

HONORS MORAL PHILOSOPHY SEMINAR

Spring 2010

Jennifer M. Morton

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Office: Papazian 215 Phone: x8428

Office Hours: W 1:00-3.00pm

Th 1.15-6pm

Room: Papazian 319

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course is an in depth survey of historical and contemporary moral philosophy with a focus on virtue ethics. In the first half of this course, we will look at various versions of consequentialism, deontology, and contractarianism. In the second half of the course, we turn to critiques of these traditions and then delve into virtue ethics. Finally, we examine some contemporary empirically informed moral philosophy.

READING: In addition to the following books, readings will be available on Blackboard.

Aristotle. Nicomachean Ethics. Hackett Publishing Company. (trans. Irwin)

Crisp, Roger and Michael Slote (eds.). Virtue Ethics. Oxford University Press.

Hursthouse, Rosalind. On Virtue Ethics. Oxford University Press.

Kant, Immanuel. Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals. Yale University Press, 2002. (trans. and ed. Allen Wood)

Mill, John Stuart. Utilitarianism. Hackett Publishing Company.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: Every week you will be responsible for the core reading plus a 1-2 page reading response (except for the weeks in which you are responsible for a discussion paper). The reading response is meant to help you come prepared to class by reconstructing a central argument from the reading and developing a problem or question you would like to see addressed in discussion. You will be responsible for 4 discussion papers throughout the term. A discussion paper is a 5-page paper (double spaced) on some aspect of the reading for that week which discusses an aspect of the reading and fleshes out an interesting question or topic for discussion. When you are responsible for writing a discussion paper, you are also responsible for coming to class ready to aid in guiding discussion and to talk about your discussion paper extensively. Response papers and discussion papers are due at 8pm on the night before class meets as submissions to blackboard. Everyone is responsible for reading the discussion papers for every class and for, at least, skimming all the response papers.

Reading Responses	20%
Discussion Papers	40%
Final Paper	30%
Participation	10%

LATE POLICY: The purpose of the reading response and discussion papers is to help you prepare to **participate** in class and enrich the discussion. Therefore, late reading responses and discussion papers will **not** be accepted after they are due. If due to some unfortunate circumstances you must reschedule when you are responsible for a discussion paper, you must let me know a full week in advance.

	READING ASSIGNMENT	WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT	DISCUSSION PAPER
INTRODUCTION & APPLIED ETHICS			
01/21	Ethics and Society from an <u>Introduction to Philosophy</u> Nagel, War and Massacre Singer, All Animals Are Equal Jarvis Thomson, A Defense of Abortion	Reading Response	
FOUNDATIONS			
01/28	Aristotle, <u>Nicomachean Ethics</u> [Class Rescheduled]	Reading Response	
02/04	Kant, <u>Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals</u>	Reading Response	
02/11	Mill, <u>Utilitarianism</u>	Reading Response	
CONTEMPORARY CONTRACTARIANISM, CONSEQUENTIALISM, AND DEONTOLOGY			
02/18	Hobbes, Selections from <u>Leviathan</u> Scanlon, Contractualism & Utilitarianism Gauthier, Why Contractarianism? Harman, Convention	Reading Response	
02/25	Korsgaard, Kant's Formula of Universal Law O'Neill, A Simplified Account of Kant's Ethics Herman, On the Value of Acting from the Motive of Duty Schapiro, Compliance, Complicity, & the Nature of Nonideal Conditions	Reading Response	
03/04	Singer, Famine, Affluence, and Morality Smart, Extreme and Restricted Utilitarianism Rawls, Two Concepts of Rules Railton, Alienation, Consequentialism, and the Demands of Morality	Reading Response	
Spring Break			
CRITIQUES			
03/18	Susan Wolf, Moral Saints Williams, Persons, Character, and Morality Nagel, Moral Luck & Williams, Moral Luck Foot, Morality as a System of Hypothetical Imperatives	Reading Response	
VIRTUE THEORY			
03/25	Anscombe, Modern Moral Philosophy Williams, Morality, The Peculiar Institution Stocker, The Schizophrenia of Modern Ethical Theories MacIntyre, The Nature of the Virtues	Reading Response	
04/01	McDowell, Virtue and Reason McDowell, Might there be External Reasons? Foot, Virtues and Vices Dancy, Ethical Particularism and Morally Relevant Properties	Reading Response	
04/08	Hursthouse, Virtue Theory and Abortion Hursthouse, Intro & Chapters 8-10 from <u>On Virtue Ethics</u> Slothe, Agent-Based Virtue Ethics	Reading Response	
THE NATURE OF REASONS & METAETHICS			
04/15	Williams, Internal and External Reasons Hooker, Williams Argument Against External Reasons Smith, Chapters 1, 3-4 from <u>The Moral Problem</u>	Reading Response	
04/22	Moore, Chapter 1 of <u>Principia Ethica</u> Miller, Chapters 1-3 <u>Introduction to Metaethics</u> Snare, Chapters 1, 4-8 <u>The Nature of Moral Thinking</u>	Reading Response	
04/29	Mackie, Chapter 1 of <u>Ethics: Inventing Right & Wrong</u> Smith, Chapters 5-6 from <u>The Moral Problem</u> Brink, Moral Motivation Recommended: Miller, Chapter 6, <u>Introduction to Metaethics</u> & Snare, Chapter 10-11, <u>The Nature of Moral Thinking</u>	Reading Response	
FINAL PAPERS DUE MAY 15 TH , 2010			
HONORS ORAL EXAMINATIONS (05/21-05/23)			