

PHIL 104 - 6
Introduction to Ethics

Queens College/CUNY
Department of Philosophy
Fall 2013

Tuesdays and Fridays 10:45am - 12pm
Kiely Hall 312

Instructor: **Claudia Pace**
office: Powdermaker Hall 350T
office hours: Fridays 1:40 - 2:55 or by appointment (do not hesitate to visit me!)
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Ethics is the branch of philosophy which deals with questions of right or wrong conduct. This course will emphasize the roles of both *normative* and *applied* ethics. We will spend the first half of the course examining normative ethical theories. These theories try to establish what makes a particular course of action right, or moral. In the latter half of the course, we will explore the application of these ethical theories to contemporary ethical issues. Rather than focussing on the history of ethics, this course will introduce you to the practice of being engaged in ethical deliberation.

This course is aligned with the Core Values of the Education Unit of promoting *Equity*, *Excellence*, and *Ethics* in urban schools and communities. More specifically, the Education Unit is committed to preparing teachers and other school professionals who: a) build inclusive communities that nurture and challenge all learners; b) demonstrate professionalism, scholarship, efficacy, evidence-based practice and reflection; and c) value diversity, democracy, and social justice.

COURSE LEARNING GOALS & OBJECTIVES

1. To develop a knowledge of the major theories of right conduct, and their application.
2. To improve one's critical writing, critical reasoning, and ability to assess philosophical arguments.

COURSE MATERIALS

To make things easier for everybody, I will be inviting each of you to share in a *Dropbox*. It will contain all the readings for the term. If you've never used Dropbox before, it's simple to use. I will need each of you to provide me with your email address. Just accept the invitation you receive by email and follow the instructions. When you access a file from Dropbox **DO NOT** "drag" it onto your own computer. *Doing this will remove the file from the communal folder and other people won't be able to access it.* If you want to a copy of a file, you must first make one (by right clicking and choosing "copy") and then paste that copy onto your computer.

ASSIGNMENTS, DUE DATES AND GRADING PLAN

COMPONENT	WEIGHT %	POINTS	DUE DATE
Short Response Papers (6)	30 (total)	5 (per paper)	Tuesday, October 29 and Friday, December 13
Midterm Essay	25	25	Friday, November 1
Final Essay Proposal	10	10	Tuesday, December 10
Final Essay	35	35	Monday, December 23, 11:59pm EST.

Short Response Papers:

Length: 1 page (each).

How to submit: Printed, handed in at the beginning of class.

You are required to submit **six** short papers, **three** on normative ethics and **three** on applied ethics. You can submit during any class (in fact, you are encouraged to do them early and regularly), **but the last day for your three normative papers is Tuesday, October 29.** If you choose, you can submit 4 normative responses and the one with the lowest grade will not be counted. **The last day for your three applied papers is Friday, December 13.** Similarly, you can submit 4 applied responses and the one with the lowest grade will not be counted.

A topic will be given in each class on which you can write a response. The specifics of each one will be discussed at that time, but in general, the following is expected: 1) State the question and explain what it means. Do any terms in the question need to be clarified or concepts explained?; 2) Identify the main philosophical issues; 3) Explain what you think about it, in a clear, organized, and grammatically correct way.

Midterm Essay:

Length: 5 pages

How to submit: Printed, handed in at the beginning of class.

A topic will be given in class at least 2 weeks before the due date.

Final Essay Proposal:

Length: 1 page

How to submit: Printed, handed in at the beginning of class.

Details to follow

Final Essay:

Length: 6-8 pages

How to submit: Electronically, to my email address in either .doc or .pages format.

Details will be given later in the term, but the paper is to be focussed on an issue in applied ethics.

*A word about assignment length: It is very important that you do not go over the given page limits. Assignments over the limit will be penalized at my discretion. In addition, **one page** means: *One typed, double-spaced 8 1/2x11 page with 1" margins, in Times New Roman font.* Do not try to change the settings to make your paper longer or shorter to fit the required length. I will notice.

