Class code: PHIL-UA 9040 - 001

Instructor Details: Professor Anthony Price (Birkbeck)
Office hour by arrangement, location to be confirmed.

Class Details: Fall 2013
Thursday, 10-1
Location to be confirmed.

Prerequisites: None.

Class Description: Introduces students to the fundamental theoretical questions of moral philosophy, with attention to both classic and contemporary readings. We will address questions such as: What is the nature of values? Is there such a thing as ethical knowledge? Why should we act morally? How do we decide what morality demands of us in a situation? Note that this is not a course in what is sometimes called ‘applied ethics’.

Course format will be classes involving informal instruction and discussion, with a focus upon the close reading of texts.

Desired Outcomes: A better understanding of the nature of the right and the good, ethical character and moral decisions, and the methods of philosophy in acquiring this understanding.

Assessment Components: A midterm test (part of Session 6); an essay of about 1,500 words (to be submitted by Session 11); an essay of about 2,000 words (to be submitted by Session 15). The final grade will be determined by a one-hour midterm test (20%), a short essay (30%), and a longer essay (50%). Each student will get a grade no lower than that determined by these inputs and in this proportion; but in some cases a higher grade may be awarded to take into account such factors as improvement, contribution to class, and so on. Grades will be lowered by 3% in the case of each unexcused absence and by 1.5 % for each late arrival after warning given. Failure to submit or fulfil any required course component results in failure of the class.

Assessment Expectations:

Grade A: Mastery of the issues and literature, and an ability to make some original contribution.

Grade B: Good grasp of issues and literature, but little or no attempt at own contribution.

Grade C: Some but uncertain grasp of the issues.

Grade D: Failure to grasp issues but some attempt made.

Grade F: Not even trying.
NYU in London uses the following scale of numerical equivalents to letter grades:

A=94-100
A-=90-93
B+=87-89
B=84-86
B-=80-83
C+=77-79
C=74-76
C-=70-73
D+=67-69
D=65-66
F=below 65

Where no specific numerical equivalent is assigned to a letter grade by the class teacher, the mid point of the range will be used in calculating the final class grade (except in the A range, where 95.5 will be used).

NYU in London aims to have grading standards and results in all its courses similar to those that prevail at Washington Square.

NYUL has a strict policy about course attendance. No unexcused absences are permitted. While students should contact their class teachers to catch up on missed work, you should NOT approach them for excused absences.

Excused absences will usually only be considered for serious, unavoidable reasons such as personal ill-health or illness in the immediate family. Trivial or non-essential reasons for absence will not be considered.

Excused absences can only be considered if they are reported in accordance with guidelines which follow, and can only be obtained from the appropriate member of NYUL’s staff.

Please note that you will need to ensure that no make-up classes – or required excursions - have been organised before making any travel plans for the semester. See also section 11.1 - Make up days.

Absence reporting for an absence due to illness

1. On the first day of absence due to illness you should report the details of your symptoms by e-mailing absences@nyu.ac.uk including details of: class(es) missed; professor; class time; and whether any work was due including exams. Or call free (from landline) 0800 316 0469 (option 2) to report your absences on the phone.

2. Generally a doctor’s note will be required to ensure you have sought treatment for the illness. Contact the Gower Street Health Centre on 0207 636 7628 to make an appointment, or use HTH general practitioners if you cannot get an appointment expediently at Gower.
3. At the end of your period of absence, you will need to complete an absence form online at [http://bit.ly/NuCl5K](http://bit.ly/NuCl5K). You will need to log in to NYU Home to access the form.

4. Finally you must arrange an appointment to speak to Nigel Freeman or Donna Drummond-Smart on your first day back at class. You must have completed the absence form before making your appointment.

Supporting documentation relating to absences must be submitted within one week of your return to class.

**Absence requests for non-illness reasons**

Absence requests for **non-illness** reasons must be discussed with the Academic Office prior to the date(s) in question – no excused absences for reasons other than illness can be applied retrospectively. Please come in and see us in Room 308, 6 Bedford Square, or e-mail us at academics@nyu.ac.uk.

