

PHILOSOPHY 120

INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS

INSTRUCTOR: Matthew Cameron

OFFICE HOURS: By appointment (Zoom)

OFFICE LOCATION: N/A

CLASSROOM: A2204

E-MAIL: mcameron@yukonu.ca

CLASS TIME: Tues & Thurs 4:00-5:30pm

TELEPHONE: (867)-668-8770 (Admin.
Assistant)

DATES: Sept. 6 – Dec. 20, 2020

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to essential topics and questions in moral philosophy: How ought we to live our lives? How are right and wrong determined? Are ethical judgments objective or subjective? Are values universal and absolute or culturally relative? What responsibilities do human beings have to one another, to other species, or to the planet? Students will analyze, interpret and evaluate ideas from major schools of ethical thought—including virtue ethics, deontological ethics, and consequentialism—and practice applying theories about ethics to contemporary moral dilemmas.

PREREQUISITES

None

RELATED COURSE REQUIREMENTS

None

EQUIVALENCY OR TRANSFERABILITY

AI GD 330 (3)

AU PHIL 2xx (3)

CAMO PHIL 100 (3)

KPU PHIL 1110 (3)

LCV GD 330 (3)

OC PHIL 1xx (3)

TRU-OL PHIL 1021 (3)

TWU PHIL 100 (3)

UBC PHIL 1st (3)

UCW PHIL 102 (3)

UFV PHIL 110 (3)

UNBC PHIL 1xx (3)

UVIC PHIL 100 (1.5)

VIU PHIL 112 (3)

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- *analyze, interpret, synthesize, and evaluate ideas associated with major schools of ethical thought and/or key figures in the history of moral philosophy*
- *explain key terms in the field of moral philosophy, among them egoist ethics, virtue ethics, deontological ethics, consequentialism, categorical imperative, rights theory, utilitarianism, and feminist care ethics*
- *apply specific ethical theories to contemporary moral problems*
- *understand the importance of ethical decision-making and action in everyday life and in a range of fields: e.g., politics, economics, research, etc.*
- *draft, organize, format, revise, and edit university-level essays*

COURSE FORMAT

The course will involve a mixture of lectures and classroom group discussion on pre-assigned material.

ASSESSMENTS

Participation

Attendance is mandatory. Students are expected to read materials according to the schedule (see below) and actively participate in (online) group discussions (including via Moodle). Each section of the course on Moodle includes online group discussion forums where students are encouraged to share their thoughts and opinions on the material, raise questions, and discuss key concepts with the class. Specific topics may be assigned for group discussion as well. Sending thoughts and questions via email to the instructor can also contribute to your participation grade.

Assignments

*Students will be assessed on the basis of short written assignments (5 in total), two essays (1500 words each), one final assignment, as well as active participation in group discussions. The first essay is due on **Sunday, October 16, 2022**. The second essay is due on **Sunday, Nov. 20, 2022**.*

NOTE: All of the essays and written assignments must be completed in order to pass the course. Late essays will be penalized by 5% per day to a maximum of 7 days, after which they will not be accepted unless there is a legitimate excuse approved by the instructor in advance of the deadline.

Tests

There are no scheduled tests for this course.

EVALUATION

Written Assignments	15%
Two Essays	50% (25% each)
Participation	15%
Final Assignment	20%
Total	100%

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS AND MATERIALS

Selected readings and materials (e.g., podcasts, videos) will be made available online (Moodle). See Reading Schedule below.

ACADEMIC AND STUDENT CONDUCT

Information on academic standing and student rights and responsibilities can be found in the current Academic Regulations that are posted on the Student Services/ Admissions & Registration web page.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence. Plagiarism occurs when a student submits work for credit that includes the words, ideas, or data of others, without citing the source from which the material is taken. Plagiarism can be the deliberate use of a whole piece of work, but more frequently it occurs when students fail to acknowledge and document sources from which they have taken material according to an accepted manuscript style (e.g., APA, CSE, MLA, etc.). Students may use sources which are public domain or licensed under Creative Commons; however, academic documentation standards must still be followed. Except with explicit permission of the instructor, resubmitting work which has previously received credit is also considered plagiarism. Students who plagiarize material for assignments will receive a mark of zero (F) on the assignment and may fail the course. Plagiarism may also result in dismissal from a program of study or the University.

