

PHIL 13: Introduction to Philosophy: Ethics
Pepper Canyon Hall 109, Tuesday/Thursday 9:30-10:50

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Course Overview

This course is an introduction to ethics. Here, we'll discuss some of the most complicated, difficult, and important questions philosophers have ever thought about:

- **How do we know what's right and wrong?** We'll start with normative ethics, the subfield of ethics concerned with developing theories to explain right and wrong action: consequentialism, deontology, and virtue ethics/the ethics of care.
- **What's right or wrong in a specific situation?** Next, we'll look at applied ethics, the subfield of ethics that applies ethical theories to particular problems we face. We will look at three: oppression and privilege, abortion, and climate change.
- **Do rightness and wrongness even exist?** We'll end the course with metaethics, the subfield of ethics that looks at the high-level questions of ethics: whether right and wrong exist and whether they're the same for everyone.

Course Requirements and Policies

You will need:

- The readings. You can purchase the course reader, which has all the readings, at AS Soft Reserves (in Student Center A). I will also make all readings available on Ted.
- An i>clicker. If you don't already have one, you can buy one at the Bookstore or on the internet. Register your clicker on the course Ted site before Thursday of week 1.
- Ted access. I will post slides, assignments, the syllabus, and other information on Ted.

Assignments: There are three assignments due in this course. There are two take-home exams, due by the start of class on May 6th (Tuesday of week 6) and on May 27th (Tuesday of week 9). The third assignment is a 4-5 page final paper, due by 5:00 pm on June 10th (Tuesday of finals week). All assignments must be submitted **both** through Ted and in hard-copy form by the start of class. Your papers will be graded using Turnitin.

Participation: Your participation grade will be calculated in two ways:

- We will be using clickers and peer instruction in this course. You will get one point for each clicker question you answer (even if you get it wrong).
- You will be responsible for completing five in-class writing assignments in your sections. These will be scheduled randomly throughout the quarter. Each assignment is worth five points.

The grade breakdown is:

- **Take-home assignment 1:** 20%
- **Take-home assignment 2:** 30%
- **Final:** 40%
- **Participation:** 10%

The grade scale is:

A+: 98% or above and at my discretion	A: 93-100%	A-: 90-92%
B+: 87-89%	B: 83-86%	B-: 80-82%
C+: 77-79%	C: 73-76%	C-: 70-72%
D+: 67-69%	D: 63-66%	D-: 60-62%
F: below 60%		

Lateness policy: Your paper must be turned in at the start of class on the day it is due. **There are no exceptions unless you make prior arrangements with me.** I will deduct one-third of a grade if the paper is turned in the day it's due any time after the start of class and one-third of a grade for each day after that that the paper is late (so, for example, a paper that would have gotten an A if it were turned in on time on Tuesday would get a B if turned in on Thursday).

On writing: Your success in this class depends on the ability to express yourself clearly. Here are some writing resources I recommend:

- **The UCSD Writing Center** (Mandeville 127; writingcenter.ucsd.edu) will talk through ideas, work through a draft with you, and generally give advice at all stages of the writing process.
- ***Style***, by Joseph M. Williams (University of Chicago Press, 1990) is an excellent guide to clear and forceful writing. It's widely and cheaply available at bookstores and through Amazon.

Other policies

- **Laptops are not allowed in class**, except with written permission from, for example, the Office for Students with Disabilities.
- **You must observe UCSD's academic integrity policies.** If you violate the Policy on Integrity of Scholarship, you will be reported to the Academic Integrity Office, and I will penalize you as severely as UCSD allows. If you're concerned you may be in violation of the Policy, you can visit the Academic Integrity Office's website (<http://students.ucsd.edu/academics/academic-integrity/index.html>) or the Writing Center, or you can talk to your TAs or me about the assignment.
- If you need an accommodation for a disability or for religious reasons, please let me know during the first week of the course.
- You are welcome and encouraged to come to my office hours or make an appointment with me or your TAs whenever you want to talk about the course material, your assignments, or any other philosophy-related concerns you have.

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

Week 1

Tuesday, April 1: Course introduction

Reading: None

Thursday, April 3: Logic and arguments

Reading: Singer, "Famine, Affluence, and Morality"

Week 2

Tuesday, April 8: Normative ethics: consequentialism

Reading: Mill, *Utilitarianism* Ch. 2

Thursday, April 10: Normative ethics: consequentialism

Reading: Smart, "Extreme and Restricted Utilitarianism"

Week 3

Tuesday, April 15: Normative ethics: consequentialism

Reading: Williams, "Against Utilitarianism"

Thursday, April 17: Normative ethics: deontology

Reading: Kant, "The Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals" and
Shafer-Landau, "The Kantian Perspective: Fairness and Justice"

Week 4: Take-home assignment 1 distributed on Tuesday

Tuesday, April 22: Normative ethics: deontology

Reading: Shafer-Landau, "The Kantian Perspective: Autonomy and Respect"

Thursday, April 24: Normative ethics: deontology

Reading: Thomson, "The Trolley Problem"

Week 5

Tuesday, April 29: Normative ethics: virtue ethics

Reading: Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics* Books I.4-5, I.7-9, and II

Thursday, May 1: Normative ethics: ethics of care

Reading: Held, "The Ethics of Care as Moral Theory"

Week 6: Take-home assignment 1 due on Tuesday

Tuesday, May 6: Applied ethics: oppression and privilege

Reading: Young, "Five Faces of Oppression"

Thursday, May 8: Applied ethics: oppression and privilege

Reading: Johnson, *The Gender Knot* Ch. 1

Week 7: Take-home assignment 2 distributed on Tuesday

Tuesday, May 13: Applied ethics: abortion

Reading: Thomson, "A Defense of Abortion"

Thursday, May 15: Applied ethics: abortion

Reading: Marquis, "Why Abortion Is Immoral"

Week 8

Tuesday, May 20: Applied ethics: climate change

Reading: Pope, "Ethics as if Tomorrow Mattered"

Thursday, May 22: Applied ethics: climate change

Reading: Sinnott-Armstrong, "It's Not *My* Fault: Global Warming and Individual Moral Obligations"

Week 9: Take-home assignment 2 due and final paper topics distributed on Tuesday

Tuesday, May 27: Metaethics: ethics and religion

Reading: Plato, *Euthyphro*

Thursday, May 29: Metaethics: moral relativism

Reading: Benedict, "The Case for Moral Relativism"

Week 10

Tuesday, June 3: Metaethics: moral relativism

Reading: Nussbaum, "Judging Other Cultures: The Case of Genital Mutilation"

Thursday, June 5: Metaethics: what good is moral theory?

Reading: Wolf, "Moral Saints"

Week 11: Final paper due on Tuesday, June 10, by 5:00 pm