

PHIL 2101 History of Ethics

Fall 2011 Tues/Thurs 1-2:30

Prof. Vida Panitch

vida_panitch@carleton.ca

Paterson 3A55

Office hours: Tues 2:30-4

Course Description:

In this course we will look at the theories of morality proposed by major figures in the history of ethics, as well as a number of debates these theories have inspired and informed in contemporary philosophy. We will focus on the moral theories of Plato, Aristotle, Immanuel Kant, and John Stuart Mill, and explore their respective conceptions of the good life and right moral conduct. We will conclude the course with an assessment of the ways in which these theories can help inform our thinking about such contemporary problems as animal rights, famine, and just warfare.

Course Assignments and Grade Distribution:

There will be two papers for this course (5-6 pages in length each). In these papers students will be asked to critically evaluate central philosophical arguments from the course, which means that they will have to explain its premises and conclusions clearly and raise (and possibly reject) thoughtful challenges. Each paper will be worth 30% of the final grade. There will also be a final take-home exam worth 40%.

Course Text:

Moral Philosophy: A Reader, 4th edition, Louis P. Pojman ed., Hackett 2009

This text is available from the Carleton Bookstore, as well as on course reserve at the library. There are a few additional readings available online, linked below.

Course Schedule:

Week 1:

Sept 8: Introduction to the Course

Week 2:

Sept 13: Plato, "What is Right Conduct?"

Plato, "Why Should I be Moral?"

Sept 15: Plato, "The Good and the Allegory of the Cave"

Week 3:

Sept 20: Louis Pojman, "A Defense of Ethical Objectivism"

Gilbert Harman, "A Defense of Ethical Relativism"

Sept 22: Ayn Rand, "A Defense of Ethical Egoism"

James Rachels, "A Critique of Ethical Egoism"

Week 4:

Sept 27: Aristotle, "Virtue Ethics"

Sept 29: Bernard Mayo, "Virtue and the Moral Life"

William Frankena, "A Critique of Virtue Based Ethics"

Week 5:

Oct 4: Alistair MacIntyre, "The Nature of the Virtues"
Jonathan Bennett, "The Conscience of Huckleberry Finn"
Oct 6: No Class

Week 6:

Oct 11: Jeremy Bentham, "Classical Hedonism"
Robert Nozick, "The Experience Machine"
Oct 13: W.D. Ross, "Value Pluralism"
Derek Parfit, "What Makes Someone's Life Go Best?"

Week 7:

Oct 18: John Stuart Mill, "Utilitarianism,"
John Hospers, "Rule-Utilitarianism"
Oct 20: Sterling Harwood, "Eleven Objections to Utilitarianism"

Week 8:

Oct 25: Bernard Williams, "A Critique of Utilitarianism"
Oct 27: Immanuel Kant, "The Foundations of Ethics."

Week 9:

Nov 1: Immanuel Kant, "The Foundations of Ethics"
Nov 3: W.D. Ross, "What Makes Right Acts Right?"

Week 10:

Nov 8: T.M. Scanlon, "A Contractarian Ethics"
Nov 10: Judith Jarvis Thomson, "The Trolley Problem"

Week 11:

Nov 15: Peter Singer, "Famine, Affluence and Morality"
Nov: 17: Onora O'Neill, "Kantian Ethics and World Hunger"

Week 12:

Nov 22: Peter Singer, "All Animals are Equal," *
<http://www.animal-rights-library.com/texts-m/singer02.htm>
Tom Regan, "The Case for Animal Rights" *
<http://www.animal-rights-library.com/texts-m/regan03.htm>
Nov 24: Judith Jarvis Thomson, "A Defense of Abortion" *
<http://spot.colorado.edu/~heathwoo/Phil160.Fall02/thomson.htm>
Marry Anne Warren, "The Personhood Argument for Abortion Rights"

Week 13:

Nov 29: Michael Walzer, "Supreme Emergency"
Thomas Nagel, "War and Massacre"
Dec 1: Course Conclusion and Discussion of Take Home Exam

Department of Philosophy and Carleton University Policies

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/academicuniv14.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/accommodation/>

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/accommodation/>

Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Documented disabilities could include but are not limited to mobility/physical impairments, specific Learning Disabilities (LD),

psychiatric/psychological disabilities, sensory disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and chronic medical conditions. Registered PMC students are required to contact the PMC, 613-520-6608, every term to ensure that I receive your Letter of Accommodation, no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations. If you only require accommodations for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodations to PMC by the deadlines published on the PMC website: <http://www2.carleton.ca/pmc/new-and-current-students/dates-and-deadlines/>

Important Dates:

Sept. 8	Classes start (after Orientation events).
Sept. 21	Last day for registration and course changes in Fall term and two-term courses.
Sept. 30	Last day for entire fee adjustment when withdrawing from fall term or two-term courses.
Oct. 7	University Day – no classes.
Oct. 10	Thanksgiving Day – university closed.
Nov. 21	Last day for tests or examinations in courses below 4000 level before the Final Examination period.
Dec. 5	Last day of classes, Fall term. Last day for handing in term assignments, subject to any earlier course deadline.
Dec. 5	Last day to withdraw from Fall term courses (academic purposes only).
Dec. 8-21	Final examinations for Fall courses, mid-terms for Fall/Winter courses.
Jan. 4	Winter term classes begin.
Jan. 17	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. 20	Family Day – university closed
Feb. 20-24	Winter Break, classes suspended.
Mar. 22	Last day for tests or examinations in courses below 4000 level before the Final Examination period.
Apr. 5	Last day of Fall/Winter and Winter term classes. Last day for handing in term assignments, subject to any earlier course deadline.
Apr. 5	Last day to withdraw from Fall/Winter and Winter term courses (academic purposes only).
Apr. 6	Good Friday – university closed.
Apr. 11-24	Final Examinations.

Addresses:

Department of Philosophy:	3A46 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
Paul Menton Centre:	500 University Centre www.carleton.ca/pmc 520-6608
Writing Tutorial Service:	4 th Floor, Library www.carleton.ca/wts 520-6632
MacOdrum Library	http://www.library.carleton.ca/ 520-2735