



Problems and Issues in Contemporary Ethics Undergraduate Course Information Guide

Course Number: CCA 322, 4 credits, 10 Weeks

Cross listed Course Number: AI 322, 2 or 4 credits, 10 Weeks

Cross listed Course Number: SNC 188, 4 credits, 10 Weeks

Delivery Formats: Online Async

| | | |
|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
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Course Description

An introduction to moral philosophy with emphasis on the conflict between "moral relativism" (or "subjective" ethics) on the one hand and "moral realism" (or "objective" ethics) on the other. During the course you will be introduced to classic theories and leading figures in the history of ethics, from Plato and Aristotle to Kant and Nietzsche. Course content will focus on issues (e.g., poverty, drug use, capital punishment, sexual behavior, euthanasia, biomedical research, animal rights, political violence) at the center of contemporary ethical debate in the United States and throughout the world.

Learning Outcomes

After completing this course, you will be able to:

- Define and apply basic critical concepts and vocabulary terms relating to philosophy and ethical theory.
- Identify and compare key figures, texts, and ideas in the history of moral philosophy.
- Identify and describe at least four major ethical theories or moral principles and apply them to contemporary issues.
- Apply insights and theories from moral philosophy to personal ethical decisions.
- Apply concepts and theories from moral philosophy to analyze issues and resolve disputes in the contemporary workplace.

If in a SCPS competence program, (BAIFA, BAC, BAGB, BAECE), this course addresses the following requirements:

| Competence | Competence Statement / Criteria |
|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| A3C | Can examine a social issue from an ethical perspective. |
| A3E | Can compare substantially different theological or philosophical systems. |
| A4 | Can analyze a problem using two different ethical systems. |
| FX | Can analyze an ethical issue in business or the contemporary workplace. |

Learning Outcomes for SNC 188 Liberal Studies Program/Arts and Literature Domain

After completing this course, you will be able to:

- Critically think about, and analyze philosophical questions and problems.
- Evaluate philosophical questions, issues and/or problems using informed judgment.
- Analyze and interpret the methods used by philosophers in addressing philosophical questions, issues, and/or problems.
- Engage with philosophical topics and figures in their historical context.
- Confront and interpret primary texts from the philosophical tradition.
- Write an analytic essay treating a philosophical question, issue and/or problem that forwards an identifiable thesis, argument, and conclusion.

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Learning Strategies and Resources

Some learning activities, assignments and deadlines will vary depending on the delivery format of the course and may differ slightly from what is presented in this document.

Learning resources for the course include a textbook, recommended videos, diagnostic quizzes, websites (especially the [Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#) and the [Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#)), and a long list of supplementary resources and texts (see below). In addition, students can earn bonus credit by tracking down helpful new resources and sharing them with classmates.

Required Readings

Books and learning materials are available at the DePaul bookstore, at <http://depaul-loop.bncollege.com>, or through alternative sources.

Timmons, Mark. *Moral Theory: An Introduction*. 2nd edition. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2013. Singer, Peter ed. *Ethics*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1994.

Additional readings available on Electronic Reserve, at the [DePaul Library](#). Login to Ares Course Reserves and select the course. Log in using your Campus Connect User ID and password. You will then get a page listing the courses in which you're enrolled that have readings posted in Ares. Click on the title of this course and the list of our electronic reserve readings will be displayed.

Electronic Reserve

Rachels, James and Stuart Rachels. "The Idea of a Social Contract." In *Elements of Moral Philosophy*, 6th edition. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010. p. 80-93.

Recommended texts

Rachels, James and Stuart Rachels (eds.). *The Right Thing to Do: Basic Readings in Moral Philosophy*. 5th edition. Hightstown, NJ: McGraw Hill, 2009.

Rachels, James and Stuart Rachels. *Elements of Moral Philosophy*. 7th Edition. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2011.

Dictionaries and Encyclopedias

Audi, Robert, ed. *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*. 2nd ed. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Blackburn, Simon, ed. *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.

Turkel, Susan Neiberg, ed. *Encyclopedia of Ethics*. New York: Facts on file, 1999.

Additional Resources

Aristotle. *Nicomachean Ethics*. New York: Penguin, 1976.
<http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/nicomachaen.html>

Attfield, Adam. *Environmental Ethics: An Overview for the Twenty-First Century*. Cambridge, UK: Blackwell Publishing, 2003.

Beccaria, Cesare. *An Essay on Crimes and Punishments*. Boston: International Pocket Library, 1983.

Bentham, Jeremy. *Benthamiana, or, select extracts from the works of Jeremy Bentham: with an outline of his opinions on the principal subjects discussed in his works.* Edited by John Hill Burton. Holmes Beach, FL.: Gaunt, 1998.

Binmore, K.G. *Game Theory and the Social Contract: Playing Fair.* MIT Press, 1994.
Cooper, David E., ed. *Ethics: The Classic Readings.* Blackwell Publishing

Dewey, John and James Hayden Tufts. *Ethics.* New York: Holt and Company, 1909.
http://books.google.com/books?id=5wwwAAAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=Dewey+%2B+ethics&ei=j0r_SbW6LJusMr7fhesD

Donaldson, Thomas and Patricia Werhane. *Ethical Issues in Business: A Philosophical Approach.* (8th edition). Prentice Hall, 2007.

Gautier, David. *Morals by Agreement.* Oxford, UK: The Clarendon Press, 1986.
Gill, Robin, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Ethics.* Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Gilligan, Carol. *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982.

Habermas, Jurgen. *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001.

Harman, Gilbert, et. al., ed. *Moral Relativism and Moral Objectivity.* Blackwell, 1996.
Held, Virginia. *Justice and Care: Essential Readings in Feminist Ethics.* Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1995.

Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviathan.* New York: Penguin, 2009.

Jaggar, Alison M. and Iris Young, eds. *A Companion to Feminist Philosophy.* Oxford: Blackwell, 1998.

James, William. *Pragmatism.* <http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/5116>
Kant. *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals.* Cambridge Univ. Press, 1988.

Levinas, Emmanuel. *Basic Philosophical Writings.* Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1996.

MacIntyre, Alasdair. *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory.* 3rd edition. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007.

Marx, Karl. *The Marx-Engels Reader.* Robert C. Tucker, ed. W.W. Norton, 1978.

Mill, John Stuart. *Utilitarianism. On Liberty. Considerations on Representative Government.* New York: Everyman, 1913.

Moore, G.E. *Principia Ethica.* (1903.) New York: Prometheus Books, 1988.

Moser, Paul, K. (ed.) *Moral Relativism: A Reader*. New York, Oxford University Press, 2000.

Noddings, Nel. *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education*. 2nd edition. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003.

Putnam, Hilary. *Ethics without Ontology*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004.

Rawls, John. *Lectures on the History of Moral Philosophy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000.

Justice as Fairness. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001.

Ross, WD. *The Right and the Good*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *The Essential Rousseau*. Lowell Blair, ed. New American Library, 1991.

Scruton, Roger. *Kant*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982.

A Short History of Modern Philosophy. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 1995.

Singer, Peter. *Animal Liberation*. Rev. ed. Avon/Hearst, 1991.

Practical Ethics. Cambridge University Press, 1993.

One World: The Ethics of Globalization. 2nd Ed. New Haven, CN: Yale University, 2004.

Tronto, Joan. *Moral Boundaries: A Political Argument for an Ethics of Care*. New York: Routledge, 1994.

Web Resources

Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy. <http://www.iep.utm.edu/>

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. <http://plato.stanford.edu/>

Wikipedia. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page

Columbia Encyclopedia Online. <http://www.bartleby.com/65/>

Recommended Films

Blood Diamond (2006)

The Constant Gardener (2003)

Dirty Pretty Things (2002)

Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind (2004)

The Fifth Estate (2013)

Food, Inc. (2009)

The Fountainhead (1949)
Gandhi (1982)
Girl, Interrupted (1999)
The Handmaid's Tale (1990)
The Hours (2002)
The Insider (1999)
Lord of the Flies (1963)
A Man for All Seasons (1966)
Minority Report (2002)
Talk to Her (2002)
Whose Life Is It Anyway? (1981)
Wit (2001)
Zero Dark Thirty (2012)

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Learning Deliverables

The course consists of 14 graded assignments and 10 required discussions. Assignments typically consist of two or three short essay-discussion questions. Discussions are not formally graded. Instead, students receive credit for participating as long as they do so in a substantive way. Discussions remain open for student posts for a period of two weeks. Student essays, especially for the last 4 modules, are evaluated both for form and content. Essays are expected to have a clear thesis statement, a body of supportive argument and evidence, and a logically consistent and clearly stated conclusion. Content will be graded mainly for accuracy of information. All submissions should be properly documented.

