

FYSM 1209
Contemporary Moral, Social, and Political Issues
Professor Christine Koggel

Fall 2014/Winter 2015: Tuesdays and Thursdays: 1:05-2:25

Office Hours: Tuesdays 2:30-4:30 or by appointment

Room 3A46 Paterson Hall, ext. 3239

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REQUIRED TEXTS (CAN BE PURCHASED AT CARLETON UNIVERSITY BOOKSTORE)

Contemporary Moral Issues. Fifth Edition. Edited by Wesley Cragg and Christine Koggel. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 2005.

Moral Issues in Global Perspective. Volume II: Human Diversity and Equality. Second Edition. Edited by Christine Koggel. Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 2006.

Moral Issues in Global Perspective. Volume III: Moral Issues. Second Edition. Edited by Christine Koggel. Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 2006.

There will be a few additional readings posted on cuLearn.

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to ethics, a branch of philosophy concerned with determining what we ought to do and why. We do this by examining in detail a number of complex theories and controversial moral issues that confront contemporary societies.

The first semester of this course is an introduction to ethics by way of an examination of moral theories and a discussion of the works of key philosophers who established theories such as deontology, utilitarianism, relativism, and care ethics. We then turn to contemporary theories of equality and accounts of difference and diversity among human beings in order to answer questions about the nature of individual choice and social responsibility. How should we live our lives and interact with others? How should we think about ethics in a global context? We critically evaluate these theories in light both of the relativist appeal for tolerance with respect to different moral practices in various cultures and of recent challenges to traditional theory by feminist, non-western, race, class, and disability theorists. We use insights from these various challenges to explore the nature, extent, and kinds of discrimination both within and across cultures.

In the second semester of the course, we do a more concentrated focus on the implications of our examination of traditional and contemporary approaches to moral theory for practical issues such as aboriginal rights, poverty, euthanasia, abortion, pornography and censorship, animal rights and the environment, and war and terrorism (specific practical issues to be decided).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1) Two (2) short assignments (no longer than 3 double spaced pages) on the readings (each worth 10% for a total of 20% of the final grade).

Assignment due dates and the topics are noted in the “Class by Class Readings for Fall Semester” list below (you must do **2 out of the 3**). All assignments must be handed in at the **beginning of class**. For each assignment, you can select to hand it in EITHER at the beginning of the class for which the readings are assigned OR at the beginning of the class immediately following that class. I will be a bit more lenient in the grading of the former as you will be working on material we have not yet discussed in class.

These two short assignments serve several purposes: they provide you with early feedback on your work, they allow you to think through and assimilate feedback on your work, and they are aids in the development of skills of argumentation and evaluation that will help you in writing the in-class mid-term exam and the final term paper (described under 3 and 5). For my part, I provide comments that identify places where your interpretation does not fit with the text; you do not back up your interpretation with support from the text; you fail to grasp key points and/or arguments made by the author; you are too brief in your summary and/or analysis; you summarize too much of the detail of the readings rather than focus on the assignment question; or you show a carelessness in grammatical presentation that gets in the way of understanding your answer(s) to the assignment question(s).

2) **Rewrite ONE** of the assignments in 1) above into an expanded paper (no longer than 5 double spaced pages and worth 20% of the final grade) according to the following instructions.

When you get the graded assignments in 1) back, you can select to rewrite one of them and hand it back in at the beginning of the following Tuesday class. The rewrite should **take my comments on the graded assignment into account and also expand the analysis** by having you **reread** the original readings and **review** notes, **add a discussion exploring answers to a second question (identified under “Rewrite Questions”)**, and **reflect** on and incorporate some of the discussion/lecture of this material in class. In some cases you may need to focus your discussion on a narrower topic than the original assignment, or do more exegetical work on the text itself before launching into criticisms/comments on it, or sometimes even broaden the original topic covered in your assignment to include some more text or another related issue. As with the write up of the class presentation, your revisions should take into account class discussion and readings that may have helped to clarify problems/misinterpretations so that you can expand the analysis beyond what you did in the original assignment.

The rewritten paper **along with the original graded assignment** needs to be handed in at the beginning of the Tuesday class following that in which I handed back the graded assignment.

3) Mid-term exam (1.5 hours) worth 25% of the final grade. The exam will be on the readings on moral theories covered in Weeks 1-5 and on the class lectures and discussion of this material.

4) Class attendance and participation (worth 10% of the final grade).

5) Final term paper worth 25% of the final grade (about 8-9 double spaced pages). The term paper covers the practical issues material from Weeks 6-11 (material after the Mid-term Exam). Topics will be handed out in advance. The due date is noted on the “Class by Class Readings” list below.

CLASS BY CLASS READINGS FOR FALL SEMESTER

Week 1 - Moral Theory

September 4 - Introduction to the course.

