

- 2) articulate the principal features of utilitarianism, natural law theory, intuitionism, Kantianism, and virtue theories of morality, highlighting their points of agreement and disagreement;
- 3) describe how these theories can be applied to evaluate the morality of actions, policies, or individuals; and
- 4) identify argumentative considerations that favor each theory and their respective strengths and weaknesses in satisfying the theoretical and practical aims of moral theory.

I would encourage all students to consult the Department of Philosophy's program learning outcomes, available here: <http://www.class.csupomona.edu/phl/courses/index.html>
 Of these outcomes, this course is designed to assist students in meeting the following six outcomes:

1. develop **analytical skills** used in identifying the concepts and drawing the subtle distinctions basic to a philosophical discussion, as well as other discussions of complex and abstract topics
2. develop **skills in reasoning** (including the substantiation of a thesis with well informed reasons and the charitable consideration of objections) required for building a convincing case for a philosophical thesis, as well as other complex and challenging arguments
3. develop **verbal skills involved in the written and oral presentation of philosophical arguments** (including the development of a well organized and clearly articulated line of thought), as well as other complex and challenging arguments
4. foster ability to **critically examine the values** underlying our social practices
5. foster ability to **recognize substantive interconnections** among philosophical topics (such as free will and personal identity) and areas (such as metaphysics and epistemology)
6. develop some **ability to produce creative philosophical work** (gauged by, for example, the presentation of an original thesis or argumentative strategy, or a creative counterexamples)

Prerequisites

This is an upper-division philosophy course.

- While there are no formal prerequisites, successfully completing some combination of Introduction to Philosophy, Critical Thinking, Ethical Problems in Contemporary Life, Logic I, and the Philosophy Proseminar would certainly be excellent preparation.
- Non-majors are of course welcome to enroll. However, the course will be taught at a level of rigor and sophistication that assumes students have some background in the main techniques and problems of philosophy. No special efforts will be taken to provide this background to those who lack it.
- Just to give you a sense of the expectations: Recent research indicates that students most effectively develop the skills of critical thinking, logical reasoning, etc., in courses that require at least 40 pages of reading per week and at least 15 pages (about 8,00-9,000 words) of writing per term. This course will reflect such expectations.

I encourage students who are concerned about their readiness for this course to discuss this matter with me as soon as possible.

Texts

We'll be doing some careful reading of our texts in class, so please have them available.

Required

- J. Dell’Olio and C.J. Simon, Introduction to Ethics: A Reader (Rowman and Littlefield, 2010)
- Other required readings will be made available in class or via Blackboard (I recommend printing a copy of the Blackboard readings.)

Recommended

- One of the supplementary texts listed on pages 7-8 of the syllabus.

Evaluation and requirements

Your grade for this course will be determined by the following four elements:

1. A *midterm exam* will be distributed via Blackboard on Wednesday, April 20, and due in class on Monday, April 25. [**25% of quarter grade**]
2. A *weekly writing assignment* will be distributed via Blackboard each week by Thursday 5 pm. (NOTE: There will be no weekly assignment on Thursday, April 21, due to the midterm exam that week.) Each assignment will be due prior to our class meeting on the subsequent Monday at 2 p.m. These assignments are brief essay assignments, designed to be completed in essays of around 800 words or so (3-4 paragraphs). You are to submit these via the Bb assignment interface. Each assignment can receive a maximum of 25 points, making 200 points (8 x 25) the maximum possible writing assignment score for the quarter. Here is the grading scale for this component of your grade [**40% of quarter grade**]:

Grade	Point total	Grade	Point total
A	171-200	C	137-143
A-	166-170	C-	133-136
B+	161-165	D+	129-132
B	152-160	D	122-128
B-	148-151	D-	117-121
C+	144-147	F	0-116

Your writing assignments will be graded on clarity and general organization, critical reasoning and argumentation, and comprehension of relevant concepts, theories, etc. For the most part, I will not give individual feedback on these assignments, but I will provide some general feedback derived from the assignments turned in for that week.

