**Philosophy 3500: Ethics**

**Syllabus—Fall 2021**

Class Time and Location: Tue, Thu 10:45AM – 12:05PM, SAEC 1145

Instructor: Joonho Lee

Office: TBA Office Hours: Fri 1:00–2:00pm or by appointment

E-mail: [joonho.lee@utah.edu](mailto:joonho.lee@utah.edu) Course website: Canvas

**Course Description**: This course focuses on the three dominant theories in moral philosophy today: consequentialism, deontology, and virtue ethics. Some of the issues covered are: right action, the good life, the concept of virtue, moral psychology, and the process of moral decision-making and moral justification.

**Pre-requisite**: None, but prior courses in philosophy are highly recommended.

**Course Objectives:** By the end of the course, students will:

1. Be able to describe some of the most important theories proposed by various philosophers in the field of ethics.
2. Understand what is involved in the application of these theories to concrete cases.
3. Be able to articulate some of the strengths and weaknesses of these theories.
4. Be able to identify, analyze, construct, and criticize philosophical arguments.

**Texts**: All readings are uploaded on Canvas.

(Note: The instructor will strive to follow diligently the schedule and plan set out in this syllabus, but this syllabus is not a binding legal contract. It may be modified by the instructor at any time, and students will be given reasonable prior notice of any modifications. If/when such modifications are made, a new version of the syllabus will be posted on the course website and will be authoritative over all previous versions of the syllabus.)

**Schedule of Topics and Readings:**

Week 1: Introduction

8/24 (Tue): Introduction, no assigned reading

8/26 (Thu): Hinman, Ch. 2, p. 32–69

Week 2: Metaethics (1)

8/31 (Tue): Schroeder, “The Problems of Metaethics”

9/2 (Thu): Rawls, “Outline of a Decision Procedure for Ethics”

Week 3: Metaethics (2)

9/7 (Tue): Sayre-McCord, “Moral Realism,” §1-4

9/9 (Thu): Enoch, “How is Moral Disagreement a Problem?”

Week 4: Consequentialism

9/14 (Tue): Discussion

9/16 (Thu): Timmons, p. 106–133; selections from Bentham and Mill

**9/18 (Sat): #1 Discussion Assignment Due Date**

Week 5: Deontology (1)

9/21 (Tue): Timmons, p. 134–163

9/23 (Thu): Timmons, p. 205–18; Kant, *Groundwork*, p. 22–33; selections from the *Metaphysics of Morals*

Week 6: Deontology (2)

9/28 (Tue): Timmons, p. 218–40; Kant, *Groundwork*, p. 33–48; selections from the *Metaphysics of Morals*

9/30 (Thu): Discussion

Week 7: Review and Exam

**10/4 (Mon): #2 Discussion Assignment Due Date**

10/5 (Tue) Review Session

**10/7 (Thu): Exam 1**

Week 8: Fall Break

10/10 – 10/17: **Fall Break—No Class**

Week 9: Virtue Ethics

10/19 (Tue): Anscombe, “Modern Moral Philosophy”

10/21 (Thu): Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* book I, II

Week 10: Ancient Moral Theories (1)

10/26 (Tue): Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* book III.6–12

10/28 (Thu): Slingerland, “Confucius and the *Lun-Yü*”; Loy, “Mozi”

Week 11: Ancient Moral Theories (2)

11/2 (Tue): Selections from the *Mencius* and the *Xunzi*

11/4 (Thu): Discussion

**11/6 (Sat): #3 Discussion Assignment Due Date**

Week 12: Contemporary Virtue Theories

11/9 (Tue): Hursthouse, “Normative Virtue Ethics”

11/11 (Thu): McDowell, “Virtue and Reason”

**11/13 (Sat): Paper Outline Due Date**

Week 13: Criticism Surrounding the Theories

11/16 (Tue): Foot, “Morality as a System of Hypothetical Imperatives”

11/18 (Thu): Keller, “Virtue Ethics is Self-Effacing”

Week 14: Discussion and Thanksgiving Break

11/23 (Tue): Discussion

11/25 (Thu): Thanksgiving Break

Week 15: Metaethics Revisited: Moral Psychology

11/30 (Tue): Nichols “How Psychopaths Threaten Moral Rationalism”