Week 2 – Moral Theory

September 9 – Readings from *Contemporary Moral Issues (CMI)*: from Chapter 11, “Introduction (587-590) and David Wong “Relativism” (603-610).

September 11 - Readings from *CMI*: from Chapter 11, Kant “Categorical Imperative (590-596).

Week 3 – Moral Theory

September 16 - Readings from *CMI*: from Chapter 11, Mill “Utilitarianism” (596-603)

September 18 - Readings from *CMI*: from Chapter 11, Kant and Mill (590-603) (review and evaluation)

Week 4 – Moral Theory

September 23 - Readings from *CMI*: from Chapter 11, Baier “The Need for More than Justice” (610-619)

September 25 - Readings from *Ethics and Social Welfare. Special Issue: Care Ethics*, v. 4, no. 2, 2010: Joan Tronto “Creating Caring Institutions” (158-171) (posted on cuLearn).

Week 5 - Moral Theory

September 30 – Readings from *CMI*: from Chapter 8, Midgley “Duties Concerning Islands” (420-429)

October 2 - **Midterm exam on readings from Weeks 1-5.**

Week 6 - Equality and Difference: Theories and Critical Analysis

October 7 - Readings from *Moral Issues in Global Perspective: Volume II (MGPII)*: Preface (xi-xiv); Introduction to Chapter 1 (1-3) and Nussbaum (4-25).

October 9 – Readings from *MGPII*: Crocker (26-42).

ASSIGNMENT #1

Assignment Topic: Question 5 from “Study Questions” in *MGPII* on page 85.

(Rewrite Topic: Question 5 from “Study Questions” in *MGPII* on page 85 with further discussion and analysis of Crocker on insiders and outsiders.)

Week 7 - Equality and Difference: Theories and Critical Analysis

October 14 – Readings from *CMI* Nussbaum and Crocker (4-42) (review and evaluate)

October 16 - Readings from *MGPII*: Steele (55-59) and Young (60-71).

Week 8 - Discrimination – Gender and Race

October 21 - Readings from *MGPII*: Thomas (72-84).

October 23 - Readings from *CMI*: Chapter 5, McIntosh “White Privilege and Male Privilege” (258-266)

FALL BREAK

Week 9 – Discrimination – Gender

November 4 – Readings from *MGPII*: Chapter 3, Saltzberg and Chrisler (142-150).

ASSIGNMENT #2

Assignment Topic: Question 2 from “Study Questions” in *MGPII* on page 213.
(Rewrite Topic: Question 2 from “Study Questions” in *MGPII* on page 213 and expand to include a comparison/discussion of Frye’s “Sexism” in *CMI* on consequences.)

November 6 - Readings from *CMI*: Chapter 5, Frye “Sexism” (267-280)

Week 10 – Discrimination - Race and Ethnicity

November 11 – Readings from *MGPII*: Introduction to Chapter 2 (89-90), Appiah (91-101), and Yamada (132-136).

ASSIGNMENT #3

Assignment Topic: Question 1 from “Study Questions” in *MGPII* on page 137.
(Rewrite Topic: Questions 1 and 3 from “Study Questions” in *MGPII* on page 137.)

November 13 - Readings from *MGPII*: Chapter 2, Frye (116-128) and Davion (129-131).

Week 11 – Discrimination – Sexual Orientation

November 18 – Readings from *MGPII*: Introduction to Chapter 4 (217-219); Jordan (220-228) and Overall (229-239).

November 20 - Readings from *CMI*, Chapter 5, Wellington “Why Liberals Should Support Same-Sex Marriage” (280-297)

Week 12 – Discrimination – Sexual Orientation

November 25 – Readings from *MGPII*: Chapter 4, Calhoun (240-251).

- **Discrimination – Disability**

November 27 - Readings from *MGPII*: Introduction to Chapter 5 (277-279); Wasserman (280-285); and Silvers (286-294).

Week 13 - Discrimination -- Disability

December 2 – Readings from *CMI*: Chapter 5, Bickenbach “Disability and Equality” (297-303).

December 4 - Readings from *MGPII*: Chapter 5, Tremain (307-320).

FINAL TERM PAPER DUE ON DECEMBER 8 BY 4:15 P.M. (FLOOR 3A AS PER INSTRUCTIONS UNDER DEPARTMENT POLICIES). DEADLINE IS SPECIFIED IN THE ACADEMIC CALENDAR AS “LAST DAY FOR HANDING IN TERM WORK AND THE LAST DAY THAT CAN BE SPECIFIED BY A COURSE INSTRUCTOR AS A DUE DATE FOR TERM WORK FOR FALL TERM COURSES.”

