



DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY  
PHIL\*2120 ETHICS  
FALL 2015, Mon., Wed., Fri. 11:30-12:20

COURSE OUTLINE

(Please read the outline carefully and hold on to it for future reference)

**Dr. Omid Payrow Shabani**

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**Office hours: Mon. & Wed. 10:30-11:30**

**Course Description:**

What is ethics or morality? And why ought we be moral? Since antiquity, these questions have been answered in variety of ways by variety of moral philosophers. In this course the students will be introduced to such a range of ethical theories. We will critically examine some of the major schools in moral philosophy including, ethical subjectivism, cultural relativism, ethical egoism, utilitarianism, deontology, etc. This analysis will be supplemented by a discussion of contemporary ethical issues and controversies such as animal rights, euthanasia, gay rights, etc.

**Course Objectives:**

By the end of the course the students should be able to:

- communicate better on ethical issues both orally and in written form.
- Have a good grasp of the history and the range of moral theories.
- Be able to identify, critically examine and assess moral controversies.
- Be able to formulate their own thoughts on moral issues based on the analytic and critical skills they acquired throughout the course.
- Build their own ethical arguments and defend them.

**Required Text:**

Brouce N. Waller, *Consider Ethics: Theory Readings and contemporary Issues*, Pearson, Longman, **Third edition**, 2004.

**Important Notice:**

The lectures are aimed at explaining and enhancing the material in the textbook, as such they might not always be identical. **Students are responsible for both the lecture material and the**

**material in the textbook. The textbook is an important part of the activities for the participation assignment. Not having the textbook may result in poor participation mark.**

A significant time commitment is required for both reading and writing on this course. Readings are not necessarily long but they tend to be difficult, requiring several readings. Correspondingly, in order to write a good paper one should allow for sufficient time for research, writing and editing the paper before finally handing it in.

#### **Evaluation:**

1) Tests, 3, each worth	15%
2) In Class Assignments, 3, each worth	5%
3) Final Paper (No final exam)	35%
4) Participation	5%

-**Tests** will be short tests of five to seven questions, covering material presented in class prior to each test.

-**In Class Assignment:** I will divide the class into groups and assign an exercise question to each group. I will give each group a sheet of paper where the students are to provide their group number, the date, their names and student number. They are given 30 minutes to discuss the question, and then write an answer. The sheets will be collected and marked as pass/fail. Each participation is worth 5%. You need to take part in all three scheduled in order to get the maximum mark of 15% for participation. **Not having your textbook for this exercise impacts your participation mark. This is an in class assignment. If you are not there I cannot give you a make-up.**

-**Final Paper** is due on Thus. Dec. 7. Extension will be granted to those who provide good reasons for their request. Late papers will lose 5 marks out of 35 each day after the deadline. *In this course, your instructor will be using Turnitin, integrated with the CourseLink Dropbox tool, to detect possible plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration or copying as part of the ongoing efforts to maintain academic integrity at the University of Guelph.*

-**Participation:** Will be assigned by the TA who leads your seminar and is based on your contribution to the seminar.

#### **Other Rules:**

-If you have any question or concern please come to see me during my office hours—don't stop me before or after the class. If you can't make the stated office hours, please let me know of your availability and I will accommodate you.

-If you email me with a question, whose answer is in this outline, you will not hear back from me.

-Make up exams will be allowed **only** after an official certification either from a doctor or your program counselor is provided. (See the Addendum to Course Outline at the end of syllabus).

-Students will have two weeks window to contest their marks after their tests are returned to them.

-**Bring your textbook to class with you. Not having the text book might impact the participation mark.**

-This outline is subject to change with sufficient notice.

-**Laptops are allowed only for class purposes; transgressors will be asked to leave the class.**

-**Cell Phones should be turned off (no texting in class). Transgressors will be asked to leave the class.**

**-No recording (audio or visual) without the expressed consent of the instructor.**

**Class Schedule:**

Friday, Sep. 11: Introduction

WEEK I.

Mon., Sep. 14: Intro: Good Reasoning and Ethics (Chapter 1)

Wed., Sep. 16: What is Morality? Religion and Morality (Chapter 1 cont.)

WEEK II.

Mon., Sep. 21: Scope of Morality (chapter 12)

Wed., Sep. 23: The Questions of Free Will (chapter 13)

WEEK III.

Mon., Sep. 28: Moral responsibility (chapter 14)

Wed., Sep. 30: **1<sup>st</sup> PARTICIPATION ACTIVITY**

WEEK IV.

Mon. Oct. 5: **TEST I**

Wed. Oct. 7: Morality of Homosexuality (chapter 18)

WEEK V.

Mon., Oct. 12: Kant's Absolute Morality (Chapter 4)

Wed. Oct. 14: Problems with Kantian Ethics (chapter 4 con.)

WEEK VI.

Mon., Oct. 19: **Thanks Giving** (No class)

Wed., Oct. 21: Utilitarianism (chapter 5)

WEEK VII.

Mon., Oct. 26: Problems with Utilitarianism and the case of criminal punishment

Wed., Oct. 28: **2<sup>nd</sup> PARTICIPATION ACTIVITY**

WEEK VIII.

Mon., Nov. 2: Social Contract Theory (chapter 7)

Wed., Nov. 4: **TEST II**

WEEK IX.

Mon., Nov. 9: Emotion and Morality: Ethical Subjectivism (Chapter 3)

Wed., Nov. 11: Psychological and Ethical Egoism (chapter 2)

WEEK X.

Mon., Nov. 16: Pluralism and Pragmatism (chapter 6)

Wed., Nov. 18: Non-objectivism: Emotivism (chapter 10)

WEEK XI.

Mon., Nov. 23: **3<sup>rd</sup> PARTICIPATION ACTIVITY**

Wed., Nov. 25: Virtue Ethics (chapter 8)

Week XII

Mon. Nov. 30: Ethics of Care (chapter 9)

Wed. Dec. 2: Moral Realism (chapter 11)

Fri. Dec. 4: **TEST III (time allocated for missed class on Thanksgiving)**

**Dec. 7: ESSAYS ARE DUE: Please submit your essay to dropbox by noon. Late essays will incur penalty of 5 marks per day.**

### **8 Standard Statements of the College of Arts, Fall 2015**

#### *E-mail Communication*

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <mail.uoguelph.ca> e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

#### *When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement*

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. [See the undergraduate calendar for information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration.](#)

#### *Drop Date*

The last date to drop one-semester courses, without academic penalty, is **Friday, 6 November 2015**. For [regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses, see the Undergraduate Calendar](#).

#### *Copies of out-of-class assignments*

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

#### *Accessibility*

The University of Guelph is committed to creating a barrier-free environment. Providing services for students is a shared responsibility among students, faculty and administrators. This relationship is based on respect of individual rights, the dignity of the individual and the University community's shared commitment to an open and supportive learning environment. Students requiring service or accommodation, whether due to an identified, ongoing disability or a short-term disability should contact Student Accessibility Services as soon as possible. For more information, contact CSD at 519-824-4120 ext. 56208 or email [sas@uoguelph.ca](mailto:sas@uoguelph.ca) or see the website: <http://www.csd.uoguelph.ca/csd/>

#### *Student Rights and Responsibilities*

Each student at the University of Guelph has rights which carry commensurate responsibilities that involve, broadly, being a civil and respectful member of the University community. [The Rights and Responsibilities are detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar](#)

### *Academic Misconduct*

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

*Please note:* Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor. [The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar](#).

### *Recording of Materials*

Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

### *Resources*

The [Academic Calendars](#) are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs.