

Introduction to Ethics and Social Issues
Summer 2018
Syllabus

Instructor Information

Course instructor: Dr. Nalini E. Ramlakhan

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Office hours: Thursdays, 4:45PM-5:45PM or by appointment

Course Information

Summer 2018, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6:05PM-8:55PM

Course title: Introduction to Ethics and Social Issues

Course number: 1550 A

Room: TB 238

Department: Philosophy

Prerequisite(s): None.

Additional information: Precludes additional credit for FYSM 1209 and PHIL 1500.

Course Website:

CULearn will be used for access to the course syllabus, grades, announcements, and discussion boards. It is recommended that students regularly check CULearn for course updates and other information. Students are responsible for keeping current with the information on CULearn. Students must check CULearn regularly for important messages, course information, assignment information, and exam information.

Course Description

An introduction to understanding, assessing, and formulating ethical arguments concerning controversial issues. This course engages in both theoretical and applied ethics. Students will explore different ethical theories such as utilitarianism, hedonism, deontology, care ethics, and virtue ethics. Students will apply different ethical theories in order to examine and evaluate issues in topics which include euthanasia, animal rights, environmental ethics, and human enhancement.

Dos and Don'ts

Do complete the readings, come to class, and complete your assignments on time. Students are expected to come to class prepared, having completed the required readings. Class attendance is important if you want to succeed in this course. If you are having difficulties, including difficulties completing an assignment on time, talk to me during my office hours. Do not be disruptive during class or use cellular phones during class. A break will be provided during class.

Course Text

Burnor, R. and Raley, Y. (2018). *Ethical Choices: An Introduction to Moral Philosophy with Cases* (2nd edition). Available at the campus bookstore.

Articles and other course materials: accessed via Google Scholar and Carleton's Library Portal (see schedule).

Disclaimer: I reserve the right to change the readings or topics assigned. Changes will not add substantial workload.

Evaluation

TEST 1

Value: 15%

Date: July 19th, 2018

Description: This test will be in multiple choice, true/false, and short and long answer format. Students will be given partial class time to complete the test (see schedule). The test will begin at 6:05PM and end at 8:05PM. Students arriving thirty minutes after the test has started will not be permitted to write the test. See 'Notes' for missed tests.

TEST 2

Value: 20%

Date: August 2nd, 2018

Description: This test will be in multiple choice, true/false, and short and long answer format. This test is summative, and it is expected that students will apply the ethical theories discussed at the beginning of the course to some of the issues discussed both in class and in the course text. Students will be given partial class time to complete the test (see schedule). The test will begin at 6:05PM and end at 8:05PM. Students arriving thirty minutes after the test has started will not be permitted to write the test. See 'Notes' for missed tests.

PARTICIPATION

Value: 20%

Description: This course takes a flipped class and interactive approach to learning. As such, students will be asked to participate during class discussions both individually and in groups. This enhances the learning experience, and allows for students to engage with important course material. Class participation is important if you want to do well in this course.

MINI IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES/ASSIGNMENTS (5 assignments X 5% each)

Value: 25%

Date: See course schedule.

Description: Students will engage in course material by completing activities/assignments during class time. Assignments will enhance students' abilities to create and analyze arguments, debate theories and ideas, and write a scholarly essay in philosophy. If a student is unable to attend class when assignments are due, they will receive a 0 for the assignment unless verifiable

documentation is received (e.g., doctor's note). Upon verified documentation, a make-up assignment will be provided. See 'Notes' section for further information.

As much as possible, I will be using a flipped class approach where students support each other in learning activities in small groups. For some of the classes, traditional lecturing will be swapped in favour of a peer learning environment. It is in your best interest to attend all classes and participate as much as possible. Some in-class assignments will take the form of group work.

ESSAY

Value: 15%

Due date: August 7th, 2018

Description: Topics will be given in class, but students are welcome to write on a topic not given in class. Topics must be approved by the instructor. Papers are to be submitted in class, on or before the due date. Papers can also be submitted via the philosophy drop box located on floor 3A, Paterson Hall. Email submissions are not accepted.

Papers must be typed, double-spaced, 12 point font Times New Roman, and must not exceed 6 pages (not including a title page and bibliography). Papers should be 4-6 pages in length, and must include a bibliography. Students will be provided with a writing workshop/tutorial (see schedule below).

