

University of Waterloo
Department of Philosophy
Phil 110B - 001
Philosophy: Ethics and Values
Fall 2014
T Th 2:30-3:50, AL 208

Instructor: Patricia Marino
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Course Description

This course is an introduction to philosophical thinking about ethics and value, that is, about what is good, right, fair, and just, in life and in society. This course does not endorse any particular conclusions about the topics under consideration. Rather, the idea is to give you conceptual tools that will enable you make sense of various ethical and political disagreements and debates you'll encounter through life; the ultimate aim is to help you develop, and intelligently defend, your own views.

We begin by discussing four different ethical approaches: consequentialism, which focuses on maximizing the best consequences overall, regardless of how this end is achieved; Kantianism, in which good intentions and respect for individual persons is paramount; pluralism, which posits a multiplicity of different values and principles which can conflict and generate moral dilemmas; and an ethics of care, which takes as central the relationships and caring attitudes among persons. We then apply what we've learned in the first part, first to the debate over abortion, and the to questions of life and death for disabled infants.

The next part of the course is directed at more political and social questions. We begin with a discussion of distributive inequality and justice: is it fair that some people have so much and others have so little? We then turn our focus to oppression, focusing first on the gender wage gap and then on the nature of racism and race discrimination. After a consideration of topics including multiculturalism, exploitation, and environmental ethics, we end by talking about markets and their limits through the examples of sex work and surrogacy.

Compared to other introductions to philosophy, this course is focused on contemporary, rather than historical, texts (though of course I will be providing historical background to ideas in the lectures and discussion).

If you have questions about the syllabus, the course, the requirements, the assignments, or anything else to do with this course, please do not hesitate to ask at any time!

Communication

Talking in person is best. Catch me or a TA before or after class, or drop by my office hours. If at other times you have a quick question that can be answered with a brief reply, feel free to email me at pmarino@uwaterloo.ca or our TA, Kathryn Morrison, at ka4morri@uwaterloo.ca. If you have a more involved question about ideas or readings, and you don't want to pose it in person or during class, you can post it on the LEARN discussion board and I will answer.

Class

Class will be a mixture of lecture, discussion, and questions. I will post study questions and discussion questions on LEARN before class, and you should use these as you do the reading. Study questions are there to help guide you through the reading and help you focus on what is important to understand. Discussion questions will be the questions I'll pose in class for us to have a general discussion about. There will also be time in class when you can ask about anything you find confusing. Note: I will post presentation slides, but these are merely an outline and illustration of the lecture, and not a substitute for it! To know what is going on in class, you have to be there.

The Readings

All readings are posted on the LEARN course page as pdfs you can download. Everyone is expected to have read the reading before class on the date for which it is listed. Sometimes the assignment is not the whole pdf posted so always check the assigned pages! The readings are not long, but philosophy texts are often dense with argumentation. If you don't get it the first time don't be discouraged! Everyone reads philosophy texts more than once and you should expect to as well. You might find that reading a given text before the lecture and again after helps you understand. Many topics list "optional additional resources" you can check out if you want to. A wonderful resource for almost any topic is the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* at plato.stanford.edu

Course Requirements

Attendance at class meetings; two papers; one optional rewrite; two in-class tests. There is no final exam. Tests will be a mix of short answer and short essay. Each paper should be 900-1200 words and topics will be handed out. For the first paper, you have the option of handing in a rewrite based on our comments. If you choose to do this your new paper grade will be an average of the original and the rewrite; your grade will not go down if the new draft is worse, but improved grades require significant changes and not just small edits. Dates for papers and tests are listed below, in the course schedule. Paper assignments will ask you to write about your own ideas about a philosophical problem while engaging the texts and ideas we've encountered in class. The focus is on presenting an original argument. Of course this means the ideas in your papers must be your own; we will talk more in class about how to ensure that the ideas you present as your own really are, and how to cite any outside sources you do use appropriately. If you have any questions at any time about academic honesty and what it requires, do not hesitate to ask. Just raise your hand or approach me or the TA after class. Also: we will post information and announcements related to the course on LEARN: please check it every day.

