In studying these issues in normative ethics we will regularly look at how they apply to concrete moral cases and issues. This will allow us to critically examine our attitudes towards issues like abortion, world-hunger, torture, racism, as well as our complex relationships to non-human animals and to human beings with sever cognitive disabilities.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

In addition to gaining a solid understanding of the abovementioned strands in normative ethics and acquiring the skills for thinking and debating critically about a number of pertinent ethical questions, students are expected to begin developing the skill of carefully reading philosophical texts (for some starting-tips on how to inculcate this skill, see ‘Reading Philosophical Texts’ below). Students will also learn how to construct a written philosophical argument in a final paper. (We will go over writing-techniques and expectations in class. Additionally, a detailed handout on how to write a philosophy paper is available on Blackboard.)

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

- You are required to keep up with the readings for the course.
- You are required to attend class regularly (For Fordham’s policy on attendance and lateness see below).
- You are required to participate in class discussions.
- You are required to write one moral dialogue during the semester
- You are required to participate in one group-debate at the end of the semester
- You are required to partake in the midterm exam
- You are required to write one final paper

**GRADE BREAKDOWN**

- Class Participation: 15% (attendance 7.5%, active participation 7.5%)
- 2 Short Multiple Choice Exams Online: 10% (5% per exam)
- Midterm Multiple Choice Exam Online: 10%
- Midterm Exam in class: 17.5%
- Moral Dialogue: 12.5% total
- Presentation: 15% total
- Final paper: 20% (1400-1600 words)

MORAL DIALOGUE & DEBATE
At the beginning of the semester students will pair up in groups of four. Each group will select one newspaper article that captures a moral dilemma, problem, or tragedy (Newspaper articles must be selected by September 21). Per group, each individual member will represent one of the four strands of ethical theory discussed in the course and he/she/they/ze will use it to approach the issue discussed in the article. Two assignments will be tied to this format, namely the ‘moral dialogue’ and the end of the semester debate. Details of these two assignments will be discussed in class.

MIDTERM EXAM
The midterm exam will consist of a multiple-choice part, which students are expected to take from home (via blackboard) and one essay-question part, which students are expected to take in class during exam week. Details will be discussed in class.

FINAL PAPER
To prepare for your final paper you are required to read and implement the tips on essay writing that will be available via Blackboard. We will also devote several classes on workshopping your papers together (details will be explained in class). You are allowed to come up with your own topic, although I must approve it before you start working on the paper. Your paper must combine 1 of 3 mainstream normative ethical theories plus one article from the final section of the course.
Also note that the University Writing Center provides excellent one-on-one tutoring sessions for free that you can greatly benefit from (even if you are a trained writer it is invaluable to have a fresh set of eyes look at your work to see if the argument is clear, if the narrative flows, if the structure works, etc.). http://www.fordham.edu/info/20126/writing_center

CLASS ROOM RULES
Philosophical questions often provoke heated discussions. Please be respectful of your fellow students’ opinions. When we disagree with one another we have to give argued reasons for it. Required respectful behavior towards your fellow students and professor also includes: listening when someone else is talking, not looking at your phone during class and arriving on time. When you are more than 10 minutes late it will count as an absence. Unless you have a note from disability services you are not allowed to bring in your laptop or other electronic equipment in class.

POLICY ON ATTENDANCE AND TARDINESS
Absences may justify some grade reduction and a total of four absences mandate a reduction of one full letter grade for the course. More than four absences mandate a failing grade for the course, unless there are extenuating circumstances, such as the following: 1) an extended illness requiring hospitalization or visit to a physician (with documentation); 2) a family emergency, e.g. serious illness (with written explanation); 3) observance of a religious holiday). Attendance and tardiness policies are enforced as of the first day of classes for all registered students. If registered during the first week of the add/drop period, student is responsible for any missed assignments and coursework. For significant tardiness on a given day, the instructor will consider such lateness as an absence for the day. Students failing a
course as a result of poor attendance should consult with an academic advisor to discuss options.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY AND INTEGRITY**
Access to essays and articles on the Internet has made plagiarism increasingly tempting and easy. However, in addition to it being illegal, plagiarism is disrespectful to the original authors, your teacher, and ultimately yourself. Do not be tempted: it is just as easy to plagiarize, as it is for me to catch you (believe me, it gives me no pleasure to say that I catch plagiarizing students almost every semester). You are in school to learn something, so just do your work and you will do well and get much more out of it!
Compromising your academic integrity through plagiarism may lead to serious consequences, including (but not limited to) one or more of the following: failure of the assignment, failure of the course, academic warning, disciplinary probation, suspension from the university, or dismissal from the university. Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of someone else’s work as one’s own in all forms of academic endeavor (such as essays, theses, examinations, research data, creative projects, etc), *intentional or unintentional*. Plagiarized material may be derived from a variety of sources, such as books, journals, internet postings, student or faculty papers, etc. This includes the purchase or “outsourcing” of written assignments for a course. For more information on our academic honesty policy see: [http://www.fordham.edu/academics/handbooks_publicati/undergraduate_academ/undergraduate_ai_pol/standards_of_ai_72295.asp](http://www.fordham.edu/academics/handbooks_publicati/undergraduate_academ/undergraduate_ai_pol/standards_of_ai_72295.asp)

**DA NOTICE**
Under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973, all students, with or without disabilities, are entitled to equal access to the programs and activities of Fordham University. If you believe that you have a disabling condition that may interfere with your ability to participate in the activities, course work, or assessment of the object of this course, you may be entitled to accommodations. Please schedule an appointment to speak with someone at the Office of Disability Services (Rose Hill - O’Hare Hall, Lower Level, x0655 or at Lincoln Center – Room 207, x6282).