YUKON FIRST NATIONS CORE COMPETENCY

Yukon University recognizes that a greater understanding and awareness of Yukon First Nations history, culture and journey towards self-determination will help to build positive relationships among all Yukon citizens. As a result, to graduate from ANY

Yukon University program, you will be required to achieve core competency in knowledge of Yukon First Nations. For details, please see www.yukonu.ca/yfnccr.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

Reasonable accommodations are available for students requiring an academic accommodation to fully participate in this class. These accommodations are available for students with a documented disability, chronic condition or any other grounds specified in section 8.0 of the Yukon University Academic Regulations (available on the Yukon University website). It is the student's responsibility to seek these accommodations. If a student requires an academic accommodation, they should contact the Learning Assistance Centre (LAC): lac@yukonu.ca.

COURSE AND READING SCHEDULE

Note: The schedule is subject to revision. All readings are available on Moodle.

Week	Dates	Topics/Assignments	Readings & Other Materials
1	Sept 6-11	Introduction and Course Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Moodle introduction and ethical dilemmas discussion post (Moodle)
2	Sept 12-18	Meta-Ethics: Why be moral?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Plato, "The Immoralist's Challenge" ▪ Joel Feinberg, "Psychological Egoism" ▪ James Rachels, "Ethical Egoism"
3	Sept 19-25	Ethical Theory: Consequentialism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Jeremy Bentham, "An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation" (ch. 1 & 4) ▪ John Stuart Mill, "Utilitarianism" ▪ J.J.C. Smart, "Extreme and Restricted Utilitarianism" ▪ Brad Hooker, "Rule Consequentialism" (sections 1-4; pp. 428 - 431)
3	Sept 25	Written Assign. #1	Due: Sunday, Sept. 25
4	Sept 26-Oct 2	Ethical Theory: Consequentialism (Continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Peter Singer, "Famine, Affluence and Morality" ▪ John Harris, "The Survival Lottery" ▪ Bernard Williams, "A Critique of Utilitarianism" (pp.92-94)
5	Oct 3-Oct 9	Applied Ethics: Animal Ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Immanuel Kant, "We Have No Duties to Animals" ▪ Peter Singer, "All Animals are Equal" ▪ Joel Feinberg, "The Rights of Animals and Unborn Generations" (excerpt)
5	Oct 4	Written Assign. # 2	Due: Sunday, Oct. 9
6	Oct 10-16	Ethical Theory: Deontological Ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Immanuel Kant, "Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals"

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Onora O'Neill, "Kantian Approaches to Some Famine Problems" (pp. 510-515). ▪ Robert Nozick, "The Rationality of Side Constraints"
6	Oct 16	FIRST PAPER	DUE: SUNDAY, OCT. 16
7	Oct 17-23	Ethical Theory: Deontological Ethics (Continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Alan Gerwith, "The Golden Rule Rationalized" (pp. 524-529) ▪ Philippa Foot, "The Problem of Abortion and the Doctrine of the Double Effect" ▪ Judith Jarvis Thomson, "Killing, Letting Die, and the Trolley Problem"
7	Oct 23	Written Assign. #3	Due: Sunday, Oct. 23
8	Oct 24-30	Applied Ethics: Environmental Ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Garth Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons" ▪ Lynn White Jr., "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis" ▪ Stephen M. Gardiner, "Ethics and Global Climate Change" (s. 1-3 & 5; pp. 555-569 & 575-578) ▪ The Ethical Implications of Global Climate Change (UNESCO Report; optional reading)
9	Oct 31- Nov 6	Ethical Theory: Virtue Ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aristotle, "The Nature of Virtue" (Book I & II; pp. 615-627) ▪ Martha Nussbaum, "Non-relative Virtues: An Aristotelian Approach"
9	Nov. 6	Written Assign. #4	Due: Sunday, Nov. 6
10	Nov 7-13	Ethical Theory: Virtue Ethics (Continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Julia Annas, "Being Virtuous and Doing the Right Thing" ▪ Julia Annas, "Virtue Ethics and Social Psychology"
11	Nov 14-20	Applied Ethics:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ United Nations Declaration of

		Indigenous Rights	Human Rights <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples ▪ Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow (s.2-4; pp. 9-24)
11	Nov 20	SECOND PAPER	DUE: SUNDAY NOV. 20
12	Nov 21-27	Feminist Ethics: The Ethics of Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Carol Gilligan, “In a Different Voice” ▪ Nell Noddings, “An Ethic of Caring”
12	Nov 27	Written Assign. #5	Due: Sunday, Nov. 27
13	Nov 28- Dec 4	Review	
14	Dec 11	FINAL ASSIGNMENT	DUE: SUNDAY, DEC. 11

If you have any questions, concerns or feedback about the course, please contact me at mcameron@yukonu.ca