**12/1 (Wed): #4 Discussion Assignment Due Date**

12/2 (Thu): Conclusion & Review Session

Week 16: Final Exam and Final Paper

**12/7 (Tue): Exam 2**

**12/11 (Sat): Final Paper Due Date**

**Course Requirements:**

1. Students are expected to finish each assigned reading before the class meeting on that assignment.
2. Participation at class meetings: students are expected to participate in discussion in class. For in-class discussion, raising thoughtful questions, responding insightfully to remarks by other students, answering questions from the instructor, and reading aloud (when asked by the instructor) will all count towards fulfilling this requirement. Students who are absent from class are still responsible for knowing what was said both during lecture *and* discussion, so if you miss class, be sure to get notes from a classmate.
3. Attendance: Given the nature of this course, attendance is required and only absences for medical reasons or in accordance with University-sanctioned activities will be excused.

See the following note based on materials from Anne Peterson:

Note: Attendance is immensely important given the nature and content of this course. In addition to adversely affecting one’s participation grade, not attending a class puts one in a far worse spot for answering questions related to that material. Merely doing the readings on one’s own will not prepare one to answer the sorts of questions that will be asked on the exams. There are three reasons for this:

* 1. Being able to *repeat* the contents of the readings will be necessary but not sufficient for doing well in the course; students will be required to *evaluate* the arguments found in the readings in the way we will practice in class, and to develop new ideas of their own in the creatively philosophical way we will practice in class discussions.
  2. Objections and replies to these arguments, as well as clear explanations, which are not found in the readings, will be covered in class, and knowing the objections and replies we discuss in class will be needed for the exams.

* 1. Students will be expected to understand the ways in which a given view solves problems faced by other views we have discussed and introduces new problems not faced by these other views, but these connections and conflicts between the views will often not be discussed in the assigned readings; they will be emphasized in class lectures and discussions.

1. Discussion assignments: the instructor will post four topics for discussion on Canvas at regular periods during the term. Grading will be pass/fail. Further directions will be posted on Canvas.
2. Exams: the instructor will post two online essay exams after Review Sessions. Essays should be submitted by the due date, as designated above. Late submissions will not be allowed unless a student misses the exam because of a serious medical issue or family emergency or the student is participating in an officially sanctioned University activity or the like (see policy [6-100-III-O](http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-100.php) on attendance). Students requesting to take a late submission on such grounds should be prepared to submit documentation of those grounds.
3. Final paper: a final, longer essay should be submitted by the day designated above. The same policy for the late submission applies to the final paper assignment.

**Grading:**

Attendance: 5%

Participation at Class Meetings: 10%

Discussion Assignment: 15%

Exams: 20% each

Final Paper: 30%

(The instructor reserves the right to change this weighting as necessary in order to fulfill the educational mission of the course.)

**Scale for Course Grade:**

• A = 95-100%

• A- = 90-94

• B+ = 87-89

• B = 83-86

• B- = 80-82

• C+ = 77-79

• C = 73-76

• C- = 70-72

• Etc. (E = anything below 60%)

Individual components of the course will be graded on the above scale, multiplied by their percentage of the overall course grade. This scale severely penalizes failure to submit required work, so students who utterly fail to submit required work will jeopardize their overall course grade to a much greater extent than students who submit work that is of poor quality.

The grading scale to be used in this course severely penalizes failure to submit an assignment, so students who utterly fail to submit assignments will jeapordize their overall course grade to a much greater extent than students who submit assignments that are of poor quality.

Note: All assignments submitted for a grade in this course must be the student’s own work. Plagiarism or other forms of academic misconduct may result in a failing grade for the entire course, and the case may be transferred to the University’s Academic Misconduct Committee for further judgment. According to the Student code, “‘Plagiarism’ means the intentional unacknowledged use or incorporation of any other person's work in, or as a basis for, one’s own work offered for academic consideration or credit for public presentation. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, representing as one’s own, without attribution, any individual’s words, phrasing, ideas, sequence of ideas, information or any other mode or content of expression” (<http://www.regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.html>). If you have further questions about what constitutes plagiarism or academic misconduct, ask the instructor and consult the University Code.

