
Read "Preserving the Environment"

Exam 4 Friday 4/27

Week 15 4/30-5/4

Read "A Defense of Abortion" and "Why Abortion Is Immoral"
If time, read Chapter 11, Feminism and the Ethics of Care

Week 16

Final Thursday 5/10, 10:10-12:10