3. You may choose to either write a *term paper* for this course or take a *final exam* for this course. The former option is strongly recommended for philosophy majors. Either way you opt to meet this requirement, it will be **30% of your quarter grade**.
 - (a) I will provide more information about the term paper requirements as the quarter continues, but you will be asked to write a 2,000-4,000 word paper defending a substantive philosophical thesis in moral theory. Many students choose to develop or elaborate upon one of their weekly writing assignments. I strongly encourage those writing term papers to discuss their topic or thesis with me before the seventh week of quarter, Monday May 9. The term papers will be due Thursday, June 9, noon, to my office (1-331).
 - (b) The final exam will be administered Monday, June 6, 1:40-3:40.
4. You are required to submit an end-of-quarter memo. More details about this memo will be provided later, but in the memo, you will describe your progress in meeting the course

learning objectives and (if you so desire) argue for the grade you believe you should receive for the course. The end-of-quarter memo will be graded pass/fail, and will be due Thursday, June 9, noon, to my office (1-331). **[5% of quarter grade]**

If *extraordinary* circumstances arise that make it unusually difficult for you to meet the class requirements, please contact me so we can discuss the possibility of alternative arrangements. I encourage students with learning or other disabilities to contact me concerning their needs.

Blackboard

We will be using Blackboard (<http://blackboard.csupomona.edu>) in support of the in-class activities in this course. In order to use Blackboard, you will need to know your university Intranet ID and password. You should be checking the Blackboard site several times weekly for updates on course activities, etc.

Discussion Board

I've created several forums in the Blackboard Discussion Board — a general forum, as well as a forum for each of theories we'll be studying and a forum for term paper writers. Use of, or participation in, these forums are not required, but many students enjoy using them and find them valuable resources with which share ideas, ask questions, seek feedback on their work, etc.

Varia

- Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will be addressed according to Cal Poly policies.
- The copyright for these course materials is held by the instructor; any attempt to distribute or sell this material without instructor authorization is in violation of that copyright.
- Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the instructor as soon as possible to discuss their needs and possible accommodations.

Schedule of readings and meetings

Please complete the readings for the class meetings listed below *before* the meeting. Items referred to with D&S refer to Dell’Olio and Simon. Material given as in-class handouts or via Blackboard (Bb) is indicated below.

DATE	TOPICS	ASSIGNED READINGS	TASKS
Mo 3/28	Introduction: What is moral theory and what are its aims?		
We 3/30	Utilitarianism: An introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D&S 1-5 • Timmons, <u>Moral Theory</u>, chapter 1 selections (Bb) • D&S 171-74 • Singer, “The Singer solution to world poverty” (D&S 201-206) 	Writing assignment #1, available by Thursday 3/31, 5pm
Mo 4/4	Mill’s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mill, “Utilitarianism,” ch. II 	Writing assignment #1

	utilitarianism	(D&S 174-181) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Darwall, “Utilitarianism: Act or rule?” (Bb) 	due, 2 p.m.
We 4/6	Critiquing utilitarianism, pt. I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Williams, “A critique of utilitarianism” (D&S 181-188) • Rawls, “The separateness of persons” (Bb) 	Writing assignment #2, available by Thursday 4/7, 5 pm
Mo 4/11	Critiquing utilitarianism, pt. II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hooker, “Rule-consequentialism” (D&S 188-201) • <i>Optional</i>: Weinberg, “It ain’t my world” (Bb) 	Writing assignment #2 due, 2 p.m.
We 4/13	Non-consequentialist alternative #1: Natural law theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D&S 125-128 • Aquinas, <u>Summa Theologica</u>, selections (D&S 129-138) • Donagan, “The Scholastic theory of moral law in the modern world” (D&S 138-147) 	Writing assignment #3, available by Thursday 4/14, 5 pm
Mo 4/18	Natural law theory and double effect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boyle, “Toward understanding the principle of double effect” (D&S 148-159) • Foot, “The problem of abortion and the doctrine of double effect” (D&S 159-169) 	Writing assignment #3 due, 2 p.m.
We 4/20	No class meeting	APA Pacific meeting, San Diego	Midterm available on Blackboard
Mo 4/25	Critiquing natural law theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gorr, “Contemporary natural law theory: Some questions” (Bb) • <i>Optional</i>: Timmons, <u>Moral Theory</u>, pp. 74-100 	Midterm due in class
We 4/27	Non-consequentialist alternative #2: Intuitionism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D&S 208-210 • Ross, “What makes right acts right?” (D&S 234-240) 	Writing assignment #4, available by Thursday 4/28, 5 pm
Mo 5/2	Critiquing intuitionism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • McNaughton, “Intuitionism” (Blackboard) • Gill, “Agonizing decisions and moral pluralism” (Bb) • <i>Optional</i>: Sinnott-Armstrong, “How strong is this obligation?” (Bb) 	Writing assignment #4 due, 2 p.m.
We 5/4	Kantianism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kant, excerpt from <u>Groundwork</u>, section I, II (D&S 211-224) 	Writing assignment #5, available by Thursday 5/5, 5 pm

