



School of Liberal Arts

Philosophy 120
Introduction to Ethics

Term 2023

3 Credits

Course Outline

INSTRUCTOR	Matthew Cameron	OFFICE HOURS	By appointment
OFFICE	N/A	CLASSROOM	A2204
E-MAIL	mcameron@yukonu.ca	CLASS TIME	Mon & Wed 2:30-4:00pm
TELEPHONE	(867)-668-8770 (Admin. Assistant)	CRN	10172
Liberal Arts office: Ayamdigut Campus A2501, liberalarts@yukonu.ca, 867-668-8770			

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to essential topics and questions in moral philosophy: How ought we to live our lives? How are right and wrong determined? Are ethical judgments objective or subjective? Are values universal and absolute or culturally relative? What responsibilities do human beings have to one another, to other species, or to the planet? Students will analyze, interpret and evaluate ideas from major schools of ethical thought—including virtue ethics, deontological ethics, and consequentialism—and practice applying theories about ethics to contemporary moral dilemmas.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

None

EQUIVALENCY OR TRANSFERABILITY

AI GD 330 (3)	AU PHIL 2xx (3)	CAMO PHIL 100 (3)
KPU PHIL 1110 (3)	LCV GD 330 (3)	OC PHIL 1xx (3)
TRU-OL PHIL 1021 (3)	TWU PHIL 100 (3)	UBC PHIL 1 st (3)
UCW PHIL 102 (3)	UFV PHIL 110 (3)	UNBC PHIL 1xx (3)
UVIC PHIL 100 (1.5)	VIU PHIL 112 (3)	

Students are reminded that it is always the receiving institution that determines whether a course is acceptable as an applicable, equivalent course or if it may be transferred to their program for credit. Find further information at: <https://www.yukonu.ca/admissions/transfer-credit>

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- analyze, interpret, synthesize, and evaluate ideas associated with major schools of ethical thought and/or key figures in the history of moral philosophy
- explain key terms in the field of moral philosophy, among them egoist ethics, virtue ethics, deontological ethics, consequentialism, categorical imperative, rights theory, utilitarianism, and feminist care ethics
- apply specific ethical theories to contemporary moral problems
- understand the importance of ethical decision-making and action in everyday life and in a range of fields: e.g., politics, economics, research, etc.
- draft, organize, format, revise, and edit university-level essays

COURSE FORMAT

The course will involve a mixture of lectures and classroom group discussion on pre- assigned material.

ASSESSMENTS

Participation

Attendance is mandatory. Students are expected to read materials according to the schedule (see below) and actively participate in (online) group discussions (including via Moodle). Each section of the course on Moodle includes online group discussion forums where students are encouraged to share their thoughts and opinions on the material, raise questions, and discuss key concepts with the class. Specific topics may be assigned for group discussion as well. Sending thoughts and questions via email to the instructor can also contribute to your participation grade.

Assignments

Students will be assessed on the basis of short written assignments (5 in total), two essays (1500 words each), one final assignment, as well as active participation in group discussions. The first essay is due on **Sunday, October 15, 2023**. The second essay is due on **Sunday, Nov. 19, 2023**.

NOTE: All of the essays and written assignments must be completed in order to pass the course.

Late essays will be penalized by **5% per day to a maximum of 7 days**, after which they will not be accepted unless there is a legitimate excuse approved by the instructor in advance of the deadline.

EVALUATION

Written Assignments	15%
Two Essays	50% (25% each)
Participation	15%
Final Assignment	20%

Total	100%
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TEXTBOOKS & LEARNING

MATERIALS

Selected readings and materials (e.g., podcasts, videos) will be made available online (Moodle). See Reading Schedule below.

COURSE WITHDRAWAL INFORMATION

Students may officially withdraw from a course or program without academic penalty up until two-thirds of the course contact hours have been completed. Specific withdrawal dates vary, and students should become familiar with the withdrawal dates of their program. See withdrawal information at www.yukonu.ca/admissions/money-matters

Refer to the YukonU website for important dates: www.yukonu.ca/admissions/important-dates

Refunds may be available. See the Refund policy and procedures at www.yukonu.ca/admissions/money-matters

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are expected to contribute toward a positive and supportive environment and are required to conduct themselves in a responsible manner. Academic misconduct includes all forms of academic dishonesty such as cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, fraud, deceit, using the work of others without their permission, aiding other students in committing academic offences, misrepresenting academic assignments prepared by others as one's own, or any other forms of academic dishonesty including falsification of any information on any Yukon University document.

