

Philosophy 002 – Introduction to Ethics

Spring 2017

Section 1 (#30868)

M/W/F 9:00 AM – 9:50 AM

Room: Mendocino Hall 3009

Satisfies General Education Area C3 (see learning objectives and evaluations below)

“Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all.”

- Aristotle

“There are two types of people in this world, good and bad. The good sleep better, but the bad seem to enjoy the waking hours much more.”

- Woody Allen

Instructor Information

Instructor: J. P. Carboni

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Mailbox: Philosophy Department Office:
Mendocino Hall, Room 3000

Office Hours: • Wednesday 1:30 PM – 2:50 PM
• Friday 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM
• Please email if you need to schedule an appointment
• Office Location: Mendocino Hall, Room #3032

Course Description

Course Catalogue: This course is designed around the “Examination of the concepts of morality, obligation, human rights and the good life. Competing theories about the foundations of morality will be investigated.”

Ethics is the study of right and wrong. However, it is more than what this overly simplistic definition implies. Ethics, and the study of ethics, concerns looking at how we act, why we act the way we do and how we justify the way we act. In this course we will discuss various traditional/historical ethical theories that have had an impact on the way in which we answer the questions above. However, while traditionally the philosopher has been stereotyped as being the “arm chair quarterback” or “backseat driver” of the moral realm, usually alongside a large wing-backed armchair and a pipe of some type, ethics is about doing. Thus, in addition to the above discussions/lectures, we will be engaging in ethical analysis of contemporary issues like abortion, war and terrorism, human rights, animal rights, environmentalism, etc. We will also read and discuss theories of the self, freedom, the role of religion, etc. and review how our understanding of these issues impacts our moral lives.

Required Textbooks

Exploring Ethics, 4th Edition. (2010). Ed. Steven M. Cahn. Oxford University Press: NYC.

Departmental Learning Objectives for Phil 002

Students will develop the following skills:

- A. Describe and distinguish key ethical concepts, including concepts such as good, right, permissible, free will, pluralism, universality, reason, relativism, absolutism, obligation, virtue, prima facie, duty, action, intention, etc.
- B. Read and comprehend philosophical texts, classical or contemporary, in the area of ethics.
- C. Discuss core ethical problems, such as whether religion is a source of values, what does it mean to be virtuous, are we free to make choices, what is justice, how can we know what is right or wrong, etc.
- D. Write clear and concise explanations and arguments about basic ethical problems.
- E. Distinguish the basic ethical theories and approaches, including: deontology, utilitarianism, virtue ethics, social contract theory, and one or more non-traditional or non-western positions (feminist theory, critical race theory, Confucian ethics, Buddhist ethics, etc.).
- F. Apply basic ethical concepts and approaches to solving practical problems in ethics, including: sex and reproduction, environment, non-human animals, drug use, capital punishment, war, euthanasia, affirmative action, abortion, economic inequality, etc..

Area C-3 Learning Objectives

- A. Demonstrate knowledge of the conventions and methods of the study of the humanities.
- B. Investigate, describe, and analyze the roles and effects of human culture and understanding in the development of human societies.
- C. Compare and analyze various conceptions of humankind.
- D. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the historical development of cultures and civilizations, including their animating ideas and values.
- E. Demonstrate an understanding of the contributions and perspectives of women; persons from various ethnic, socio-economic, and religious groups, gays and lesbians; and persons with disabilities.
- F. Student Learning Objectives for Area C3 courses can be viewed at:
<http://www.csus.edu/acse/Senate-Info/13-14Agendas-Minutes/051514Agendas-Minutes/13-14FS-116ap.pdf>

Each of these learning objectives will be met through a variety of course assignments including readings, examination, quizzes, essays, group work and class lectures/discussions (each of these is discussed further below).

Standards of Conduct

Plagiarism and/or cheating will not be tolerated in this class. All those who engage in these activities will receive a zero on the associated assignment. In addition, all incidents of cheating and/or plagiarism will be reported to the department chair and to the Judicial Officer in the Office of Student Affairs. It is your responsibility to both know and adhere to Sac State's Academic Honesty Policy. This policy can be found at the following address:

<http://www.csus.edu/umanual/student/UMA00150.htm>. If you wish for more assistance/advice on the issue of plagiarism, please see the following CSUS library link <http://library.csus.edu/content2.asp?pageID=353>.

In-Class Participation: Purposely "obstructing" the viewpoint of another student in the classroom during classroom discussions is prohibited. This class will involve many discussions concerning the material assigned for homework and the material presented during the classroom lectures. This being a philosophy course, many of these discussions *may* challenge certain beliefs that you hold. Open dialog and proper methods of argumentation (which will be discussed) are not only expected but required for this class.

Attendance/Participation: Students are expected to attend each class session. This class will involve many in-class discussions and a significant amount of in-class work. Students are expected to have completed the readings and participate in all in-class discussions.

Cell Phones and Computers: Please set your phone to vibrate before class. Cell phones are not to be used in class for any reason. If you must take a call (which I discourage unless an emergency) please step outside before you answer. No texting or Internet use will be allowed in class (unless directed by me).

Email Correspondence: Monday through Friday I check my Sac State *and* Gmail accounts a minimum of two times each day (morning and evening). If I do not respond to an email that you have sent within one business day, please feel free to resend the email. In order to ensure a prompt reply, all emails that you send must be formatted according to the following link: <http://www.csus.edu/phil/guidance/how-to-correspond.html>

Disability Accommodations

If you have a disability and require accommodations, you will need to provide disability documentation to SSWD, Lassen Hall 1008, (916) 278-6955. Information can be found at the following link: <http://www.csus.edu/sswd/ApplicationProcess-Forms.html>. Please discuss your accommodation needs with me after class or during my office hours *before* the end of the third week of the semester.

Special Note: All instructors employed by CSU, Sacramento are 'mandatory reporters' of suspected child abuse or neglect according to the *California Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act*. As such, I am bound to the requirements established by CSU Executive Order 1083 which can be found at the following link: <http://www.calstate.edu/eo/EO-1083.html>

Evaluation/Homework Assignments:

In-Class Group Assignments: There will be a number of randomly assigned, short in-class assignments throughout the term. These assignments will be worth a total of 5 – 10 points each (exact value will be announced prior to each assignment). At the end of the term, a total of 40 points will be possible. There are no make-ups on missed in-class work.

Quizzes: As outlined on the weekly course breakdown below, there will be two types of quizzes in this class.

- (1) ***Reading Quizzes:*** Prior to each new section lecture/new topic, there will be a quiz to be completed prior to the lecture on that reading/subject (see weekly breakdown below for details). These quizzes must be completed in Blackboard and must be completed prior to the scheduled lecture. Each Reading Quiz will be made available on the date stated in the weekly breakdown and will be available until 10 minutes before that scheduled class. Once you begin a quiz, you will have 20 minutes to complete it. These quizzes will be multiple choice and/or true and false. Each quiz will be worth 7 points.
- (2) ***Lecture Quizzes:*** This course is scheduled to meet Monday, Wednesday and Friday. As illustrated in the weekly breakdown below, each class session will involve a lecture/class discussion on the material assigned. At the end of each week (after Friday's lecture each week) students will be required to complete a short quiz on the lecture material provided. This quiz will be available on Blackboard on Friday after class and must be completed no later than Sunday 11 PM. Once you begin a quiz, you will have 20 minutes to complete it. Like each Reading Quiz, the Lecture Quizzes will be multiple choice and/or true and false. Each Lecture quiz will be worth 10 Points.

There will be no make-up quizzes if you fail to complete either type of quiz during the allotted time. I will, however, drop the lowest score received on each type of quiz at the end of the semester (one reading quiz and one lecture quiz). To do well on these quizzes and thus to do well in the class as a whole, you should make sure to attend class, to actively participate in the lecture and to complete the assigned readings.

Examinations: There will be two in-class examinations in this class (a midterm and a final exam – 100 possible points each). You will receive a detailed study guide prior to each examination. The dates of these examinations will be as follows:

Midterm Exam: Friday, March 17th

Final Examination: TBA

Essays: This class will involve three short essay assignments (3 Page Maximum). Each essay will be worth 80 possible points. You will be provided with a detailed essay assignment sheet including a grading rubric two weeks prior to the assignment due date.

Essay # 1: *Due March 3rd*

Essay # 2: *Due April 14th*

Essay # 3: *Due May 5th*

Students are expected to adhere to the guidelines posted in “How to Analyze a Philosophical Essay” that is located on the CSUS Department of Philosophy webpage. This information will be reviewed in class on *Monday of Week 5* (prior to the first essay being due). Below is the link to the webpage:

<http://www.csus.edu/phil/Guidance/How%20to%20Write%20an%20Analysis.htm>

The following is a link to the department’s outline of proper philosophic analysis:
Philosophical Analysis: <http://www.csus.edu/phil/guidance/how-to-analyze.html>

The following is a link to the Department Grading Guidelines:
Grading Standards: <http://www.csus.edu/phil/guidance/grading-standards.html>

Extra Credit Opportunity: There will be one extra credit opportunity in this course. The possible point value for this assignment will be a maximum of 15 points. The specific assignment details will be provided during week 4. The assignment will involve the *Nammour Symposium* held on April 5th (10:00 AM – 12:30 PM and 1:00 PM – 3:30 PM) and 6th (12:30 PM – 4:00 PM). This year’s symposium is on the well-being of political and economic migrants throughout the world.

A maximum of 15 extra credit points for attending one of the events and constructing a brief essay detailing one topic of interest (see assignment prompt for more details).

Grading Scale:

All essays will be graded based upon an 80-point scale according to the following breakdown:

A Outstanding (75 - 80 pts)	A- Very Good (72 - 74 pts)
B+ Above Satisfactory (68.5 - 71 pts)	B Satisfactory (67 - 68 pts)
B- Below Satisfactory (64 - 67 pts)	C+ Above Average (61 - 63 pts)
C Average (58 - 60 pts)	C- Below Average (56 - 57 pts)
D+ Poor High (53 - 55.5 pts)	D Poor Low (48 - 52 pts)
F Unacceptable (47 and lower pts)	

All Examinations will be graded based on a 100-Point scale according to the following breakdown:

A Outstanding (100 - 95 pts)	A- Very Good (94 - 90 pts)
B+ Above Satisfactory (89 - 86 pts)	B Satisfactory (83 - 85 pts)
B- Below Satisfactory (82 - 80 pts)	C+ Above Average (79 - 76 pts)
C Average (75 - 73 pts)	C- Below Average (72 - 70 pts)
D+ Poor High (69 - 66 pts)	D Poor Low (65 - 60 pts)
F Unacceptable (59 and lower pts)	

Overall Point Breakdown:

Quizzes

- 1) Reading – (x20) 140 pts possible
- 2) Lecture – (x14) 140 possible points

Examinations – 200 pts possible

Essays – 240 pts possible

In-Class Work/Film Assignment Work – 50 pts possible (Film Assignment = 20)

Total Possible Points: 770 pts.

Final Grade Breakdown: A 770 – 728 pts; A- 727 – 690 pts; B+ 689 – 665 pts; B 664 – 645 pts; B- 644 – 615 pts; C+ 614 – 590 pts; C 589 – 565 pts; C- 564 – 530 pts; D 529 – 455 pts; F 454 pts and Below

Reading/Assignment Schedule

Below is the reading schedule for the course. All readings, unless indicated, will be from the required text for the course. All additional materials will be posted on Blackboard.

Note: (1) All **Reading Quizzes** must be completed **prior to** the class listed for each quiz (Quiz will be posted to Blackboard as stated and will be available until 10 minutes before the specific class)

(2) All **Lecture Quizzes** must be completed by 11:00 PM on Sunday each week (Quiz will appear immediately after class on Friday and will be available until 11:00 PM on Sunday)

Section I: What is the Study of Ethics and Some General Problems

Week 1: (Jan 23rd – 27th)

Topics: Course introduction. What is philosophy and who cares about ethics?

Readings –
Monday: Course Review, Learning Exercises
Wednesday: Discussion – *Are We Entitled to Our Opinions? (No Reading)*
Friday: Morality and Moral Philosophy, William K. Frankena
• **Lecture Quiz #1 (Posted to Blackboard on 1/27)**

Week 2: (Jan 30th – Feb 3rd)

Topics: What is morality? How do we know what's right?

Readings –
For Monday: How Not to Answer Moral Questions, Tom Regan
• **Due: Reading Quiz #1 (Posted to Blackboard on 1/27)**
For Wednesday: *Crito*, Plato
• **Due: Reading Quiz #2 (Posted to Blackboard on 1/27)**
For Friday: The Nature of Ethical Disagreement, Charles L. Stevenson
• **Lecture Quiz #2 (Posted to Blackboard on 2/3)**

Week 3: (Feb 6th – 10th)

What role does God play in all this?

Readings –
For Monday: God and Morality, Steven M. Cahn
• **Due: Reading Quiz #3 (Posted to Blackboard on 2/3)**
For Wednesday: Euthyphro Problem (Blackboard)
For Friday: In-Class Assignment
• **Lecture Quiz #3 (Posted to Blackboard on 2/10)**

Week 4: (Feb 13th – 17th)

Sophistic Relativism (Cultural and Ethical) – What is Relativism, where did it originate, and why is it such a headache for moral philosophers?

Reading – Monday/Wed/Fri: The Challenge of Cultural Relativism, James Rachels

- **Due: Reading Quiz #4 (Posted to Blackboard on 2/10)**
- **Review for Essay #1**
- **Lecture Quiz #4 (Posted to Blackboard on 2/17)**

Week 5: (Feb 20th – 24th)

Psychological and Ethical Egoism

Readings – For Monday: The Social Contract, Thomas Hobbes

- **Due: Reading Quiz #5 (Posted to Blackboard on 2/17)**

For Wednesday: Reading on Ayn Rand (Posted on Blackboard)

- **Due: Reading Quiz #6 (Posted to Blackboard on 2/17)**

For Friday: In-Class Work – *Why Thomas Hobbes and Ayn Rand are Wrong* (No Reading Assigned)

- **Lecture Quiz #5 (Posted to Blackboard on 2/24)**

Section II: The Big Three

Week 6: (Feb 27th – Mar 3rd)

Utilitarianism

Readings – For Monday: Reading on Jeremy Bentham (Blackboard)

- **Due: Reading Quiz #7 (Posted to Blackboard on 2/24)**

For Wednesday/Friday: Utilitarianism, John Stuart Mill; Strengths and Weaknesses of Utilitarianism, Louis P. Pojman

- **Due: Essay #1 (Friday)**
- **Due: Reading Quiz #8 (Posted to Blackboard on 2/24)**
- **Lecture Quiz #6 (Posted to Blackboard on 3/3)**

Week 7: (March 6th – 10th)

Deontic Ethics

Readings – For Monday: The Categorical Imperative, Immanuel Kant

- **Due: Reading Quiz #9 (Posted to Blackboard on 3/3)**

For Wednesday: *Kant Continued*

For Friday: A Simplified Account of Kant's Ethics, Onora O'Neill

- **Due: Reading Quiz #10 (Posted to Blackboard on 3/3)**
- **Lecture Quiz #7 (Posted to Blackboard on 3/10)**

Week 8: (March 13th – 17th)

Midterm Exam Review, In-Class Work (Monday & Wednesday) and Midterm Exam (Friday, March 17th).