Late essay submissions will be penalized one full letter grade per day, including weekends (if a B+ paper is handed in a day late, it will receive a C+. If a paper is submitted after 4:15PM via the philosophy drop box, it will be considered submitted the following day. If a paper is submitted after 4:15PM on a Friday, it will be considered submitted on the following Monday). Late essays will be accepted without penalty only if there is legitimate reason. Extensions may be granted under special circumstances. If you need an extension, you must see the instructor at least one week before the assignment is due. There is no guarantee for an extension. Essays submitted after August 15th will not be accepted (see policy page below).

RESPONSE PAPER

Value: 5%

Due date: August 14th, 2018

Description: A paper in response to a particular issue. Topics will be given in class on August 7th. Papers are to be submitted in class on August 14th. Papers must be typed, double-spaced, 12 point font Times New Roman, and must not exceed two pages. Papers should be 1-2 pages in length. Email submissions are not accepted. Late response papers will be penalized one full letter grade. Late papers should be submitted to the philosophy drop box. Response papers handed in after August 15th will not be accepted (see policy page below).

NOTES

1. The standard time for returning graded tests, assignments, etc. is two weeks from the date of the test or assignment due date. If additional time is needed for grading, announcements will be made in class or posted on the CULearn website.

2. If a disagreement over a grade occurs, the student can appeal the grade to the instructor after having discussed the grade with the TA.
3. A make-up test/assignment will be provided only upon presentation of verifiable documentation (e.g., a doctor's note). A failure to provide one will result in a zero. It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor if a test or assignment is missed. Students must contact the instructor within 72 hours of a missed test or 24 hours of a missed assignment to schedule a make-up. This is the student's responsibility. Arrangements must be made directly with the instructor. There are no exceptions.
4. Student or professor materials created for this course (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the author(s). They are intended for personal use and may not be reproduced or redistributed without prior written consent of the author(s).

Class Schedule

Unit 1: Introduction to Philosophy and Ethics

July 3rd

Overview of course syllabus and class expectations

Introduction to philosophy

Readings: Bunor & Raley, Introduction (pp. 1-3)

July 5th

Documentary: Ethics Matters

In-class activity 1

Readings: No Readings

Unit 2: The Good Life and Ethics

July 10th

Ethics and Values

Hedonism and Egoism

Virtue Ethics

Readings: Bunor & Raley, Chapter 1 (pp. 5-18, case studies are optional), Section IV of Chapter 5 (pp.96-98), and Chapter 11 (pp. 223-247, case 5 is optional)

Nozick, R. (2013). The Experience Machine. <http://www.aaron-zimmerman.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Nozick-Parfit.pdf> (first two pages only. Parfit's chapter is optional)

Optional Reading

Plato, Ring of Gyges

<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/d6f3/957113c5d0b52247e80753aa3ff68fa5bdd8.pdf>

Unit 3: Ethical Theories

July 12th

Consequentialist Ethics

Deontological Ethics

Feminist and Care Ethics

Readings: Burnor & Raley, Chapter 6 (pp. 111-133), Chapter 7 (pp. 134-149), Chapter 8 (pp. 150-171, cases 2-6 are optional), and Chapter 12 (pp. 249-275)

July 17th

Buddhist Ethics

Review for Test 1

In-class activity 2

Readings: Keown, D (2005). *Buddhist Ethics: A Very Short Introduction*, Chapters 1 and 2. Accessed via Carleton's Library Portal

July 19th

Test 1

Writing workshop

Essay assignments distributed

Readings: No Readings

Unit 4: Ethics and Society

July 24th

Moral Relativism

Social Contracts and Rights

In-class activity 3

Readings: Burnor & Raley, Chapter 2 (pp. 25-45) and Chapter 10 (pp. 198-222)

Unit 5: Ethics and Social Issues

July 26th

Animal Ethics

Readings: Singer, P. (1974) All Animals Are Equal. *Philosophic Exchange Volume 5 Number 1 Volume 5*. Accessed via Google Scholar.

https://digitalcommons.brockport.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1179&context=phil_ex

Davis, S.L. (2003). The Least Harm Principle May Require That Humans Consume a Diet Containing Large Herbivores, Not a Vegan Diet. *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics 16*: 387–394. Accessed via Google Scholar. https://www.lbs.co.il/data/attachment-files/2015/05/23994_thbahvnyt.pdf

