

Fall Semester 2014

PHILOSOPHY 101

Introduction to Philosophy Ethics

Section 3 (Course #22547)

GMCS-214

Class Sessions: T, TH 9h30-10h45

Film Screenings: TH, 19h

Professor: Mark R. Wheeler

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OFFICE HOURS

T, TH 10h45-12h15 in AL-434, and by appointment.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To introduce you to some of the central issues in Western philosophy—including problems in ethics, metaphysics, epistemology, and logic—with a primary focus on ethics. By the end of the semester you will be able to recognize the basic concepts and arguments that define the following philosophical positions:
 - a. Utilitarianism/Consequentialism,
 - b. Deontology/Kantianism,
 - c. Virtue Ethics,
 - d. The Ethics of Care,

- e. Essentialism and Existentialism,
 - f. Realism and Relativism,
 - g. Objectivity and Subjectivity,
 - h. Foundationalism, and
 - i. Correspondence, Coherence, and Pragmatic Conceptions of Truth.
2. To introduce you to the fundamental methods of Western philosophy, with emphasis on the methods of conceptual and logical analysis. By the end of the semester, you will be have acquired the following abilities:
- a. To formulate, analyze, and critically assess:
 - i. Enumerative definitions of concepts,
 - ii. Assertions of materially equivalent concepts, and
 - iii. Assertions of logically equivalent concepts.
 - b. To formulate, analyze, and assess:
 - i. Inductive arguments, for strength and cogency, of the following forms:
 - 1. Analogical argument,
 - 2. Statistical argument,
 - 3. Causal argument, and
 - 4. Enumerative inductive generalization.
 - ii. Deductive arguments, for validity and soundness, of the following forms:
 - 1. Modus ponens,
 - 2. Modus tollens,
 - 3. Disjunctive syllogism,
 - 4. Separation of cases,
 - 5. Hypothetical syllogism, and
 - 6. Bi-conditional syllogism.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

An Introduction to Philosophy: Contemporary Female Philosophers on Ethics, edited by Steven Cahn and Peter Markie, Oxford University Press.

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

1. Every class session will focus on the assigned readings. Please read the texts before the class sessions for which they are assigned.
2. At the beginning of each class session, I will ask you questions about the assigned reading for the class session.
3. During class, we will discuss the assigned material. I will present material you will need to know for the exams.
4. I will encourage you to ask questions and express your opinions during the class session.
5. Please bring the assigned reading (i.e. the book) to class.
6. You are welcome to use your computers and other devices in class in order to take notes or to otherwise assist you in participating in the class session. Please do not use your computers for other purposes during class.
7. Please put your phones and other devices on silent mode. Unless it is an emergency, please do not take a call during class.

READING ASSIGNMENTS

1. The reading assignments for each week are listed below in the “Assigned Readings and Important Dates” section.
2. Classroom discussion and exams will focus on the assigned readings. So, it is important that you complete the assigned readings.
3. Take notes while you read. Below, in the “How to Read the Assigned Texts” section, I have provided you with a set of tools that will help you to read and to understand the assigned texts. Please use these tools when you read.

4. Do not expect to understand fully the assigned reading. Complete the assigned reading, understanding as much of it as you can. If you don't understand a part of the assigned reading, make a note of that fact and ask me to help you.

FILM SCREENINGS

Each week, you will have an opportunity to watch and discuss a film that directly relates to the assigned reading. These films will be screened in the Little Theater on campus Thursdays beginning at 19h. For every three screenings you attend, you will earn 1 percentage point extra credit toward your final grade in the course. To earn credit for attendance, you must be present during the film screening and participate in the discussion about the film. If you cannot attend the film screenings but wish to earn extra credit by watching the films and writing a short response paper, please speak with me during my office hours.

GRADED WORK

Your final grade for the course will be based on your exam grades and the grade for your essay.

EXAMS:

There will be 3 exams—two mid-terms and a final. The exams are designed to test and reinforce your understanding of the assigned readings, the lecture material, and the methods of conceptual and logical analysis.