Assessment

- Paper 1: 20%
- Test 1: 25%
- Test 2: 30%
- Paper 2: 25%

Late Work

Please submit your paper before class on the day it is due. Obviously, you should hand in your paper on time, but if you must be late, I will subtract three percentage points from your paper grade per day of lateness. If you experience unexpected difficulties like illness or personal difficulties, please let me know as soon as possible. If you expect to miss a deadline or test, it's essential to let me know by email before the deadline or test. If anything arises that gets in the way of you doing your work for this class, do come talk to me: I'm here to help and I'll do what I can.

Information on Plagiarism Detection

No formal or technological plagiarism detection mechanisms will be used in this class.

Electronic Device Policy

There is no formal policy against the use of laptops or tablets in class, but there are two rules: 1) you may not use any technology in ways that are distracting to me or to the other students and 2) you must be mentally present for what is going on in the classroom. **This means no videos, no social networking, no email, no checking your phone during class.** If you must use your phone, please leave the classroom to do so. You may return when you're done.

Attendance Policy

Though attendance is not part of your assessment, in practice you have to be in class to understand the material in an appropriate way.

Etiquette

Please call me "Patricia." Or you can call me "Professor Marino" or "Dr. Marino" if you prefer.

Topics and Readings:

Sept 9: Introduction

- No reading

Sept 11: Consequentialism

- Reading: Peter Singer, selection from *Practical Ethics* 2nd edition (Cambridge University Press, 1993) (**read pages 8-26**).
- Optional additional resource: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/consequentialism/>

Sept 16: Consequentialism and its critics

- Reading: Edgar Carritt, "Criticisms of Utilitarianism," (published 1950) reprinted in Bratman and Perry eds., *Introduction to Philosophy* (Oxford University Press), pp. 477-479 (**read the whole pdf**).
- Reading: Williams, "Consequentialism and Integrity," originally published 1973, reprinted in Scheffler, *Consequentialism and Its Critics* (Oxford University Press, 1988) (**read sections 2 and 4, that is, pages 30 to 35 and 42 to 50**).
- Optional additional resource: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/consequentialism/#ConWhaRigRelRul>

Sept 18: Kantian moral theory

- Reading: Onora O'Neill, "Kantian Approaches to Some Famine Problems," (published 1980), reprinted in Russ Shafer-Landau (ed.), *Ethical Theory: An Anthology* (Wiley, 2013), pp. 510-520 (**read the whole pdf**).
- Optional additional resource: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/kant-moral/>

Sept 23 class cancelled

Sept 25: Pluralism

- Reading: W. D. Ross, "What Makes Right Acts Right?" from his 1930 book *The Right and the Good*, reprinted in Russ Shafer-Landau (ed.), *Ethical Theory: An Anthology* (Wiley, 2013), pp. 756-762 (**read the whole pdf**).
- Optional additional resource: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/william-david-ross/>

Sept 30: Moral reasoning and an ethic of care

- Reading: Carol Gilligan, selection from "In a Different Voice" (published 1982), reprinted in Russ Shafer-Landau (ed.), *Ethical Theory: An Anthology* (Wiley, 2013), pp. 692-698 (**read the whole pdf**).
- Optional additional resource: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminism-ethics/#CarEthTheDifVoi>

Oct 2: Abortion: philosophical perspectives, part 1

- Reading: Peter Singer, selection from *Practical Ethics* 2nd edition (Cambridge University Press, 1993) **(read pages 83-109)**
- Optional additional resource: www.iep.utm.edu/abortion/
- FIRST PAPER DUE**

Oct 7: Abortion: philosophical perspectives, part 2

- Reading: Don Marquis, "Why Abortion is Immoral," *The Journal of Philosophy*, 86(4) (1989), 183–202 **(read the whole paper)**
- Optional additional resource: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/grounds-moral-status/#CapDevSopCogCap>

Oct 9: Abortion: philosophical perspectives, part 3

- Reading: Judith Jarvis Thomson, "A Defense of Abortion," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 1(1) (1971), 47-66 **(read the whole paper)**.
- Optional additional resource: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminism-family/#3.1>

Oct 14: Life and death decisions for disabled infants

- Reading: Peter Singer, selection from *Practical Ethics* **(read pages 181-190)**.
- Harriet McBryde Johnson, "Unspeakable Conversations," *New York Times Magazine*, February 16, 2003 **(read the whole essay)**.