• **Essay #2 Review (Wednesday)**

Week 9: (March 20th – 24th)
Spring Break – No Classes Held

Week 10: (Mar 27th – 31st)

Virtue Ethics

Readings - For Monday: The Nature of Virtue, Aristotle

• **Due: Reading Quiz #11 (Posted to Blackboard on 3/24)**

For Wednesday: Aristotle Cont.

For Friday: Reading on Confucius (*Posted on Blackboard*)

• **Due: Reading Quiz #12 (Posted to Blackboard on 3/24)**

• **Lecture Quiz #8 (Posted to Blackboard on 3/31)**

Section III: Applied Ethics

Week 11: (Apr 3rd – 7th)

What is a person & the Nature of Animal Rights

Readings – For Monday: The Case for Animal Rights, Tom Regan

• **Due: Reading Quiz #13 (Posted to Blackboard on 3/31)**

For Wednesday: Why Animals Have No Rights, Carl Cohen

• **Due: Reading Quiz #14 (Posted to Blackboard on 3/31)**

For Friday: Finish Lectures and (if time) In-Class Assignment

• **Lecture Quiz #9 (Posted to Blackboard on 4/7)**

Week 12: (Apr 10th – 14th)

Personhood and abortion

Readings – For Monday: On the Moral and Legal Status of Abortion, Mary Anne Warren

• **Due: Reading Quiz #15 (Posted to Blackboard on 4/7)**

For Wednesday: Why Abortion Is Immoral, Don Marquis

• **Due: Reading Quiz #16 (Posted to Blackboard on 4/7)**

For Friday: Finish Lectures and (if time) In-Class Assignment

• **Due: Essay #2**

• **Lecture Quiz #10 (Posted to Blackboard on 4/14)**

Week 13: (Apr 17th – 21st)

Human Rights/World Hunger (Do We Have A Moral Obligation To Help Others)

Readings – For Monday: Famine, Affluence, and Morality, Peter Singer

• **Due: Reading Quiz #17 (Posted to Blackboard on 4/14)**

4/14)

For Wednesday: World Hunger and Moral Obligation: The Case Against Singer, John Arthur (Posted to Blackboard)

• **Due: Reading Quiz #18 (Posted to Blackboard on 4/14)**

For Friday: Theory of Justice, John Rawls

• **Review for Essay #3**

• **Lecture Quiz #11 (Posted to Blackboard on 4/21)**

Week 14: (Apr 24th – 28th)

Environmental Ethics – Should we care about our planet?

Reading - For Monday/Wednesday: Philosophical Problems for Environmentalism, Elliott Sober

For Friday: Begin Lecture On: We Are What We Eat, Tom Regan

• **Lecture Quiz #12 (Posted to Blackboard on 4/28)**

Week 15: (May 1st – 5th)

Should we care about what we eat?

Reading – For Monday: Finish Lecture On: We Are What We Eat, Tom Regan

• **Due: Reading Quiz #19 (Posted to Blackboard 4/28)**

Film – For Wednesday/Friday: TBA (To be followed by a class discussion)

For Friday: Finish Film/Discussion

• **Film Assignment Given (Due May 8th)**

• **Due: Essay #3**

• **Lecture Quiz #13 (Posted to Blackboard on 5/5)**

Week 16: (May 8th – 12th)

Just war theory and the ethics of torture (What Does All This Even Mean?)

Reading – For Monday: The Moral Equivalent of War, William James (Blackboard)

• **Due: Reading Quiz #20 (Posted to Blackboard on 5/5)**

Wednesday: Torture, Henry Shue

For Friday: Final Examination Review

• **Lecture Quiz #14 (Posted to Blackboard on 5/12)**

Week 17: (May 15th – 19th)

Final Examination Week – Examination Date TBA

Finally, welcome to philosophy 002.