List of Likely Topics for Winter Semester (to be finalized at end of Fall Semester)

- 1) Aboriginal Rights (*CMI* and supplementary)
- 2) Poverty (*CMI* and *MGPII*)
- 3) Euthanasia (*CMI* and *MGPIII*)
- 4) Abortion and Reproductive Issues (*CMI* and *MGPIII*)
- 5) Pornography and Censorship (*CMI* and *MGPIII*)
- 6) Animal Rights and Environmental Ethics (*CMI* and *MGPIII*)
- 7) War and Terrorism (*CMI* and *MGPIII*)

Department of Philosophy and Carleton University Policies (2014-15)

Assignments:

Unless specifically told otherwise by their instructors, students:

- must not use a plastic or cardboard cover or paper clips
- must staple the paper (there is a stapler on the essay box)
- must include the following in the lower right corner of the cover sheet:
 - student name
 - student number
 - course number and section
 - instructor's name
- The Philosophy Department does not accept assignments by FAX. You may send them by courier, if necessary.
- No assignments will be accepted after the last day for handing in term work – see dates in next column.
- Assignments handed in through the essay box (just inside the glass doors, Paterson Hall, Floor 3A) must be dropped into the box by **4:15** on a regular business day in order to be date-stamped with that day's date. Assignments handed in after 4:15 or on a non-business day will be stamped as having been handed in on the next business day.
- Students are required to keep copies of their assignments. If your paper is lost at any point, you will be considered not to have submitted it if you cannot produce a copy immediately on request.

Deferrals for Term Work:

If you miss a final examination and/or fail to submit a final assignment by the due date because of circumstances beyond your control, you may apply for a deferral of examination/assignment. For deferred examinations, you must apply within 5 working days after the scheduled date of your exam. To apply for deferral of a final assignment, you must apply within 5 working days of the last scheduled day of classes. Visit the Registrar's Office for more information.

Plagiarism:

It is the responsibility of each student to understand the meaning of 'plagiarism' as defined in the Undergraduate or Graduate Calendars, and to avoid both committing plagiarism and aiding or abetting plagiarism by other students. (Undergraduate Calendar Academic Regulations, section 14.3, or <http://www4.carleton.ca/calendars//ugrad/current/regulations/acadregsuniv14.html#14.3>)

Academic Accommodation:

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website: <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

Religious obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website: <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The **Paul Menton Centre** for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your **Letter of Accommodation** at the beginning of the term, and no

later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (*if applicable*). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (*if applicable*) at <http://www2.carleton.ca/pmc/new-and-current-students/dates-and-deadlines/>

You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

Important Dates:

Sept. 4	Classes start (after Orientation events).
Sept. 17	Last day for registration and course changes in Fall and Fall/Winter courses.
Sept. 30	Last day for entire fee adjustment when withdrawing from Fall term or two-term courses.
Oct. 13	Thanksgiving Day – university closed.
Oct. 27-31	Fall Break – no classes.
Nov. 24	Last day for tests or examinations in courses below 4000-level before the Final Examination period.
Dec. 8	Last day of classes, Fall term. Last day for handing in term work and the last day that can be specified by a course instructor as a due date for Fall term courses.
Dec. 8	Last day to withdraw from Fall term courses (academic purposes only).
Dec. 9	No classes or examinations take place. Review classes may be held, but no new material may be introduced.
Dec. 10-21	Final examinations for Fall courses, mid-terms for Fall/Winter courses.
Dec. 21	Take-home exams are due.
Jan. 5	Winter term classes begin.
Jan. 16	Last day for registration and course changes in Winter term classes.
Jan. 31	Last day for entire fee adjustment when withdrawing from winter courses or winter portion of two-term courses.
Feb. 16-20	Winter Break, classes suspended.
Mar. 24	Last day for tests or examinations in courses below 4000-level before the Final Examination period.
Apr. 8	Last day of Fall/Winter and Winter term classes. Last day for handing in term work and the last day that can be specified by a course instructor as a due date for term work for Fall/Winter and Winter term courses.
Apr. 8	Last day to withdraw from Fall/Winter and Winter term courses (academic purposes only).
Apr. 9-10	No classes or examinations take place. Review classes may be held, but no new material may be introduced.
Apr. 11-23	Final Examinations. Exams will not be held Apr. 18-20.
Apr. 23	Take-home exams are due.

Addresses:

Department of Philosophy:	3A35 Paterson Hall www.carleton.ca/philosophy 520-2110
Registrar's Office:	300 Tory www.carleton.ca/registrar 520-3500
Student Academic Success Centre:	302 Tory www.carleton.ca/sasc 520-7850
Writing Tutorial Service:	4 th Floor, Library http://www1.carleton.ca/sasc/writing-tutorial-service/ 520-6632
MacOdrum Library	http://www.library.carleton.ca/ 520-2735