Oct 16 Test 1

Oct 21: Inequality and justice: Rawls

- Reading: John Rawls, selection from *A Theory of Justice* (first published 1971), reprinted in Russ Shafer-Landau, *Ethical Theory* (Wiley, 2013) 581-591 **(Read the whole pdf)**.
- Optional additional resource: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/justice-distributive/#Difference>

Oct 23: Rawls and his critics

- Reading: Susan Okin, selection from "Justice and Gender," *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, (1987), 42-72 **(read pages 42-52 and 65-72)**.
- Optional additional resource: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/justice-distributive/#FemPri>
- Optional additional resource: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/justice-distributive/#Difference>

Oct 28: Inequality and libertarianism

- Reading: Robert Nozick, "Distributive Justice," *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 3 (1973), 45-126 **(read pages 45 to 61)**.
- Optional additional resource: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/justice-distributive/#Libertarian>

Oct 30: Libertarianism and its critics

- Reading: Gerald Cohen, "Robert Nozick and Wilt Chamberlain: How Patterns Preserve Liberty," *Erkenntnis*, 11(1), 5–23 (**read the whole paper**).
- Optional additional resource: <http://www.bostonreview.net/forum/libertarianism-and-liberty>

Nov 4: Gender inequality and the wage gap

- Reading: Ann Cudd, "Oppression by Choice," *Journal of Social Philosophy*, 25 (1994), 22–44 (**read the whole paper**).
- Optional additional resource: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminism-topics/>

Nov 6: Race and racism

- Reading: Tommie Shelby, "Is Racism in the 'Heart'?" *Journal of Social Philosophy*, 33(3) (2002), 411–420 (**read the whole paper**).
- Optional additional resource: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/race/>

Nov 11: Multiculturalism

- Reading: Will Kymlicka, selection from *Liberalism, Community, and Culture* (published 1991) reprinted in Eldon Soifer, *Ethical Issues: Perspectives For Canadians* (Broadview, 2009), pp. 616-631 (**read the whole pdf**).
- Optional additional resource: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/multiculturalism/>

Nov 13: Exploitation

- Reading: Chris Meyers, "Wrongful Beneficence: Exploitation and Third World Sweatshops," *Journal of Social Philosophy*, 35 (2004) (3): 319-333 (**read the whole paper**).
- Optional additional resource: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/exploitation/>
- SECOND PAPER DUE**

Nov 18: Environmental Ethics

- Mark Sagoff, "At the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima, or Why Political Questions Are Not All Economic," *Arizona Law Review* Vol. 23 (1981), pp. 1283-1298 (**read the whole paper**).
- Optional additional resource: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ethics-environmental/>

Nov 20: Markets in sex work

- Reading: Deborah Satz, "Markets in Women's Sexual Labor," *Ethics* 106(1) (1995), 63-85 (**read the whole paper**).
- Optional additional resource: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminist-sex-markets/>

Nov 25: Markets in reproduction

- Reading: Elizabeth Anderson, "Is Women's Labor a Commodity?" *Philosophy and Public Affairs* (1990), 71-92 (**read the whole paper**).
- Optional additional resource: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminism-family/#3.2>

Nov 27 Test 2

Cross-listed course:

Please note that a cross-listed course will count in all respective averages no matter under which rubric it has been taken. For example, a PHIL/PSCI cross-list will count in a Philosophy major average, even if the course was taken under the Political Science rubric.

Academic Integrity:

Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71 - Student Discipline](#).

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances](#), Section 4.

Appeals: A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read [Policy 72 - Student Appeals](#).

Other sources of information for students:

[Academic Integrity website \(Arts\)](#) [Academic Integrity Office \(uWaterloo\)](#)

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:

Note for students with disabilities: The [AccessAbility Services](#) office, located in Needles Hall Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS office at the beginning of each academic term.