**Diversity and Civility in the Classroom:**

The instructor welcomes a diversity of perspectives and views from students. Philosophy, however, is a discipline that also involves subjecting various claims and beliefs to critical scrutiny. We will be discussing and debating a range of ideas over the course of the term, and these debates and discussions may be uncomfortable at times. The instructor will strive to maintain a classroom environment that is civil, respectful, and conducive to learning, but the achievement of such an envrionment *also* depends on how students treat each other. Students are therefore expected to behave respectfully towards their classmates and avoid speaking and acting in ways that demean others. Any student who has concerns about the respectfulness and civility of the classroom environment is invited to discuss them with the instructor, and the instructor will take corrective action if needed. Please see as well the Philosophy department’s statement on diversity and inclusion at <https://philosophy.utah.edu/about/diversitystatement.php>.

**Public Health and Safety Guidance:**

**• Masking and Physical Distancing**

Masks and face coverings are no longer required at most University of Utah facilities (exceptions include University of Utah Health dedicated clinical facilities, and campus buses and shuttles). According to the CDC, wearing a mask remains an effective means of preventing infection for both unvaccinated and vaccinated people. Regardless of what someone chooses (mask or no mask), the university seeks to foster a sense of community and asks everyone on campus to be respectful of individual decisions on mask wearing.

**• Vaccination**

While Utah law prohibits state universities from requiring COVID-19 vaccinations, all members of the University of Utah community are encouraged to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. Vaccination is proving highly effective in preventing severe COVID-19 symptoms, hospitalization, and death from coronavirus. Vaccinations are available to everyone 12 years and older. Appointments are open in the U of U Health system for patients as well as additional vaccine providers throughout Utah. For up-to-date campus vaccination information go to: <https://alert.utah.edu/covid/vaccine/>

**• Testing and Exposure**

The university will continue to follow guidance from the CDC for testing, contact tracing and exposure management. When an exposure is reported, the contact tracing team will engage and advise next steps. Please note that vaccination status is part of the contact tracing protocol.

**• University COVID-19 Testing Services**

Voluntary asymptomatic testing will continue to be available weekly for all members of the campus community. To schedule a COVID-19 test go to: <https://alert.utah.edu/covid-19-testing/>

• **Self-Report**

If students test positive for COVID-19 (or, have been exposed or experiencing symptoms), self-report should be madevia this website: <https://coronavirus.utah.edu/>

**College of Humanities Academic Misconduct Policy:**

Academic misconduct includes cheating, plagiarizing, research misconduct, misrepresenting one’s work, and inappropriately collaborating. Definitions can be found in the Student Code at <http://www.regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.html>.

If you are suspected of academic misconduct, the process proceeds according to the rules found in the Student Code, University Policy 6-400(V). According to that policy, after meeting with you, the instructor must determine whether academic misconduct has, in fact, occurred.

—If s/he determines that no academic misconduct has occurred, s/he will document that you are not responsible for any academic misconduct.

—If s/he determines academic misconduct has occurred and this is the **first instance** in which you have been alleged to have committed academic misconduct, s/he will take into account whether the act was intentional or a result of negligence in determining the appropriate sanction, which can be up to failing the course. The sanction will be noted in the resolution of the case and your right of appeal is as specified in Policy 6-400(V).

—If s/he determines academic misconduct has occurred, and you have previously been sanctioned for an act of academic misconduct, and the prior instance of misconduct resulted in a sanction less than failing the course, the department will follow the process to fail you for the course. If the prior sanction was failure of the course, your new act of misconduct will result in failure of the course and the department will also follow the process to seek your dismissal from the program and the University.

**ADA Statement:**

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services, and activities for people with disabilities. If you need accommodations in this class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the instructor and to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 801-581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations.

**University Safety Statement:**

The University of Utah values the safety of all campus community members. To report suspicious activity or to request a courtesy escort, call campus police at 801-585-COPS (801-585-2677). You will receive important emergency alerts and safety messages regarding campus safety via text message. For more information regarding safety and to view available training resources, including helpful videos, visit safeu.utah.edu.

**Addressing Sexual Misconduct:**

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a civil rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veteran’s status or genetic information.  If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, 135 Park Building, 801-581-8365, or the Office of the Dean of Students, 270 Union Building, 801-581-7066.  For support and confidential consultation, contact the Center for Student Wellness, 426 SSB, 801-581-7776.  To report to the police, contact the Department of Public Safety, 801-585-2677(COPS).

Emergency Assembly Point: If needed, there are two designated Emergency Assembly Points for CTIHB, in the parking lots to the west and east of the building. See the map below:

