

**Philosophy 162 – Contemporary Moral Issues**

Fall 2016, MWF 1:00-1:50, CSB 004

Grader: J.P. Messina

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Office: HSS 8061

**Course Description**

The purpose of this course is to carefully explore arguments and issues in contemporary moral ethics pertaining to the use of violence. Such issues include: the moral permissibility of the resort to personal self-defense, to war, to civil disobedience, to terrorism, and to torture. We will also investigate issues pertaining to pacifism. In each case, we will begin with an analysis of the concept followed by moral argumentation. Students should be warned that some of the readings will be graphic.

**Grading**

*Tests* - There will be three take-home exams. The first two will be worth 30% each of your total grade, and the last will be worth 40%. Each exam will consist of a set of short-answer questions from which you will be required to answer a certain number of them. All exams will be turned in electronically. The material covered in each exam covers only what was assigned since the previous exam.

*Attendance* - I will not take attendance. However, it is in your interest to show up to class. The readings can be quite difficult; the purpose of lecture is to elucidate and supplement these readings. In addition, much of what will be on the test will be taken from lecture, and will not be covered in the readings.

*Excuses* - Extensions to an exam's due date will be granted for religious observances provided I am informed beforehand. Extensions will also be granted for very serious emergencies (hospitalization, bereavement, etc.) provided suitable evidence is provided afterwards. Otherwise, exams will be docked one point for every day that they are late (including weekends).

*grading scale:*

<u>points</u>	<u>grade</u>
10	A
9	A-
8	B+
7	B
6	B-
5	C+
4	C
3	C-
2	D+
1	D
0	F

**Reading**

All readings will be available electronically on the class's TritonEd website.

**Academic Integrity**

Any violations of academic integrity will be turned over to the Dean of Judicial Affairs. Details regarding what counts as cheating can be found here: [academicintegrity.ucsd.edu](http://academicintegrity.ucsd.edu). Consult the site or an instructor if you have any doubts or questions regarding what counts as cheating. All research papers will be run through the Turnitin service, which will determine whether the author has plagiarized from other papers or from Internet sources.

**Contact**

I am available at my office hours (HSS 8061) every Wednesday, from 2:15-3:45. If you cannot attend at that time, you should feel free to make an appointment by talking to me in person, or by contacting me by email.

## Readings & Topics

*This schedule is highly tentative. Any changes will be announced in class.*

### PART I. Ethics of Self-Defense

#### Week 0

Fri. Sep. 23 - [class introduction]

#### Week 1

Mon. Sep. 26 - Thomson, "Self-Defense"

Wed. Sep. 28 - Otsuka, "Killing the Innocent in Self-Defense"

Fri. Sep. 30 - McMahan, "Moral Liability to Defensive Killing"

#### Week 2

Mon. Oct. 3 - Frowe, "Equating Innocent Threats and Bystanders"

Wed. Oct. 5 - Ferzan, "Culpable Aggression"

Fri. Oct 7 - Farrell, "The Justification of Deterrent Violence"

### PART II. Ethics of Terrorism

#### Week 3

Mon. Oct. 10 - Scheffler, "Is Terrorism Morally Distinctive?" *First Test Assigned*

Wed. Oct. 12 - McPherson, "Is Terrorism Distinctively Wrong?"

Fri. Oct. 14 - (no new reading)

### PART III. Ethics of War

#### Week 4

Mon. Oct. 17 - Part 2 of the Stanford Encyclopedia Entry on War *First Test Due*

Wed. Oct. 19 - Reichberg, "Just War and Regular War- Competing Paradigms"

Fri. Oct. 21 - Hurka, "Proportionality and the Morality of War" [p1]

#### Week 5

Mon. Oct. 24 - Hurka, "Proportionality and the Morality of War" [p2]

Wed. Oct. 26 - McMahan, "The Morality of War and the Law of War" [p1]

Fri. Oct. 28 - McMahan, "The Morality of War and the Law of War" [p2]

#### Week 6

Mon. Oct. 31 - Rodin - "The Myth of National Self-Defense" *Second Test Assigned*

Wed. Nov. 2 - Fabre - 'War Exit'

Fri. Nov. 4 - [no class]

### PART IV. Ethics of Pacifism

#### Week 8

Mon. Nov. 14 - May, "Contingent Pacifism and the Moral Risks of Participating in War" *Second Test Due*

Wed. Nov. 16 - McMahan, "Pacifism and Moral Theory"

Fri. Nov. 18 - Bazargan, "Varieties of Contingent Pacifism in War"

### PART V. Ethics of Torture

#### Week 7

Mon. Nov. 7 - Sussman, "What's Wrong with Torture?"

Wed. Nov. 9 - Dershowitz, "Should the Ticking Bomb Terrorist Be Tortured?"

Fri. Nov. 11 - Shue, "Torture in Dreamland"

## **PART VI. Ethics of Civil Disobedience**

### Week 9

Mon. Nov. 21 - Farrell, "Paying the Penalty: Justifiable Civil Disobedience and the Problem of Punishment"

Wed. Nov. 23 - Lefkowitz, "On a Moral Right to Civil Disobedience"

Fri. Nov. 25 [no class]

### Week 10

Mon. Nov. 28 - Brownlee, "The Communicative Aspects of Civil Disobedience" *Third Test Assigned*

Wed. Nov. 30 - Smith, "Civil Disobedience and the Public Sphere"

Fri. Dec. 2 - Delmas, "Political Resistance: A Matter of Fairness"

### Finals Week

Wed. Dec 07 - *Third Test Due*