

PHI 2600: Introduction to Ethics
Spring 2017 Philosophy
Instructor: Dr. Elizabeth Scarbrough
U11: T/Th 3:30 – 4:45 pm DM 193
U12: T/Th 11-12:15 pm Graham 278B
U13: T/Th: 12:30-1:45 Graham 287A
Office Hours: T/TH 2:20-3:30 DM340B
(and by appointment)
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Course Description:

This class is a brief introduction to moral theory and applied ethics. We will pair historical readings with contemporary insights into those reading. The first part of the course will focus on three big moral theories: Utilitarianism, Kantianism, and Virtue Ethics. These theories present accounts of what makes an action right or wrong, what makes a person virtuous or vicious, and what role an ethical theory should play in a good life. Some of the applied ethical topics discussed will include: whether we have an obligation to follow the law, our obligations to global famine relief, abortion, animal rights, and pornography.

Important info at a glance:

Required Text:

Cahn, Steven M., ed. *Exploring Ethics: An Introductory Anthology*, 4th Ed (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).¹

This book is required and you must bring it to class.

All other text will be placed in a shared folder (PDF).

Assignments:

Attendance and Participation:15%

Writing Assignments: 50% (Practice paper 15%, Project plan 15%, Final paper 20%)

Quizzes: 15% (6 scheduled quizzes, 2 pop quizzes)

Final Exam: 15% (cumulative, during finals week)

Draft Revisions: 5% (in-class: Feb 28th, April 13th)

Student Conduct & Academic Integrity:

I take academic honesty extremely seriously and will pursue sanctions against any student(s) caught engaging in any form of academic misconduct, in accordance with the **FIU's Code of Academic Integrity**, as well as the definition of plagiarism, readable in the student handbook. All students suspected of plagiarism will be turned into the Office of Academic Integrity and will receive a provisional "0" on the assignment in question. Ignorance of policies regarding academic misconduct does not constitute a legitimate excuse for inappropriate behavior.

Disability Accommodations:

Students with disabilities should contact Disabled Resource Center (Modesto Maidique Campus) at 305-348-3532 or visit their website to request accommodations at <http://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/student-success/disability-resource-center/request-accommodations/index.php> . Please present the letter of accommodation to me so we can discuss the accommodations you might need for the class.

¹ There are on-line resources associated with this text. Please visit: www.oup.com/us/cahn

Course Objectives:

It is the objective of this course to acquaint the student with aesthetic theory both as a way of enriching the student's exchange with art as well as the broader culture. Your skills will be developed and tested in three ways:

- (1) **Reading Comprehension:** involves carefully, closely reading all the assigned texts;
- (2) **Philosophical Writing:** involves completing a variety of written assignments designed to teach you how good philosophical writing differs from other familiar types of writing (this is a Gordon's Rule course);
- (3) **Class Discussion:** involves actively, respectfully engaging with your peers and instructor about philosophically complex, abstract theories that have implications for how we should make choices and live our lives.

Success in this course requires you to prepare yourself for class discussion by reading critically, to defend your own views with reasons and arguments, and to give a good faith effort to develop your philosophical skills, both verbally and in writing.

Learning Objective: It is the aim of this class to equip the student with the tools necessary to make informed and intelligent judgments about art and culture.

Grading:

- Late work will be penalized at 10% a day (or part of a day) unless you have made prior arrangements with me.
- You may not make up in class quizzes, exams, participation credit, or draft revisions without prior consent of instructor or documented illness/emergency.² In cases of *documented* illness or emergency, contact me as soon as possible to make arrangements.
- You are graded on the merit of your work (not your effort). If you believe you have been graded unfairly, I am willing to look over your work again, but be aware that I will re-evaluate it and provide you with a new grade. This means that there is a chance that your grade may go down because I may decide that I was too generous the first time.
- Academic misconduct includes cheating, plagiarism, and unauthorized collaboration with other students on assignments. *Academic dishonesty disadvantages honest students, and is clearly unfair to hardworking students. Instructors have a duty, therefore, to protect honest students, and to insure that they are not disadvantaged by dishonest students.* For more information, see FIU's Academic Misconduct policy (Section 2.44). There are serious consequences for academic misconduct, including suspension and expulsion from the university. **All students suspected of plagiarism will be reported to the Office of Academic Misconduct and receive a "0" on their assignment.**

Attendance and Participation 15%:

- You are required to attend class sessions. Attendance includes being awake, alert, and prepared. There will be group discussions and group work in class. You are being graded on the quality of your contribution to the class.

² Documented illnesses/emergencies do not include car trouble, work schedules, or family trips/vacations.

-If you miss more than 4 unexcused classes your final grade will be penalized 5% per missed class

- I expect you not to disrupt me, or other students, during class, which means that if I catch you texting or surfing the internet I will count you **absent** for the day.

**Writing Assignments 50% total:
(15% practice paper, 15% project plan, 20% final paper)**

This is a "Gordon Rule" course, and grades reflect all elements of writing--grammar, punctuation, sentence and paragraph structure, clarity of expression, and essay structure--as well as the quality of the reasoning and philosophical understanding. There are three writing assignments in this course:

Practice Paper (15%): You will be assigned a 3 page "practice paper" on a topic of my choice. We will spend time in class working on this assignment. Your "final" practice paper will be due Tuesday, February 28th. You **MUST** turn this paper in online in our "Turn-It-In" folder **AND** bring a copy to class where we will workshop our papers.