Each exam will involve multiple choice, short answer, and short essay questions. Each midterm is worth 20% of your final grade. The final is worth 30% of your final grade. You will take both midterm exams in class during regular class time:

The first midterm will take place on 30 September, in class.

The second midterm will take place on 4 November, in class.

The final exam will be administered in the regular classroom on Thursday, 11 December, from 8h to 10h.

ESSAY:

You will write a 3 to 4 page paper. It is worth 30% of your final grade.

The paper is due by the beginning of class on 9 December. Submitting your paper as an email attachment is preferred. Hardcopies will be accepted.

You must follow—strictly—both the MECHANICAL and the COMPOSITIONAL guidelines for the paper. If you violate any of the MECHANICAL Guidelines (see below), then the highest possible grade you will receive on the paper is a B. For each COMPOSITIONAL Guideline you violate (see below), you will lose 5 points.

MECHANICAL GUIDELINES FOR THE PAPER:

1. The paper must have a title page with your Red I.D. on it.
2. The paper must be machine-written on standard letter-size (8 ½" x 11") paper.
3. The type-font must be standard and *no larger than* 12 point.
4. The paper must be double-spaced.
5. The margins must be no more than inch from the edge of the paper.
6. If you turn in a hardcopy of your paper, the pages of the paper must be either stapled or clipped together.
7. The pages must be numbered, except for the title page.
8. There must be fewer than 3 misspellings.
9. There must be fewer than 5 grammatical mistakes (not including misspellings).
10. The paper must be handed in on time. For each day late, a letter grade will be deducted from your final grade.

COMPOSITIONAL GUIDELINES FOR THE PAPER:

1. State and explain at least one argument presented in one of the assigned texts for the course. This means you must:
 - a. State—in your own words—the conclusion of the argument(s) in question and the premises presented in support of that conclusion.
 - b. State where in the text you found the argument(s).
 - c. Explain the major concepts that appear in the argument.
2. State and explain why the argument is important ***in the context of the work in which it is found.***
3. Develop at least one objection to the argument presented in section (1).
4. Explain how someone might defend the argument in section (1) against the objection you raised in section (3).
5. Write your paper in the first person singular.
6. Limit your paper to at least 3 full pages and no more than 4 full pages in length, not including the title page.

ASSIGNED READINGS

and

IMPORTANT DATES

You should complete the readings before the class for which they are assigned.

Assignments for class sessions:

1. *For August 26-28: Moral Saints* by Susan Wolf.
2. *For September 2-4: Moral Saints* by Susan Wolf.
3. *For September 9-11: Turning the Trolley* by Judith Jarvis Thomson.
4. *For September 16-18: Moral Dilemmas and Consistency* by Ruth Barcan Marcus
5. *For September 23-25: Consistency in Action* by Onora O'Neill.
6. *For September 30: EXAM #1.*
7. *For October 2: Skepticism about Practical Reasoning* by Christine Korsgaard.
8. *For October 7-9: Modern Moral Philosophy* by G. E. M. Anscombe.
9. *For October 14-16: Modern Moral Philosophy* by G. E. M. Anscombe.
10. *For October 21-23: Non-relative Virtues: An Aristotelian Approach* by Martha Nussbaum.
11. *For October 28-30: Non-relative Virtues: An Aristotelian Approach* by Martha Nussbaum.
12. *For November 4: EXAM #2.*
13. *For November 6: On the Value of Acting from the Motive of Duty* by Barbara Herman.
14. **November 11: No class—Veteran's Day celebration.**
15. *For November 13: Morality as a System of Hypothetical Imperatives* by Philippa Foot.
16. *For November 18-20: Feminist Transformations of Moral Theory* by Virginia Held.
17. *For November 25: Killing and Letting Die* by Philippa Foot.
18. **November 27: No class—Thanksgiving celebration.**

19. *For December 2-4: A Defense of Abortion* by Judith Jarvis Thomson.
20. *For December 9: The Moral and Legal Status of Abortion*. **Final paper due. Please send as an email attachment.**
21. *For December 11: FINAL EXAM: 8h-10h in regular classroom.*

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class, it is your responsibility to contact Student Disability Services at (619) 594-6473. To avoid any delay in the receipt of your accommodations, you should contact Student Disability Services as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive, and that accommodations based upon disability cannot be provided until you have presented your instructor with an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services. Your cooperation is appreciated.

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

The University Policy File includes the following statement on Absence for Religious Observances:

By the end of the second week of classes, students should notify the instructors of affected courses of planned absences for religious observances. Instructors shall reasonably accommodate students who notify them in advance of planned absences for religious observances.

California Education Code 89320 states:

The Trustees of the California State University shall require that each state university, in administering any test or examination, to permit any student who is eligible to undergo

the test or examination to do so, without penalty, at a time when that activity would not violate the student's religious creed.

Please notify me if you plan to be absent for religious observance.

How to Read the Assigned Texts

A. Getting the Main Ideas

Use this method to become familiar with the main concepts used in the assigned reading:

1. Quickly look through the text.
 - a. In your notebook, note any words that are bolded, underlined, italicized, or otherwise highlighted in the assigned text.
2. Skim the introduction and conclusion.
 - a. In your notebook, list any word(s) appearing in both.
 - b. List any word(s) unfamiliar to you.
3. Skim the first and last sentence of each textual division.
 - a. In your notebook, list any word(s) appearing frequently, and
 - b. List any word(s) unfamiliar to you.
4. Skim the assigned reading one textual division at a time.
 - a. In your notebook, list any word(s) appearing frequently, and
 - b. List any word(s) unfamiliar to you.
5. Look up the words on your lists in:
 - a. An ordinary dictionary (which you should own), and
 - b. A Dictionary of Philosophy (which can be found in the reference section of the library).

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B. Finding the Arguments:

Read the assigned text slowly! As you read each sentence, ask yourself the following questions. For some sentences, you can answer “yes” to more than one of these questions; for others, you can answer “yes” to none. If you aren’t sure of the answer, put a question mark next to the sentence and move on!:

1. Is the author presenting a definition of a word or concept? If yes, then:
 - a. Highlight or underline the word/concept,
 - b. Note in the margin that it is a definition,
 - c. Write the definition in your notebook, preferably in the words of the author and in your own words.

2. Is the author presenting a conclusion of an argument? (Hint: Look for conclusion indicators such as ‘therefore’, ‘hence’, ‘thus’, ‘it follows that’, and ‘in conclusion’.) If yes, then:
 - a. Highlight or underline the sentence,
 - b. Note in the margin that it is a conclusion,
 - c. Write the conclusion in your notebook, preferably in the words of the author and in your own words, and
 - d. Note whether or not the conclusion serves as a premise in another argument.

3. Is the author presenting the premise of an argument? (Hint: Look for premise indicators such as ‘since’, ‘because’, ‘if’, and ‘either’.) If yes, then:
 - a. Highlight or note the premise,
 - b. Note in the margin that it is a premise,
 - c. Write the premise in your notebook, preferably in the words of the author and in your own words, and
 - d. Note whether or not the premise is the conclusion of another argument.

4. Is the author presenting an example? If yes, then:
 - a. Highlight or note the example,
 - b. Note in the margin that it is a example,
 - c. Note what the example supports or undermines, and
 - d. Write the example, and what it supports, in your notebook (preferably in the words of the author and in your own words).

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C. Organizing the Arguments

1. For each of the conclusions you noted in part B2 (above):
 - a. Determine which of the premises you discovered in part B3 (above) relates to that conclusion.
 - b. Using your argument patterns, organize these premises into valid or strong arguments in support of the conclusion.
 - c. Determine whether the conclusion is the main conclusion of the work you are reading:
 - i. If it is, then the argument in support of it is the main argument.
 - ii. If not, then ask how it is related to the main conclusion of the work.
2. State the main argument of the work you are reading:
 - a. State the main conclusion of the work.
 - b. State the premises supporting that main conclusion.
 - c. Using your argument patterns, determine whether the argument is valid or strong.
3. State any arguments that support the premises of the main argument:
 - a. State the premise of the main argument.
 - b. State the premises supporting that premise.
 - c. Using your argument patterns, determine whether the argument is valid or strong.
4. Note any premises presented without supporting argument.
5. State any arguments presented against any premises in the main argument.
6. Evaluate the main argument:
 - a. If any of the premises of the main argument are not supported by further argument, then present the best reasons you can discover for thinking those premises are false.
 - b. For those premises supported by further argument:
 - i. If any of the premises of these arguments are not supported by further argument, then present the best reasons you can discover for thinking those premises are false.
 - ii. For those premises supported by further argument, repeat Step C6b for these premises.

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7. Ask yourself how the main argument presented in the assigned reading relate to the main arguments made in the previous assigned readings? Note your answer.
8. Ask yourself what argument is the author likely to present in the next part of the text? Note your answer.
9. If you are having difficulties:
 - a. Reread the assigned reading, and try again.
 - b. Review previous assignments and class notes, and try again.
 - c. Skim the next part of the text, and try again.
 - d. Note the words, sentences, and/or paragraphs that you don't understand, and explain in your own words what you don't understand.
 - e. Raise questions either in class or during office hour.

Cheating and Plagiarism

From the "University Policies" section of the SDSU General Catalog:

Institutions of higher education are founded to impart knowledge, seek truth, and encourage one's development for the good of society. University students shall thus be intellectually and morally obliged to pursue their course of studies with honesty and integrity. Therefore, in preparing and submitting materials for academic courses and in taking examinations, a student shall not yield to cheating or plagiarism, which not only violate academic standards but also make the offender liable to penalties explicit in Section 41301 of Title 5, California Code of Regulations as follows: Expulsion, Suspension, and Probation of Students. Following procedures consonant with due process established pursuant to Section 41304, any student of a campus may be expelled, suspended, placed on probation, or given a lesser sanction for one or more of the following causes that must be campus related.

Cheating

Cheating is defined as the act of obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for academic work by the use of dishonest, deceptive, or fraudulent means. Examples of cheating include, but are not limited to copying, in part or in whole, from another's test or other examination; discussing answers or ideas relating to the answers on a test or other examination without the permission of the instructor; obtaining copies of a test, an examination, or other course material without the permission of the instructor; using notes, cheat sheets, or other devices considered inappropriate under the prescribed testing condition; collaborating with another or others in work to be presented without the permission of the instructor; falsifying records, laboratory work, or other course data; submitting work previously presented in another course, if contrary to the rules of the course; altering or interfering with the grading procedures; plagiarizing, as defined below; and knowingly and intentionally assisting another student in any of the above.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as the act of incorporating ideas, words, or specific substance of another, whether purchased, borrowed, or otherwise obtained, and submitting same to the university as one's own work to fulfill academic requirements without giving credit to the appropriate source. Plagiarism shall include but not be limited to: submitting work, either in part or in whole, completed by another; omitting footnotes for ideas, statements, facts, or conclusions that belong to another; omitting quotation marks when quoting directly from another, whether it be a paragraph, sentence, or part thereof; close and lengthy paraphrasing of the writings of another; submitting another person's artistic works, such as musical compositions, photographs, paintings, drawings, or sculptures; and (f) submitting as one's own work papers purchased from research companies.

Disciplinary Action

Cheating and plagiarism in connection with an academic program at the university may warrant two separate and distinct courses of disciplinary action that may be applied concurrently in response to a violation of this policy: academic sanctions, such as grade modifications; and punitive sanctions, such as probation, suspension, or expulsion.

Academic sanctions are concerned with the student's grades and are the responsibility of the instructor involved. Punitive sanctions are concerned with the student's records and status on campus and shall be the responsibility of the university president or designated representative. The Coordinator of Judiciary Procedures shall be the president's representative in matters of student discipline.