

Philosophy 1130: Approaches to Ethics

Fall 2007

TR 5:30-6:45, 217 Clark Hall

Instructor: Tyler Paytas

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Office: 556 Lucas Hall

Office Hours: Wednesday 11:30-12:30 or by appointment

Course description:

This is a course in theoretical moral philosophy. We will address very abstract and difficult questions about the nature and justification of morality: Do you need to be good in order to be happy? Does being good make you happy? Are moral judgements based upon reasons or upon passions? Should you violate moral rules in order to make others happy? Is morality always operative, or only under certain circumstances? Is conventional morality a sham? We will be reading historical texts. We will not be doing applied ethics. Despite its course number, and despite the fact that there are no prerequisites, this is a rigorous course. Be prepared to read the assigned texts multiple times. On the other hand, this is an extremely interesting course, and it is an excellent introduction to serious philosophy.

Course Requirements:

Students will take a midterm exam on Thursday, October 11 (20%) and a final exam on Tuesday, December 11, at 5:30 p.m. (30%). You will need to bring a completely blank blue book to each exam. The exams will be open-book and open-notes. Students will take five pop quizzes with the best four scores (40%) counting toward the final grade. Each quiz will be designed to test whether students have learned the material we have recently covered, as well as whether students have read the assigned chapter for that day. The quizzes will be closed-book and closed-notes. Quizzes will be administered at 5:30 p.m. and will last about 20 minutes. There will be no make-up quizzes. Do not be late. Attendance and participation will count for 10% of your final grade.

Attendance

Regular attendance is required for you to do well in and pass this course. You are expected to be in attendance at every class session unless you have a legitimate reason for not being there (for example: family emergency, illness, or a pre-arranged, university-sponsored activity like a sporting event). Absence for legitimate reasons is not automatically excused; you must contact me (in advance, if at all possible) to let me know the reason for your absence.

Here are the grade criteria for your participation grade:

- A: Few or no unexcused absences; regular, thoughtful contributions in class
- B: Like the "A" criteria, except possibly a few more absences or less frequent/ less thoughtful class contributions
- C: EITHER: regular attendance, but not many contributions to the discussion in class
OR: irregular attendance, but a fair number of contributions to the class discussion
- D: regular absences from class
- F: absent from class a large portion of the time

Texts:

1. *Great Traditions in Ethics*, eds. Denise, White, and Peterfreund, 12th edition.
2. *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. <http://plato.stanford.edu>
3. Photocopies of additional readings will be provided.

Course Schedule (Note: From time to time, adjustments in this schedule may need to be made. Any change in it will be announced in class.)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Reading Assignment Due</u>	<u>Topic</u>
8/21	None	Introduction
8/23	Ch. 3 (Aristotle)	Aristotle
8/28	http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle-ethics (1-5, 10)	Aristotle
8/30	Handout	Religious Ethics
9/4	Ch. 6 (Saint Augustine)	Religious Ethics
9/6	Ch. 7 (Saint Thomas Aquinas)	Religious Ethics
9/11	Ch. 8 (Hobbes)	Social Contract
9/13	Handout	Social Contract
9/18	None	Social Contract
9/20	Ch. 12 (Kant)	Kant
9/25	http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/kant-moral (1-7, 10)	Kant
9/27	Handout	Kant

10/2	http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/consequentialism	Utilitarianism
10/4	Ch. 13 (Mill)	Utilitarianism
10/9	None	Utilitarianism
10/11	Midterm	
10/16	Ch. 15 (Marx)	Marx
10/18	http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/marx (1, 2, 5).	Marx
10/23	http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/egoism	Egoism
10/25	None	Egoism
10/30	Ch. 24 (Rawls)	Rawls
11/1	http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/original-position	Rawls
11/6	None	Rawls
11/8	Ch. 26 (Annette Baier)	Feminist Ethics
11/13	http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminism-ethics (1, 2, 4)	Feminist Ethics
11/15	Ch. 27 (Mackie)	Ethical Skepticism
11/27	Ch. 28 (Williams)	Ethical Skepticism
11/29	Handout	Ethical Skepticism
12/4	Handout	Ethical Skepticism
12/6	None	Flex day/Review
12/11	Final Exam	

Miscellaneous Remarks

I encourage you to ask questions and make comments in class. I also encourage you to meet with me during my office hours if you have any questions or problems. Email is another good way to reach me. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to get any information from another student. Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Disability Access Services Office in 144 Millennium Student Center at 516-6554 as soon as possible to ensure that such accommodations are arranged in a timely fashion.

Please come to class on time. Please do not begin to gather up your things to leave class until I dismiss you. Please turn off your telephones before walking into the classroom; if your phone *does* ring in class, please turn it off very quickly, and try not to draw any further attention to yourself. Do not chat with other students once class begins.

Department of Philosophy Academic Honesty Statement

In all cases of academic dishonesty, for example cheating, plagiarism, or sabotage, the instructor shall make an academic judgment about the student's grade on the work involved. Since this judgment is often a grade of zero, its assignment may result in a failing grade for the course. The complete campus policy on academic dishonesty may be found under "Student Conduct Code" in the Student Planner or at

[http://www.umsl.edu/studentlife/dsa/student_planner/policies/conductcode .htm](http://www.umsl.edu/studentlife/dsa/student_planner/policies/conductcode.htm)