

## Ethics and Society Spring 2017

### Instructor

Reuven Brandt

Office: HSS 7023

Office Hours: Monday 3-4PM;

Wednesday 3-4PM

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### Teaching assistants:

William Albuquerque walbuque@ucsd.edu	Jonathan Knutzen jknutzen@ucsd.edu	Marcus McGahhey mmcgahhe@ucsd.edu	Shawn Wang tiw159@ucsd.edu
Mon. 3-4, Wed. 4-5 HSS 8027	Mon 4:30-6:30 HSS 7055	Mon. 5-6, Tu. 4-5 H&SS 7043	Mon 3-4pm, Thr 4-5 H&SS 8004

### Course description:

This class is an introduction to philosophical approaches to contemporary questions in applied ethics. In the first portion of the class we will be examining three theoretical approaches to ethical questions: Mill's utilitarianism, Kant's deontology, and Ross' pluralistic deontology. With this theoretical background in place, we will then move to examining questions that arise in applied ethics. The first two questions we will look at pertain to reproductive ethics. We will look at whether it is permissible to have children, and whether parents ought to be licensed. Next we will look at whether drugs should be legal, and whether there is a general obligation to follow the law. The last section will look at what we owe to others, and whether we have an obligation to treat everyone impartially when it comes to charitable giving.

### Readings (All available on the course website)

<b>Week 1</b>	April 3  Intro Class	April 5  Utilitarianism Utilitarianism, Mill Ch.2-4
<b>Week 2</b>	April 10  Utilitarianism  Utilitarianism, Mill Ch.4	April 12  Kantian Deontology Kant, "Groundwork for the metaphysics of morals"
<b>Week 3</b>	April 17  Kantian Deontology Kant, "Groundwork for the metaphysics of morals"	April 19  Ross, "What makes right actions Right", <i>The Right and the Good</i>

<b>Week 4</b>	April 24  Review	April 26  In class midterm
<b>Week 5</b>	May 1  Is Reproduction Permissible?  Benatar, "Why coming into existence is always a harm", <i>Better to Have Never Been; The Harm of Coming Into Existence</i>	May 3  Is Reproduction Permissible?  McMahan, "Causing People to Exist and Saving People's Lives"
<b>Week 6</b>	May 8  Should Parents be Licensed?  LaFollette, "Licensing Parents"	May 10  Should Parents be Licensed?  Frisch, "On licentious licensing: A reply to Hugh LaFollette"
<b>Week 7</b>	May 15  Should Drugs be Legal?  Smith, "Drugs, Morality and the Law"	May 17  Should Drugs be Legal? (Essay due)  Corlett, "Taking Drugs Very Seriously"
<b>Week 8</b>	May 22  Is There an Obligation to Obey the Law?	May 24  Is There an Obligation to Obey the Law?
<b>Week 9</b>	May 29 No Class	May 31  Singer, "Famine, Affluence and Morality"
<b>Week 10</b>	June 5  Hardin, "Lifeboat Ethics"	June 7  Cottingham, "Partiality, favouritism and morality"

### Assessment:

Section: attendance 5%, participation 5%

In-class midterm: 25% (April 26<sup>th</sup>)

Short Essay (1500 words): 30% (Due May 17<sup>th</sup> at 6PM)

Final Essay (2000 words): 35% (due June 16<sup>th</sup> at 6PM) **HARD DEADLINE**

### **Late policy for short essay:**

Essays received up to May 19<sup>th</sup> at 11:59PM will be penalized by 3 percent, but comments will be provided. Essays received after May 19<sup>th</sup> will be penalized an addition 2 percent per day, and no comments will be provided. Essay will not be accepted after May 28<sup>th</sup>.

### **Late policy for final essay:**

**Late essays will not be accepted**, except for good cause (eg. illness, family emergency, etc). Please see university policy governing assigning incomplete (I) grades, which can be found here: <http://ucsd.edu/catalog/front/AcadRegu.html>

### **Guidelines:**

- Readings are subject to minor adjustments.
- I reserve the right to limit and/or prohibit the use of laptops, mobile phones, and other electronic devices at any point during the term if I judge that such devices are impeding concentration.
- If you require any form of accommodation on the grounds of disability please make sure you have registered with the Office for Students with Disabilities and have followed their guidelines for alerting instructors to your particular needs. The university's policy on the accommodation of disability can be found here: <https://senate.ucsd.edu/Operating-Procedures/Senate-Manual/Appendices/3>
- If you require any accommodation on religious grounds, please alert me in writing as soon as possible. The university's policy on religious accommodation can be found here: <https://senate.ucsd.edu/operating-procedures/educational-policies/courses/epc-policies-on-courses/policy-exams-including-midterms-final-exams-and-religious-accommodations-for-exams/>
- All instances of academic offences including plagiarism, cheating on exams, and multiple submission of work, will be handled in accordance with official UCSD policy, which can be found here: <http://senate.ucsd.edu/Operating-Procedures/Senate-Manual/Appendices/2>. Please read the policy, and ensure that you understand it.