Please refer to Academic Regulations & Procedures (updated bi-annually) for further details about academic standing, and student rights and responsibilities: www.yukonu.ca/policies/academic-regulations

ACCESSIBILITY AND ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

Yukon University is committed to providing a positive, supportive, and barrier-free academic environment for all its students. Students experiencing barriers to full participation due to a visible or hidden disability (including hearing, vision, mobility, learning disability, mental health, chronic or temporary medical condition), should contact Accessibility Services for resources or to arrange academic accommodations: access@yukonu.ca.

COURSE AND READING SCHEDULE

Note: The schedule is subject to revision. All readings are available on Moodle.

Week	Dates	Topics/Assignments	Readings & Other Materials
1	Sept 6-10	Introduction and Course Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moodle introduction and ethical dilemmas discussion post (Moodle)
2	Sept 11-17	Meta-Ethics: Why be moral?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plato, "The Immoralist's Challenge" Joel Feinberg, "Psychological Egoism" James Rachels, "Ethical Egoism"
3	Sept 18-24	Ethical Theory: Consequentialism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jeremy Bentham, "An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation" (ch. 1 & 4) John Stuart Mill, "Utilitarianism" J.J.C. Smart, "Extreme and Restricted Utilitarianism" Brad Hooker, "Rule Consequentialism" (sections 1-4; pp. 428 – 431)
3	Sept 24	Written Assign. #1	Due: Sunday, Sept. 24
4	Sept 25-Oct 1	Ethical Theory: Consequentialism (Continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peter Singer, "Famine, Affluence and Morality" John Harris, "The Survival Lottery" Bernard Williams, "A Critique of Utilitarianism" (pp.92-94)
5	Oct 2-Oct 8	Applied Ethics: Animal Ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immanuel Kant, "We Have No Duties to Animals" Peter Singer, "All Animals are Equal"

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joel Feinberg, "The Rights of Animals and Unborn Generations" (excerpt)
5	Oct 8	Written Assign. # 2	Due: Sunday, Oct. 8
6	Oct 9-15	Ethical Theory: Deontological Ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immanuel Kant, "Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals" Onora O'Neill, "Kantian Approaches to Some Famine Problems" (pp. 510-515). Robert Nozick, "The Rationality of Side Constraints"
6	Oct 15	FIRST PAPER	DUE: SUNDAY, OCT. 15
7	Oct 16-22	Ethical Theory: Deontological Ethics (Continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alan Gerwith, "The Golden Rule Rationalized" (pp. 524-529) Philippa Foot, "The Problem of Abortion and the Doctrine of the Double Effect" Judith Jarvis Thomson, "Killing, Letting Die, and the Trolley Problem"
7	Oct 22	Written Assign. #3	Due: Sunday, Oct. 22
8	Oct 23-29	Applied Ethics: Environmental Ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Garth Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons" Lynn White Jr., "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis" Stephen M. Gardiner, "Ethics and Global Climate Change" (s. 1-3 & 5; pp. 555-569 & 575-578) The Ethical Implications of Global Climate Change (UNESCO Report; optional reading)

9	Oct 30- Nov 5	Ethical Theory: Virtue Ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aristotle, "The Nature of Virtue" (Book I & II; pp. 615-627) ▪ Martha Nussbaum, "Non-relative Virtues: An Aristotelian Approach"
9	Nov. 5	Written Assign. #4	Due: Sunday, Nov. 5
10	Nov 6-12	Ethical Theory: Virtue Ethics (Continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Julia Annas, "Being Virtuous and Doing the Right Thing" ▪ Julia Annas, "Virtue Ethics and Social Psychology"
11	Nov 13-19	Applied Ethics: Indigenous Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ United Nations Declaration of Human Rights ▪ United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples ▪ Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow (s.2-4; pp. 9-24)
11	Nov 19	SECOND PAPER	DUE: SUNDAY NOV. 19
12	Nov 20-26	Feminist Ethics: The Ethics of Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Carol Gilligan, "In a Different Voice" ▪ Nell Noddings, "An Ethic of Caring"
12	Nov 26	Written Assign. #5	Due: Sunday, Nov. 26
13	Nov 27-Dec 3	Review	
14	Dec 10	FINAL ASSIGNMENT	DUE: SUNDAY, DEC. 10

If you have any questions, concerns or feedback about the course, please contact me at mcameron@yukonu.ca