**Further information regarding absences**

Each unexcused absence will be penalized by deducting 3% from the student’s final course mark. Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence.

Unexcused absences from exams are not permitted and will result in failure of the exam. If you are granted an excused absence from an examination (with authorisation, as above), your lecturer will decide how you will make-up the assessment component, if at all (by make-up examination, extra coursework, viva voce (oral examination), or an increased weighting on an alternate assessment component, etc.).

NYUL also expects students to arrive to class promptly (both at the beginning and after any breaks) and to remain for the duration of the class. If timely attendance becomes a problem it is the prerogative of each instructor to deduct a mark or marks from the final grade of each late arrival and each early departure.

Please note that for classes involving a **field trip or other external visit**, transportation difficulties are never grounds for an excused absence. It is the student’s responsibility to arrive at an agreed meeting point in a punctual and timely fashion.

Please refer to the Student Handbook for full details of the policies relating to attendance. A copy is in your apartment and has been shared with you on Google Docs.

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**Late Submission of Work**

Written work due in class must be submitted during the class time to the professor. Late work should be submitted in person to a member of NYU London staff in the Academic Office (Room 308, 6 Bedford Square) during office hours (Mon – Fri, 10:30 – 17:30). Please also send an electronic copy to academics@nyu.ac.uk for submission to Turnitin.

Work submitted within 5 weekdays after the submission time without an agreed extension receives a penalty of 10 points on the 100 point scale.

Written work submitted more than 5 weekdays after the submission date without an agreed extension fails and is given a zero.
Please note end of semester essays must be submitted on time.

Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism: the presentation of another piece of work or words, ideas, judgements, images or data, in whole or in part, as though they were originally created by you for the assignment, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism.

Please refer to the Student Handbook for full details of the plagiarism policy.

All students must submit an electronic copy of each piece of their written work to www.turnitin.com and hand in a printed copy with the digital receipt to their professor. Late submission of work rules apply to both the paper and electronic submission and failure to submit either copy of your work will result in automatic failure in the assignment and possible failure in the class.

Electronic Submission

The Turnitin database will be searched for the purpose of comparison with other students’ work or with other pre-existing writing or publications, and other academic institutions may also search it.

In order for you to be able to submit your work onto the Turnitin website, you will need to set up an account:

1) Go onto the Turnitin website http://www.turnitin.com
2) Click ‘Create Account’ in the top right hand corner
3) Select user type of ‘student’
4) Enter your class ID & Turnitin class enrolment password (these will be e-mailed to you after the drop/add period, or contact academics@nyu.ac.uk if you have misplaced these).
5) Follow the online instructions to create your profile.

To submit your work for class, you will then need to:

1) Log in to the Turnitin website
2) Enter your class by clicking on the class name
3) Next to the piece of work you are submitting (please confirm the due date), click on the ‘submit’ icon
4) Enter the title of your piece of work
5) Browse for the file to upload from wherever you have saved it (USB drive, etc.), please ensure your work is in Word or PDF format, and click ‘submit’
6) Click ‘yes, submit’ to confirm you have selected the correct paper (or ‘no, go back’ to retry)
7) You will then have submitted your essay onto the Turnitin website.
8) Please print your digital receipt and attach this to the hard copy of your paper before you submit it to your professor (this digital receipt appears on the web site, immediately after you submit your paper and is also sent to your e-mail address). Please also note that when a paper is submitted to Turnitin all formatting, images, graphics, graphs, charts, and drawings are removed from the paper so that the program can read it accurately. Please do not print the paper in this form to submit to your lecturers, as it is obviously pretty difficult to read! You can still access the exact file you uploaded by clicking on the ‘file’ icon in the ‘content’ column.

Please also see the Late Submission of Work policy, above.

