SYLLABUS, PHIL 13: Ethics, Fall 2011

Class: Tu&Th 2-3:20, CENTR 115
Contact: office hours are by appointment. email: sbazargan@ucsd.edu

Saba Bazargan

READINGS: One book is required- Utilitarianism: For and Against by Smart & Williams. All other readings can be found on the course webpage: [http://sites.google.com/site/bazarganthings/]

GRADING: There will be three in-class short-answer tests, each worth 30% of your total grade. Each test will be the same length. Study questions will be provided one week before each test. Attendance at discussion is worth 10% of your total grade.

TOPICS: This course will consist of an introduction to meta-ethics, normative ethics, and applied ethics. The ordering of the topics we will cover is pre-arranged. But the amount of time we will spend on each topic is not.

CHEATING: UCSD policy- [http://senate.ucsd.edu/manual/appendices/app2.htm]

MISC: Unless you have language or hearing difficulties, I prefer that you refrain from recording lecture.

TAs: Jeremy Gomer: jgomer@ucsd.edu, Kyle Sereda: ksereda@ucsd.edu, Nat Jacobs: njacobs@ucsd.edu

I. Meta-Ethics

I.A. The Possibility of Ethics
Are there any true ethical claims?
What, if anything, makes an ethical claim true?
Is relativism about ethical claims correct?
Bernard Williams, ‘Subjectivism’

I.B. The Basis of Ethics
Does morality require a religious basis?
Plato, ‘Euthyphro’
David Brink, ‘The Autonomy of Ethics’
Does morality rest on psychological egoism?
Is altruism possible?
Joel Feinberg, ‘Psychological Egoism’

I.C. Values in Ethics
Does an individual's good consist in his or her pleasure?
Bentham, An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation, ch. I
Does desire satisfaction have value when it occurs unbeknownst to the individual?
Robert Nozick, ‘The Experience Machine’

II. Normative Ethics

II.A. The Formal Structure of Ethics
What is the relationship between right acts and good acts?

II.B. Utilitarian Ethics
Varieties of Utilitarianism
UF&A, PI: §2 & §3
Altruism, Benevolence, Emotions, & Fairness
UF&A, PI: §4 & §5
Right/Wrong vs. Rational/Irrational, Future Generations
UF&A, PI: §6 & §7
Utilitarianism, Justice, & Meta-Ethics
UF&A, PI: §9 & §10

II.C. Critique of Utilitarianism
The Structure of Consequentialism
UF&A, P2: §1 & §2
Negative Responsibility Revisited, Remoter Effects
UF&A, P2: §3 & §4
Integrity
UF&A, P2: §5

II.D. Kantian Ethics
Duty and the Good Will
GMM: Preface, Ch. 1.
Hypothetical and Categorical Imperatives
GMM: Ch. 2 (to pg. 29)
Universal Law
GMM: Ch. 2 (pg 29 to end of chapter)

III. Applied Ethics

III.A. World Hunger
Is Utilitarianism Too Demanding?
Peter Singer, “Famine, Affluence, and Morality”

III.B. Intoxicated Consent
When does ‘yes’ mean ‘yes’?
Alan Wertheimer, “Intoxicated Consent to Sexual Relations”

III.C. Ethics of Driving
Is it permissible to make yourself safer by imposing risks on others?
Husak – “Vehicles and Crashes - Why Is This Moral Issue Overlooked?”

III.D. [TBA?]