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Optional:</i> Korsgaard, “Kant’s analysis of obligation: The argument of <u>Foundations I</u>” 	
Mo 5/9	Universalization in Kantian ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bergeron and Tramel, “Rightness as fairness: Kant’s categorical imperative,” (Bb; read pp. 238-246) AND/ OR Glasgow, “Kant’s principle of universal law” (Bb) 	Writing assignment #5 due, 2 p.m. Term paper writers should have met with me by this date!
We 5/11	Humanity as an end in itself	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baron, “Kantian ethics” (D&S 224-234) • Bergeron and Tramel, “Rightness as fairness: Kant’s categorical imperative” (Bb; read pp. 246-254) 	Writing assignment #6, available by Thursday 5/12, 5 pm
Mo 5/16	Kant’s casuistry, system of duties, & the kingdom of ends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kant, “On a supposed right to lie from philanthropic motives” (Bb) • Bergeron and Tramel, “Rightness as fairness: Kant’s categorical imperative” (Bb; read pp. 254-58) • <i>Optional:</i> Cholbi, “The murderer at the door: What Kant should have said” (Bb) 	Writing assignment #6 due, 2 p.m.
We 5/18	Agents vs. acts: Introducing virtue theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D&S 255-258 • Aristotle, <u>Nicomachean Ethics</u>, selections (D&S 259-274) • <i>Optional:</i> Wolf, “Moral saints” (Bb) 	Writing assignment #7, available by Thursday 5/19, 5 pm
Mo 5/23	Being virtuous, becoming virtuous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aristotle, <u>Nicomachean Ethics</u>, selections (D&S 274-285) • <i>Optional:</i> MacIntyre, selection from <u>After Virtue</u> (D&S 298-319) 	Writing assignment #7 due, 2 p.m.
We 5/25	Some challenges to virtue theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Louden, “Some vices of virtue ethics” (Bb) • Nussbaum, “Non-relative virtues: An Aristotelian approach” (Bb) • <i>Optional:</i> Hursthouse, “Virtue theory and abortion” (Bb); Hill, “Ideals of human excellence and preserving natural environments” (D&S 319-333) 	Writing assignment #8, available by Thursday 5/26, 5 pm
Mo 5/30	NO CLASS	Memorial Day Holiday	Writing assignment #8

			due, 2 p.m.
We 6/1	Student choice	Readings to be determined	
Mo 6/6			Final exam, 1:40-3:40, 9-213
Th 6/9			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Term papers due, noon, my office (1-331) • End-of-quarter memos due, noon, my office (1-331)

Supplementary texts

Some of you may opt to read, in addition to the assigned readings on the above schedule, one of the selected supplementary texts below. Each of these are single-author texts that describe and analyze the main ethical theories we will discuss in this course (along with other theories as well). Each has my recommendation, though of course they vary in their respective strengths and weaknesses, and different texts will likely meet different sets of needs. Each is one is organized with sections on the theories we'll be studying, so you should be able to identify the relevant sections to read as the quarter goes on. All are available through Amazon or other online book dealers.

Driver, [Ethics: The Fundamentals](#): A fairly new text with especially helpful chapters on virtue theory and contemporary utilitarianism. Difficulty level: medium.

Rachels, [The Elements of Moral Philosophy](#): A classic, easy to read text that offers vivid examples to explain the main moral theories. Excellent discussions of relativism and egoism. Tends to favor utilitarianism, and the chapter on Kant is spotty. Difficulty level: low.

Timmons, [Moral Theory](#): The appendix on evaluating moral theories is superb. The chapters are precise. Very good on utilitarianism, and has chapters on natural law theory and pluralism. Difficulty level: medium-high to high.

Darwall, [Philosophical Ethics](#): In four parts, the last two of which cover normative ethical theories. Organized mainly historically, the book offers close and nuanced readings of important historical figures (Hobbes, Mill, Kant, Aristotle). Difficulty level: medium-high to high.

Graham, [Eight Theories of Ethics](#): The chapters on hedonism and existentialism are well conceived. Tends to interpret theories unsympathetically. Difficulty level: low to medium.

Shafer-Landau, [The Fundamentals of Ethics](#): Brand new. Very thorough and patient. The introductory material is dandy —and it must be good because I'm credited in the acknowledgements. Difficulty level: low to medium.