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Assessment of Student Learning

Grading Practices

Assignments will be graded mostly on content – that is, on accuracy of information and depth and persuasiveness of argument. Please try to keep your answers clear and concise and, where appropriate, provide illustrative examples.

In addition to these criteria, assignments will also be evaluated on the basis of overall correctness (including spelling, punctuation, and grammar); clarity, succinctness, and force of expression; and grace and readability of style. You must of course always cite your sources.

Distribution of Grade Points

| | |
|---------------------|-----|
| Forum Discussions | 18% |
| Written Assignments | 82% |

Grading Scale

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|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| A = 92 to 100 | A- = 90 to 91 | B+ = 88 to 89 |
| B = 83 to 87 | B- = 80 to 82 | C+ = 77 to 79 |
| C = 72 to 76 | C- = 70 to 71 | D+ = 65 to 69 |
| D = 61 to 64 | F = 60 or below | INC |

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Course Schedule

| Week and Module Title | Readings | Assignments |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Week 1, Module 1: Introduction to Moral Philosophy. Relativism and Realism; Consequentialism and Deontology. | | Module 1, Unit 1 Assignment 1.1 (10 points) Module 1, Unit 2 Assignment 1.2 (7 points) Discussion Forum 1.3 (2 points) |
| Week 2, Module 2: Divine Command Theory and Natural Law Theory. | | Module 2, Unit 1 Assignment 2.1 (6 points) |

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|-----------------------------------------------------------|--|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | <p>Module 2, Unit 2</p> <p>Assignment 2.2 (10 points)</p> <p>Discussion Forum 2.3 (2 points)</p> |
| Week 3, Module 3: Utilitarianism. | | <p>Module 3</p> <p>Assignment 3.1 (10 points)</p> <p>Discussion Forum 3.2 (2 points)</p> |
| Week 4, Module 4: Kantian Ethics. | | <p>Module 4</p> <p>Assignment 4.1 (7 points)</p> <p>Discussion Forum 4.2 (2 points)</p> |
| Week 5, Module 5: Moral Pluralism and Prima Facie Duties. | | <p>Module 5</p> <p>Assignment 5.1 (6 points)</p> <p>Discussion Forum 5.2 (3 points)</p> |
| Week 6, Module 6: Virtue Ethics and Ethics of Care. | | <p>Module 6, Unit 1</p> <p>Assignment 6.1 (8 points)</p> <p>Module 6, Unit 2</p> <p>Assignment 6.2 (7 points)</p> <p>Discussion Forum 6.3 (3 points)</p> |

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Week 7, Module 7: Social Contract Theory.</p> | | <p>Module 7</p> <p>Assignment 7.1 (7 points)</p> <p>Discussion Forum 7.2 (3 points)</p> |
| <p>Week 8, Module 8: Capital Punishment. Euthanasia and Suicide.</p> | | <p>Module 8, Unit 1</p> <p>Assignment 8.1 (10 points)</p> <p>Module 8, Unit 2</p> <p>Assignment 8.2 (10 points)</p> <p>Discussion Forum 8.3 (3 points)</p> |
| <p>Week 9, Module 9: Environmentalism and Animal Rights.</p> | | <p>Module 9</p> <p>Assignment 9.1 (10 points)</p> <p>Discussion Forum 9.2 (3 points)</p> |
| <p>Week 10, Module 10: World Poverty; Business and Professional Ethics.</p> | | <p>Module 10</p> <p>Assignment 10.1 (10 points)</p> <p>Forum 10.2 (3 points)</p> |

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Course Policies

For access to all SCPS and DePaul University academic policies, refer to the following links:

[SCPS Student Resources Website](#)

[DePaul Student Handbook](#)

The [D2L Course Website](#) for this course.

Course Syllabus

The official syllabus for this course that includes course dates, instructor information and quarter specific details will be provided by the course instructor by the start of the course and available on the course D2L website.

Course Registration

To find out when this course will be offered next, you can go to the [SCPS Registration website](#) for details on how to register for the course.

For information on how this course can apply to your program, contact your academic advisor.

School of Continuing and Professional Studies

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