Students must retain an electronic copy of their work for one month after their grades are posted online on Albert and must supply an electronic copy of their work if requested to do so by NYU in London. Not submitting a copy of a piece of work upon request will result in automatic failure in the assignment and possible failure in the class. NYU in London may submit in an electronic form the
work of any student to a database for use in the detection of plagiarism, without further prior notification to the student.

Penalties for confirmed cases of plagiarism are set out in the Student Handbook.

Required Text(s)


Supplemental Text(s) (not required to purchase as copies are in NYU-L Library)


Other optional reading is accessible electronically (either open source, or via London or New York university libraries), or will be made available electronically.

Internet Research Guidelines

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (http://plato.stanford.edu); consult index under for whatever author or topic interests you.

On writing a philosophy essay, see http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html

On philosophical terms and methods, see http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/vocab/index.html

On how to read a philosophy article, see http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/reading.html

Additional Required Equipment

None

Session 1

5 September

Introductory

Session 2

12 September

Reason and the Will

RSL ch. 1: Hume

Optional: Wiggins, chs 2-3

Session 3

19 September

The Subjectivity of Values

RSL ch. 3: Mackie

Optional: Wiggins, ch. 11

Session 4

26 September

Objectivism

RSL chs 4, 9: Harman, Smith

Optional: Wiggins, ch. 12
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<tr>
<th>Session 5</th>
<th>Why be moral?</th>
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<tr>
<td>3 October</td>
<td>RSL chs 15-16: Plato, Foot</td>
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<td>Optional: Wiggins, ch. 1</td>
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<tr>
<th>Session 6</th>
<th>Midterm Test</th>
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<tr>
<td>10 October</td>
<td>Psychological Egoism</td>
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<td>RSL ch. 19: Feinberg</td>
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<th>Session 7</th>
<th>Pleasure, desire, value</th>
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<tr>
<td>17 October</td>
<td>RSL chs 30, 33: Nozick, Kraut</td>
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<th>Session 8</th>
<th>Being Responsible for one’s Actions</th>
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<tr>
<td>24 October</td>
<td>RSL chs 36-7: Taylor, Galen Strawson</td>
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<th>Session 9</th>
<th>Holding People Responsible for their Actions</th>
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<tr>
<td>31 October</td>
<td>RSL ch. 41: Peter Strawson</td>
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<th>Session 10</th>
<th>Consequentialism</th>
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<tr>
<td>14 November</td>
<td>RSL chs 48, 52: Mill, Hare</td>
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<th>Session 11</th>
<th>1st essay deadline</th>
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<tr>
<td>15 November (Make-up day)</td>
<td>The Categorical Imperative</td>
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RSL ch. 55: Kant

Optional: RSL ch 56: Korsgaard; Wiggins chs 4-5

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<th>Session 12</th>
<th>Problems in Deontology</th>
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<td>21 November</td>
<td>RSL ch. 61: Thomson</td>
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<th>Session 13</th>
<th>Particularism</th>
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<tr>
<td>28 November</td>
<td>RSL chs 80-2: Dancy, Little, Dworkin</td>
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<th>Session 14</th>
<th>Unfinished Business</th>
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<tr>
<td>5 December</td>
<td>Submission of draft of 2nd essay (optional) by dawn, 9 December</td>
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<th>Session 15</th>
<th>2nd essay deadline</th>
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<tr>
<td>12 December</td>
<td>Retrospect</td>
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Classroom Etiquette

- Food should not be consumed in class, and drink only with caution.
- Mobile phones should be set on silent and should not be used in class except for emergencies.
- Laptops may be used freely to serve the purposes of the class.
- Please kindly dispose of rubbish in the bins provided.

Required Co-curricular Activities

- None

Suggested Co-curricular Activities

- London is rich in philosophical occasions; students will be given information, or told where to find it on the internet.
Your Instructor

Anthony Price is Professor of Philosophy and Chairman of Department, Birkbeck College, London. See his webpage http://www.bbk.ac.uk/philosophy/our-staff/academics/price