Philosophical Ethics (PHIL 3000)

Summer 2017, Session II

Instructor: Samuel Kampa
Office: Collins B15
Office Hours: TR @ 10:00-12:00pm

Meeting Time: TWR @ 1:00-4:00pm
Location: Keating 105
E-mail: skampa@fordham.edu

Course Description (from catalog). This course involves philosophical reflection on the major normative ethical theories underlying moral decision making in our everyday lives. The principal focus of the course is a systematic introduction to the main normative ethical theories, i.e., eudaimonism, natural law ethics, deontological ethics, utilitarianism, virtue ethics and feminism. The differences among these approaches are illuminated by studying various moral issues. In each section of the course, at least half the readings will be selected from Aristotle and Kant. Each section will include writings by at least one contemporary figure.

Course Description (from instructor). What is the right thing to do? How should I live? What should I consider when making moral decisions? These are the sorts of questions that we will explore. Recurring themes of this course include the practical ramifications of moral theories, uses and abuses of moral intuitions, and the “reflective equilibrium” approach to theoretical and practical ethics. It is the instructor’s hope that each student will come out of the class with a profounder sense of the importance of ethical reflection and an enhanced ability to reason well about ethics.

Course Objectives. By the end of this course, you should be able to…

- critique and defend ethical theories.
- apply ethical theories to contemporary moral issues.
- justify (or revise) your moral beliefs.

Prerequisite. Philosophy of Human Nature (PHIL 1000)

Papers. Each student will write one term paper (5+ pages in length) on a topic related to the course material.

Exams. There are two exams. Each exam will consist of quote identification questions, multiple choice questions, short answer questions, and essay prompts. Approximately four days prior to each exam, the instructor will distribute three essay prompts to the class. Students will then have the opportunity to prepare for each prompt. On the day of the exam, the instructor will randomly select one essay prompt, and students will be required to respond to the selected prompt.

Reading Responses. Each student will write four responses (1 page each) to selected readings. Prompts will be distributed prior to the due date.

Presentation/Discussion. Each student will have the opportunity to lead class discussion on an assigned reading of his or her choosing (first-come, first-served). The discussion leader will present a one-page write-up wherein he or she briefly summarizes the main argument of the reading, raises
objections or concerns *vis-à-vis* the main argument or an auxiliary argument of the text (and/or defends the author from potential objections), and poses one or two questions for discussion. The presentation should take five to ten minutes, and the ensuing discussion (which the presenter shall facilitate) should take about twenty minutes. The presenter will be evaluated on the quality of her write-up and her facility in leading discussion. *The presenter should send the instructor a copy of her write-up by noon on the day of her presentation.*

**Attendance.** Regular attendance is mandatory. Students lose ten participation points for each unexcused absence. Inattentiveness or disruptiveness may also result in loss of participation points. Students who are sick must inform the professor of their sickness on or before the day of their absence. Failure to inform the professor promptly will result in loss of attendance points for the day.

**Anonymization.** All papers, assignments, and exams are to include the student’s Fordham ID Number and exclude the student's name, unless otherwise specified. Personally identifying details should also be excluded from the body of the paper or assignment in question. Failure to comply with this requirement will result in point deduction.

**Late Work.** An assignment is late if it is submitted after class time on the due date. Late assignments will receive a ten-point deduction for each late day. (N.B. An assignment that is submitted after class time the day after the due date is considered two days late.) A student may receive an extension only if *i)* the student notifies the instructor at least three days prior to the due date and has a legitimate reason to request an extension, or *ii)* the student has an emergency or severe hardship (e.g., the sudden death of a close relative). Whether the student has satisfied *(i)* or *(ii)* will be determined at the discretion of the instructor. *No assignments will be accepted after the date of the final exam.*

**Technology Policy.** Students are not allowed to use cell phones, laptops, or other electronic devices in class. If a student is found to be in violation of the technology policy, the instructor reserves the right to deduct attendance points.

**Academic Integrity.** The instructor is obligated to report all instances of plagiarism to the dean of the student’s college. Instances of plagiarism include…

- copying word-for-word the work of another author without appropriately citing the author and/or without wrapping the copied material in quotation marks.
- copying word-for-word work that one has written in the past (i.e., self-plagiarizing).
- paraphrasing the work of another author without appropriately citing the author.

Penalties for plagiarism and other forms of cheating include, but are not limited to…

- failure of the assignment (for a first offense).
- failure of the course (for a second offense or for an egregious first offense).
- suspension or expulsion from the university (for a third offense or for an egregious second offense).

For a detailed statement of Fordham’s academic integrity policy, see [http://www.fordham.edu/info/21684/university_regulations/3695/the_fordham_university_undergraduate_policy_on_academic_integrity](http://www.fordham.edu/info/21684/university_regulations/3695/the_fordham_university_undergraduate_policy_on_academic_integrity).
Notice from the Office of Disability Services. 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, coursework, 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).

Reporting. If you are a victim of sexual harassment, assault, stalking, or any other crime, you are strongly encouraged to talk to Anastasia Coleman, the Title IX coordinator (acoelman11@fordham.edu, 718-817-3112); the dean of students (for freshmen, Robert Parmach (parmach@fordham.edu, 718-817-4730)); the Department of Public Safety (718-817-2222; call especially if you’re in danger); your resident director; a faculty member; or me. Note, however, that we are required reporters; what you say to us will be reported through the proper channels, and we cannot guarantee confidentiality (though we will preserve anonymity to the extent possible). If you wish to talk to someone confidentially, you may contact Counseling and Psychological Services (718-817-3725) or Campus Ministry (718-817-4500). For more information, resources, and contact information, see the Fordham CARE page (http://www.fordham.edu/info/23849/campus_assault_and_relationship_education).

Required Text

Breakdown of Points

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Responses (25 pts each)</td>
<td>100 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam #1</td>
<td>150 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam #2</td>
<td>250 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term Paper</td>
<td>400 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation/Discussion</td>
<td>50 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>50 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1000 pts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>930-1000 pts</td>
<td>930-1000 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>900-929 pts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>870-899 pts</td>
<td>870-899 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>830-869 pts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>770-799 pts</td>
<td>770-799 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>730-769 pts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>700-729 pts</td>
<td>700-729 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>630-669 pts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>670-699 pts</td>
<td>670-699 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>600-629 pts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-599 pts</td>
<td>0-599 pts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Readings and Assignments

All readings and assignments are subject to rescheduling and modification at the discretion of the instructor.

### INTRODUCTION

**Wednesday, July 5 | Course Introduction**

**Thursday, July 6 | Logic Primer; Relativism and Moral Skepticism**

- Coffman, “Finding, Clarifying, and Evaluating Arguments” (Blackboard)
- Mackie, “The Subjectivity of Values” (pp. 757-67)
- Nussbaum, “Judging Other Cultures” (Blackboard)

### CONSEQUENTIALISM

**Tuesday, July 11 | Introduction to Utilitarianism | READING RESPONSE #1 DUE**

- Singer, “Famine, Affluence, and Morality” (pp. 870-7)
- Mill, *Utilitarianism* (pp. 363-84)

**Wednesday, July 12 | Against Utilitarianism**

- Williams, “A Critique of Utilitarianism” (pp. 544-60)
- Thomson, “The Trolley Problem” (pp. 923-36)

**Thursday, July 13 | Contemporary Moral Issues: Euthanasia and Torture**

- Rachels, “Active and Passive Euthanasia” (pp. 860-63)
- Foot, “Killing and Letting Die” (pp. 864-69)
- Shue, “Torture” (pp. 903-13)
- Hill, “Ticking Bombs, Torture, and the Analogy with Self-Defense” (pp. 914-22)

**Tuesday, July 18 | Contemporary Moral Issues: Genetic Enhancement | EXAM #1**
Savulescu, “Genetic Interventions and the Ethics of Enhancement of Human Beings” (Blackboard)

[FILM SCREENING]

**DEONTOLOGY**

Wednesday, July 19 | **Kantian Deontology | READING RESPONSE #2 DUE**

Kant, *Groundwork* (pp. 314-36)

Thursday, July 20 | **Kantian Deontology (cont.)**

Kant, *Groundwork* (pp. 336-53)

Tuesday, July 25 | **Duty and Moral Luck | READING RESPONSE #3 DUE**

Herman, “On the Value of Acting from the Motive of Duty” (pp. 633-46)

Nagel, “Moral Luck” (pp. 668-76)

Wednesday, July 26 | **Contemporary Moral Issues: Animal Rights and Abortion**

Regan, “The Case for Animal Rights” (Blackboard)

Cohen, “The Case for the Use of Animals in Biomedical Research” (Blackboard)

Warren, “On the Moral and Legal Status of Abortion” (pp. 824-34)

Marquis, “An Argument that Abortion is Wrong” (pp. 834-45)

**VIRTUE ETHICS**

Thursday, July 27 | **Aristotle’s Ethics**

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (pp. 124-40)

Tuesday, Aug 1 | **Aristotle’s Ethics (cont.) | READING RESPONSE #4 DUE**

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (pp. 140-61, 169-78)

Wednesday, Aug 2 | **Contemporary Virtue Ethics**

Annas, “Being Virtuous and Doing the Right Thing” (pp. 703-13)

Nussbaum, “Non-Relative Virtues: An Aristotelian Approach” (Blackboard)

Thursday, Aug 3 | **Beyond Virtue**

Harman, “Moral Philosophy Meets Social Psychology” (Blackboard)

Held, “Feminist Transformations of Moral Theory” (pp. 714-29)

Tuesday, Aug 8 | **EXAM #2 | TERM PAPER DUE**