Project Plan (15%): You will hand in a "project plan" of your final paper which will consist of a 3-4 page outline of the paper you will turn in at the end of the quarter. Multiple topics will be given out in class. This too will be handed in online on "Turn-It-In" Tuesday March 21st. You will receive feedback on this plan from me.

Final Paper (20%): Your final There will be one assigned final paper. This paper should be 4-6 pages in length, typed and double-spaced and turned in (on "Turn-It-In") on the last day of class. It will take the form of a critical examination of a text selection to be given in class. A draft of this final paper must be brought to class (printed out) Thursday April 13th but the final paper is due the Monday of finals week.

Quizzes 15%: There will be eight in-class quizzes composed of multiple choice questions. Six of these are noted in the syllabus, two of the eight will be "pop" quizzes and cannot be made up if you are absent that day.

Final Exam 15%: A final exam composed of multiple choice questions will be held during examination week. This exam will be cumulative.

Draft revisions 5%: Twice during this semester you will be required to bring papers to class and receive feedback from fellow students (February 28th and April 13th). To receive full credit for each of these (2.5% each) you must **both** bring in your paper and give feedback to another student. If you do not bring in your paper **AND** give feedback, you will receive a 0 on these assignments.

Grading Scale: A = 93-100%, A- = 90-92%, B+ = 87-89%, B = 83-86%, B- = 80-82%, C+ = 77-79%, C = 70-76%, D+ = 67-69%, D = 63-66%, D- = 60-62%, F = 59% and below

Tentative Lesson Plan*

Date / Topic	Assignment Due
Tues, Jan 10 Introduction	No assignment: personal introductions and syllabus overview
Thurs, Jan 12 Introduction	Tom Regan, “How Not To Answer Moral Questions” (Cahn)
Tues, Jan 17 Obligation to Follow the Law?	William Frankena, “Morality and Moral Philosophy” (Cahn) Plato, <i>Crito</i> (Cahn) *Practice quiz
Thurs, Jan 19 Obligation to Follow the Law?	Martin Luther King, Jr. “Letter from Birmingham Jail” (Cahn)
Tues, Jan 24 Obligation to Follow the Law?	Stokely Carmichael / Kwame Ture, “Black Power” (listen to some of it here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dFFWTsUqEaY) We will watch some of his other speeches in class
Thurs, Jan 27* Cultural Relativism	James Rachels, “The Challenge of Cultural Relativism” (Cahn) *First quiz
Tues, Jan 31 Utilitarianism	John Stuart Mill, “Utilitarianism” (Cahn)
Thurs, Feb 2 Utilitarianism	Louis P. Pojman “Strengths and Weaknesses of Utilitarianism” (Cahn)
Tues, Feb 7* Utilitarianism - Applied	Peter Singer, “Famine, Affluence, and Morality” (Cahn) *Second quiz
Thurs, Feb 9 Deontology	Immanuel Kant, “The Categorical Imperative” (Cahn)
Tues, Feb 14 Deontology Nature	Onora O’Neill “A Simplified Account of Kant’s Ethics” (Cahn)
Thurs, Feb 16* Deontology Nature	Onora O’Neill “Kantian Approaches to Some Famine Problems” (PDF)

* I reserve the right to add to / eliminate / change the readings assigned in this course.

Deontology - Applied	*Third quiz
Tues, Feb 21 Papers/ Aristotle	Working on Papers / Aristotle
Thurs, Feb 23 Aristotle	Aristotle, "The Nature of Virtue" (Cahn) Julia Driver, "Virtue Ethics (Cahn)
Tues, Feb 28* PRACTICE PAPER DUE	PAPERS DUE ON "TURN-IT-IN" and IN CLASS. YOU MUST BRING A COPY TO CLASS FOR OUR DRAFT REVIEW
Thurs, March 2 Abortion	Rosalind Hursthouse, "Virtue Theory and Abortion" (Cahn)
Tues, March 7 Abortion	Don Marquis, "Why Abortion is Immoral" (Cahn)
Thurs, March 9* Abortion	Judith Jarvis Thomson, "A Defense of Abortion" (Cahn) *Fourth quiz

Date	Assignment Due
Tues, March 14	SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS
Thurs, March 16	SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS
Tues, March 21* Animal Rights	David Foster Wallace, "Consider The Lobster" (PDF) *Project Plan Due
Thurs, March 23 Animal Rights	Peter Singer, "On Animals" (PDF)
Tues, March 28 Animal Rights	Tom Regan, "The Case for Animal Rights" (Cahn)

Thurs, March 30*	Mary Anne Warren, "Speaking of Animal Rights" (Cahn)
Animal Rights	*Fifth quiz
Tues, April 4	
Pornography	Helen E. Longino, "Pornography, Oppression, and Freedom" (Cahn)
Thurs, April 6	
Pornography	Joel Feinberg, "The Case Against Pornography" (Cahn)
Tues, April 11	
Pornography	Nicholas Power, "Cheap Thrills: A Call for More Pornography" (PDF)
Thurs, April 13*	
ESSAY DRAFT	BRING ESSAY DRAFTS TO CLASS FOR IN CLASS PRACTICE
Tues, April 18	
Pornography	Nancy Bauer, "Pornutopia" (PDF) *Sixth quiz
Thurs, April 20	
Final Day	Susan Wolf, "Moral Saints" (Cahn)
Monday, April 24	FINAL PAPERS DUE @ 6:00 pm
FINAL EXAM	U13: Tuesday 4/25: 12-2pm Graham Center 287A U11: Tuesday 4/25: 2:15-4:15 DM 193 U12: Thursday 4/27: 9:45-11:45 Graham Center 278B