Queens College's grading scheme is as follows: A+/97-100; A/93-96; A-/90-92; B+/87-89; B/83-86; B-/80-82; C+/77-79; C/73-76; C-/70-72; D+/67-69; D/60-66; F/0-59.

LATE POLICY

As might be expected, assignments are due at the time and date specified in the statement of the problem. A *down* computer or printer is not an excuse for turning in an assignment late. Where you are unable to complete an assignment as a result of documented reason, such as illness, family duties, or some other event that incapacitates you, then you should let me know. A reasonable grace period will be granted in cases of documented incapacity. Otherwise, late papers will be penalized 10% per day until 5 days after the due date, after which they will not be accepted. **NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED WITHOUT APPROVAL PRIOR TO THE DUE DATE.**

The final paper should be treated as a final exam, for which it is a substitute. Unless in cases of extreme emergency, **a late final paper will result in a grade of ZERO.**

CUNY POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The Policy on Academic Integrity, as adopted by the Board is available to all candidates. Academic Dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New York and is punishable by penalties, including failing grades, suspension, and expulsion. This policy and others related to candidates' issues are available to you at: <http://qcpages.qc.cuny.edu/provost/Policies/index.html>.

USE OF CANDIDATE WORK

All teacher education programs in New York State undergo periodic reviews by accreditation agencies and the state education department. For these purposes, samples of candidates' work are made available to those professionals conducting the review. Candidate

anonymity is assured under these circumstances. If you do not wish to have your work made available for these purposes, please let the professor know before the start of the second class. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES

Candidates with disabilities needing academic accommodation should: 1) Register with and provide documentation to the Special Services Office, Kiely 171; 2) Bring a letter to me indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of class. For more information about services available to Queens College candidates, contact: Special Service Office; 171 Kiely Hall; 718-997-5870 (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.).

COURSE EVALUATIONS AND ASSESSMENTS

Course Evaluations are available to candidates online at:

<http://www.qc.cuny.edu/courseevaluation>.

Education Unit Assessment Forms are available to candidates online at:

https://intaps.qc.cuny.edu/pls/qcteams/qcteams.login_pkg.login_form.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

DATE	TENTATIVE READINGS
Friday, August 30	Introductory remarks
Tuesday, September 3	<i><u>METAETHICAL ISSUES</u></i> LaFollette, Hugh (2007). [Selections from] "Introduction" <i>Ethics in Practice</i> (Malden, MA: Blackwell): 1-15.
Friday, September 6	NO CLASS
Tuesday, September 10	<i><u>DEONTOLOGY (1)</u></i> O'Neill, Onora (2009). "A Simplified Account of Kant's Ethics" in Steven M Cahn (ed.) <i>Exploring Ethics: An Introductory Anthology</i> .
Friday, September 13	NO CLASS
Tuesday, September 17	<i><u>DEONTOLOGY (2)</u></i> Rawls, John (1999). [Selections from] <i>A Theory of Justice</i> (Cambridge, MA: Belknap): 93-130.
Friday, September 20	<i><u>DEONTOLOGY (3)</u></i> *continued from previous weeks*

DATE	TENTATIVE READINGS
Tuesday, September 24	<u>DEONTOLOGY (4)</u> Foot, Philippa (1967). "The Problem of Abortion and the Doctrine of Double Effect" <i>Virtues and Vices</i> : 19-32.
Friday, September 27	<u>UTILITARIANISM (1)</u> John Stuart Mill, [Selections from] <i>Utilitarianism</i> . Read only 5-35.
Tuesday, October 1	<u>UTILITARIANISM (2)</u> Brink, David O. (1992) "Mill's Deliberative Utilitarianism" <i>Philosophy & Public Affairs</i> 21.1: 67-103.
Friday, October 4	<u>UTILITARIANISM (3)</u> *continued from previous weeks*
Tuesday, October 8	<u>UTILITARIANISM (4)</u> Williams, Bernard (1973). [Selections from] "A Critique of Utilitarianism," from J. Smart and Williams <i>Utilitarianism: For and Against</i> (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press): 93-118.
Friday, October 11	<u>VIRTUE ETHICS (1)</u> Hursthouse, Rosalind (1999). "Introduction" to <i>On Virtue Ethics</i> (Oxford: Oxford University Press): 4-15.
Tuesday, October 15	NO CLASS: COLLEGE RUNS ON A MONDAY SCHEDULE
Friday, October 18	<u>VIRTUE ETHICS (2)</u> *continued from previous week*
Tuesday, October 22	<u>VIRTUE ETHICS (3)</u> Annas, Julia (2009) "Virtue Ethics and the Charge of Egoism," in Paul Bloomfield (ed.), <i>Morality and Self-Interest</i> (Oxford: Oxford University Press): 205–21.
Friday, October 25	<u>VIRTUE ETHICS (4)</u> Gowans, Christopher W. (2011). "Virtue Ethics and Moral Relativism" in Stephen D. Hales (ed.), <i>A Companion to Relativism</i> (New York: Oxford University Press): 391-410.
Tuesday, October 29	DEADLINE TO SUBMIT 3 NORMATIVE RESPONSE PAPERS (at most 4) <u>NORMATIVE REVIEW</u> *continued from previous weeks*

DATE	TENTATIVE READINGS
Friday, November 1	MIDTERM ESSAY DUE <u>ABORTION (1)</u> Thomson, Judith Jarvis (1971). "A Defense of Abortion" <i>Philosophy and Public Affairs</i> 1.1: 47 - 66.
Tuesday, November 5	<u>ABORTION (2)</u> Marquis, Don (1989). "Why Abortion is Immoral" <i>The Journal of Philosophy</i> 86.4: 183 - 202.
Friday, November 8	<u>ABORTION (3)</u> *continued from previous weeks*
Tuesday, November 12	<u>CAPITAL PUNISHMENT (1)</u> Pojman, Louis (1997). "For the Death Penalty" from Pojman and Reiman (eds.) <i>The Death Penalty: For and Against</i> (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield): 1-27.
Friday, November 15	<u>CAPITAL PUNISHMENT (2)</u> Roberts-Cady, Sarah (2010). "Against Retributive Justifications of the Death Penalty" <i>Journal of Social Philosophy</i> 41.2: 185-193.
Tuesday, November 19	<u>CAPITAL PUNISHMENT (3)</u> *continued from previous weeks*
Friday, November 22	<u>PORNOGRAPHY (1)</u> Brison, Susan J. (2005). "The Price We Pay? Pornography and Harm" in Cohen and Wellman (eds.) <i>Contemporary Debates in Applied Ethics</i> (Malden, MA: Blackwell): 236-250
Tuesday, November 26	<u>PORNOGRAPHY (2)</u> Altman, Andrew (2005). "The Right to Get Turned On: Pornography, Autonomy, Equality" in Cohen and Wellman (eds.) <i>Contemporary Debates in Applied Ethics</i> (Malden, MA: Blackwell): 223-235.
WEDNESDAY November 27	<u>PORNOGRAPHY (3)</u> *continued from previous weeks*
Friday, November 29	NO CLASS
Tuesday, December 3	<u>ANIMAL RIGHTS (1)</u> Singer, Peter (1989). "All Animals are Equal" in Regan and Singer (eds.), <i>Animal Rights and Human Obligations</i> (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall): 148- 162

DATE	TENTATIVE READINGS
Friday, December 6	<p><u>ANIMAL RIGHTS (2)</u> Korsgaard, Christine M. (2004). "Fellow Creatures: Kantian Ethics and Our Duties to Animals." Delivered as the <i>Tanner Lecture on Human Values</i> at the University of Michigan, February 6, 2004.</p>
Tuesday, December 10	<p>FINAL ESSAY PROPOSAL DUE <u>ANIMAL RIGHTS (3)</u> *continued from previous weeks*</p>
Friday, December 13	<p>DEADLINE TO SUBMIT 3 APPLIED RESPONSE PAPERS (at most 4) <u>APPLIED ETHICS REVIEW</u> *continued from previous weeks*</p>
MONDAY, December 23	FINAL ESSAY DUE