**READING PHILOSOPHICAL TEXTS**
If you are fairly new at reading philosophical texts you will notice that reading philosophy takes a special kind of concentration and patience. You could even say that it takes a certain amount of faith: even if you hardly understand anything on the first reading, you need to have faith that somehow you will start to have a better grasp of the text on the second and third reading (Believe me! It’s really true!).
Because you are strongly encouraged to read all the material twice before each meeting I tend to assign between 10-35 pages of text a class, depending on the difficulty of the reading material. Here are some suggestions on how to cope with the texts for this semester:

- **On the first reading** DO NOT try to understand every word, every sentence or even every paragraph. Simply try to get a sense of the *overall theme* that the author is addressing.
- Place question marks in the margins when you do not understand something (yet) that seems important. You can pay extra attention to these passages on the second reading: they usually begin to make a lot more sense the second time around when you already have a lingering sense of where the author is going to end up.
- Highlight some of the central concepts that keep appearing in the text, such as “freedom”, or “reason”, or “passion” and try to get a sense of the author’s attitude towards these concepts. (As you will see, almost all of the philosophers we will be reading employ these concepts, but they all have their own way of defining them and giving them a certain place in their philosophies. You can think of the history of philosophy as one long discussion over the meaning of concepts like ‘truth’, ‘reason’, ‘freedom’, ‘desire’, ‘the mind’, ‘the body’ etc. This means that one of the big tasks for you as a reader is to figure out how the specific philosopher you are dealing with treats these concepts.)
- Try to isolate the paragraph(s) where the argument that the philosopher is unfolding comes to its conclusion.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIAL (Available at Rose Hill Book Store)
- Exploring Ethics An Introductory Anthology (Third Edition), Steven M. Cahn
- Immanuel Kant, Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals: with On a Supposed Right to Lie because of Philanthropic Concerns (Hackett Classics) (Paperback)
- 4 Months, 3 Weeks, 2 Days (For Rent on Amazon: https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/B001NEC9GU?ie=UTF8&qid=1441122526&ref=twm_aiv_swatch_0&sr=1-1-catcorr)

ALL OTHER REQUIRED COURSE MATERIAL WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE ON BLACKBOARD!

CLASS SCHEDULE

- Introduction, syllabus, groups

THE MEANING AND LIMITS OF MORALITY

CULTURAL RELATIVISM, EGOISM, SKEPTICISM, AND GOD
- Chapters 5-9 From Cahn

VIRTUE ETHICS

HUMAN LIFE AND THE HIGHEST GOOD
- Aristotle’s Nicomachean Ethics, Book 1

THE VIRTUE OF CHARACTER
- Aristotle’s Nicomachean Ethics, Book 2

CHOICE AND DELIBERATION
- Aristotle’s Nicomachean Ethics, Book 3
A VIRTUE-ETHICAL APPROACH TO ABORTION
- “Virtue Theory and Abortion,” Rosalind Hursthouse (BB)
- Watch 4 Months, 3 Weeks, 2 Days

KANTIAN DEONTOLOGICAL ETHICS

KANT’S MORAL LAW
- Kant, Groundwork The Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals, First Section (you can skip the preface).
- Kant, “On a supposed right to lie because of philanthropic circumstances”

THE VALUE OF HUMANITY
- Onora O’Neill, “A Simplified Account of Kant’s Ethics” (in Cahn)
- Kant, Groundwork, The Groundwork, Section 2 4: 410 up to 4:441

KANTIAN ETHICS AND OUR OBLIGATIONS TO NON-HUMAN ANIMALS
- Christine Korsgaard, “Fellow Creatures and Our Duties to Animals” (BB)
- Tom Regan, “The Case for Animals”

UTILITARIANISM

THE FATHERS OF UTILITARIANISM
- Jeremy Bentham – An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation, Chapters 1, & 4 (BB)
- John Stuart Mill, “Utilitarianism” (in Cahn)

UTILITARIANISM: PROS AND CONS
- Re-read: John Stuart Mill, “Utilitarianism” (in Cahn)

A UTILITARIAN APPROACH TO WORLD HUNGER
- Peter Singer, “Famine, Affluence, and Morality” (in Cahn)

COMBINING OR OVERCOMING UTILITARIANISM AND KANTIAN ETHICS?
- David Sussman, “What’s Wrong with Torture?” (BB)
- Online Test Utilitarianism Due
THE ETHICS OF CARE & THE ‘VICTIM’ STANDPOINT

THE ETHICAL MEANING OF TRUST
- Jean Amery, “On Torture” (BB)
- Annette Baier, “Trust and Anti-Trust” (BB)

ETHICS AND VULNERABILITY
- Judith Butler, “Precarious Life, Vulnerability, and the Ethics of Cohabitation” (BB)
- Eva Kittay, “The personal is the political” (BB)

THE ETHICS OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE & THE CASE FOR REPARATIONS
- Martin Luther King, Jr.: “Letter from a Birmingham Jail”