Keown, D. (2005). *Buddhist Ethics: A Very Short Introduction*, Chapter 3. Accessed via Carleton's Library Portal

July 31st

Environmental Ethics

In-class activity 4

Readings: Burnor & Raley, Chapter 14 (pp. 310-316, 323-325, cases 2 and 3, 328-332)

August 2nd

Test 2

Writing workshop

Readings: No readings

August 7th

Personal Autonomy and Moral Agency

Medical Ethics

Response papers distributed

Essays due

Readings: Burnor and Raley, Chapter 3 (pp. 46-56, case study 4, 66-67) and Chapter 14, Section II (pp. 303-308)

August 9th

The Ethics of Human Enhancement

Documentary: Who's Afraid of Designer Babies? The Ethics of Genetic Screening

TEDTalks: Nick Bostrom—Humanity's Biggest Problems Aren't What You Think They Are

Readings: No Readings

August 14th

The Ethics of Human Enhancement

In-class activity 5

Response papers due

Readings: Bostrom, Nick (2003). Human Genetic Enhancements: A Transhumanist Perspective.

The Journal of Value Inquiry 37: 493–50. Accessed via Google Scholar

<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/ebc1/f73ee2b78b72b05b6b4d774650cbb223cf86.pdf>

Department of Philosophy and Carleton University Policies (Summer 18)

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 on the first page: student name and number; course name and number; instructor's name.
- No assignments will be accepted after the last day for handing in term work – see dates below.
- 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 students are unable to complete term work because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control, they should contact their course instructor no later than *three working days* of the due date. Normally, any deferred term work will be completed by the last day of the term. Term work cannot be deferred by the Registrar.

Deferrals for Final Examinations:

Students are expected to be available for the duration of a course including the examination period. Occasionally, students encounter circumstances beyond their control where they may not be able to write a final examination or submit a take-home examination. Examples of this would be a serious illness or the death of a family member. If you miss a final examination and/or fail to submit a take-home examination by the due date, you may apply for a deferral no later than *three working days* after the original due date (as per the University Regulations in [Section 2.4, 2.5 and 2.5.1 of the Undergraduate Calendar](#)). Visit the [Registrar's Office](#) for further 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 12.0, or [Academic Integrity < Carleton University](#)

Academic Accommodation:

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term:

- *Pregnancy or religious obligation*: write to your professor 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.
- *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 your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class test or exam requiring accommodation. After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with your professor to ensure accommodation arrangements are made.

Important Dates:

May 7	Classes start.	July 2	Statutory holiday, University closed.
May 14	Last day for registration and course changes for <u>early</u> summer courses.	July 3	Late summer courses begin and full summer courses resume.
May 18	Last day for registration and course changes for <u>full</u> summer courses.	July 10	Last day for registration and course changes for late summer courses.
May 21	Statutory holiday, University closed.	July 23	Last day to withdraw from late summer courses with a full fee adjustment. Withdrawals after this date will result in a permanent notation of WDN on the official transcript.
May 25	Last day for a full fee adjustment when withdrawing from <u>early</u> and <u>full</u> summer courses. Withdrawals after this date will result in a permanent notation of WDN on the official transcript.	Aug. 6	Civic holiday, University closed
June 12	Last day for summative or final examinations in <u>early</u> summer courses before the official examination period.	Aug. 8	Last day for summative or final examinations for late or full summer courses before the official examination period.
June 19	Last day for <u>early</u> summer classes. Last day for handing in term work. Last day for academic withdrawal from <u>early</u> summer courses.	Aug. 15	Last day of late and full summer term classes. Classes follow a Monday schedule. Last day for handing in term work. Last day for academic withdrawal from late summer and full summer courses.
June 22-28	Final examinations.	Aug. 18-24	Final examinations.
June 28	Take-home examinations for early summer courses are due.	Aug. 24	Take-home examinations for late or full summer courses are due.

Useful Contacts:

Department of Philosophy:	3A35 Paterson Hall www.carleton.ca/philosophy 520-2110	Academic Advising Centre:	302 Tory www.carleton.ca/academicadvising 520-7850
Registrar's Office:	300 Tory www.carleton.ca/registrar 520-3500	Writing Services:	4 th Floor, Library http://www.carleton.ca/csas/writing-services/ 520-3822