

PHIL-UA9040L01 ETHICS

NYU London

Instructor Information

Dolores Iorizzo

Course Information

Tuesday 1:00 – 4:00

Room G05

No prerequisites

Course Overview and Goals

Introduces students to the fundamental questions of moral philosophy, with attention to both classic and contemporary readings. (What is it to be a good human being, and to act morally? How do we decide what morality demands of us in some situation?) Also addresses some issues of current moral debate.

The course will consist of lectures, discussion of case studies, analysis of literature and film, and extensive student participation. A better understanding of the nature of the right and the good, ethical character, and agency, and the methods of philosophy in acquiring this understanding. This course will also develop analytical skills (reading, writing, thinking, argumentation) that will benefit the student in their other courses.

Upon completion of this Course, students will be better able to have an understanding of the nature of the right and the good, ethical character, agency, and the methods of philosophy. This course will also develop analytical skills (reading, writing, thinking, argumentation) that will benefit the student in their other courses, which include:

- Reading and interpreting texts in an analytical way
- Having a firm grasp of main authors in the history of ethical thought
- Ability to construct rational arguments in a logical way
- Ability to argue more persuasively from a philosophical perspective
- Gaining knowledge of the internal contradictions of your own beliefs
- Building up a personal ethical framework that is grounded in the history of philosophy

Course Requirements

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Grading of Assignments

A midterm essay (by week 7 – 30%- up to 2000 words), a final essay (by week 14 - 40%- up to 3000 words) and a final examination (week 15 - 30%). 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, effort, and so on. Grades will be lowered by 3% in the case of each unexcused absence beyond one, and by 1.5% for each late arrival (after warning given).

The grade for this course will be determined according to these assessment components:

Assignments/ Activities	Description of Assignment	% of Final Grade	Due
Mid-term Essay	2000 word paper on Plato or Aristotle	30%	
Final Essay	3000 word paper on Kant or Mill	40%	
Final Exam	Final Exam covering all authors and philosophical problems in practical ethics	30%	

Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the class

Grades

Letter grades for the entire course will be assigned as follows:

Letter Grade	Percent	Description
A	Example: 93.5% and higher	Mastery of the issues and literature, and an ability to make some original contribution.
B	Example: 82.5% - 89.5%	Good grasp of issues and literature, but no attempt at original contribution.
C	Example: 72.5% - 85.0%	Some but uncertain grasp of the issues.
D	Example: 62.5% - 72.00%	Confused understanding of the issues.
F	Example: 62.0% and lower	Failure to make any attempt to master the material.

Course Materials

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Required Textbooks & Materials

Bernard Williams, *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy* (Harvard - ISBN: 067426858X)

Plato, *Republic* (ed. Ferrari, translation Griffith, Cambridge Univ. Press- ISBN: 052148443X)

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (translation and eds. Broadie, S and Rowe, C. Oxford University Press - ISBN: 0198752717)

Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork for the Metaphysic of Morals* (translation and ed. Gregor, M. Cambridge University Press: ISBN: 0521626951)

John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism* (ed. Crisp, R. Oxford University Press – ISBN 019875163X)

J.J.C. Smart and Bernard Williams, *Utilitarianism: For and Against* (Cambridge University Press - ISBN: 052109822X)

Peter Singer (ed.), *Applied Ethics* (Oxford University Press - ISBN: 0198750676)

Optional Textbooks & Materials

David Bostock, *Aristotle's Ethics* (Oxford University Press - ISBN: 0198752652)

N. Pappas, *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Plato and the Republic* (Routledge - ISBN: 0415299977)

Samuel Scheffler (ed.), *Consequentialism and its Critics* (Oxford University Press - ISBN: 0198750730). There are two excellent encyclopedias of philosophy: a recent one published by Routledge, and an older one, published by Collier-Macmillan, both available in Senate House Library.

There are many useful sources on the internet, but also many bad ones. The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy <http://plato.stanford.edu> is faultless, but there are many others which are not so please get permission to use internet resources.

Resources

- **Access your course materials:** [NYU Classes](http://nyu.edu/its/classes) (nyu.edu/its/classes)
- **Databases, journal articles, and more:** [Bobst Library](http://library.nyu.edu) (library.nyu.edu)
- **NYUL Library Collection:** [Senate House Library](http://catalogue.libraries.london.ac.uk) (catalogue.libraries.london.ac.uk)
- **Assistance with strengthening your writing:** [NYU Writing Center](http://nyu.mywconline.com) (nyu.mywconline.com)
- **Obtain 24/7 technology assistance:** [IT Help Desk](http://nyu.edu/it/servicedesk) (nyu.edu/it/servicedesk)

Course Schedule

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Session/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignments Due
Session 1:	Aspirations of Ethics	Williams, <i>Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy</i>	
Session 2:	Definitions of Justice in Plato's <u>Republic</u>	Plato, <i>Republic</i> , Book 1	Provide detailed outline of reading, including line numbers for reference
Session 3	Justice in the State	Plato, <i>Republic</i> , Books 2-5	Provide detailed outline of reading, including line numbers for reference
Session 4:	Justice in the Individual	Plato, <i>Republic</i> , Books 6-7	Provide detailed outline of reading, including line numbers for reference
Session 5:	Aristotle's Virtue Ethics: Happiness	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , 1-5 and Williams, <i>Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy</i> , Ch. 3	Provide detailed outline of Aristotle reading, including line numbers for reference
Session 6:	Aristotle's Virtue Ethics: The Function Argument and Practical Reason	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , Book 1-5	Provide detailed outline of Aristotle reading, including line numbers for reference
Session 7:	Aristotle's Virtue Ethics: Contemplation	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , compare Books 1 and 10	Provide detailed outline of Aristotle reading, including line numbers for reference.
Session 8:	Kant's Moral Philosophy: The Groundwork	Kant, Groundwork for the Metaphysic of Morals	First Essay Dues Outline of Kant Readings.
Session 9:	Kant's Moral Philosophy: Autonomy	Kant, Groundwork for the Metaphysic of Morals	Outline of Kant Readings

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Session/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignments Due
		and Williams, Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy, Ch.4	
Session 10:	Kant's Moral Philosophy: The Categorical Imperative	Kant, Groundwork for the Metaphysic of Morals	Outline of Kant Readings
Session 11:	Mill on Utilitarianism	Mill, Utilitarianism, Chs 1-4	Outline of Mill Reading
Session 12:	Utilitarianism, Justice and Rights	Mill, Utilitarianism, Ch. 5 and Smart and Williams, Utilitarianism: For and Against	Outline of Mill Reading
Session 13:	Abortion and Euthanasia	Thomson and Tooley in Singer (ed.), Applied Ethics	Construct Arguments for/against
Session 14:	Life and Death	Hume and Rachels in Singer (ed.), Applied Ethics	Construct Arguments for/against
Session 15:	Final Exam		Final Essay Due

Co-Curricular Activities

Attendance at Philosophy Lectures and Seminars in London will be announced.

Classroom Etiquette

No Mobile Phones allowed in class. Laptops will be permitted by permission.

NYUL Academic Policies

Attendance and Tardiness

- Key information on NYU London's absence policy, how to report absences, and what kinds of absences can be excused can be found on our [website](http://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/attendance-policy.html) (<http://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/attendance-policy.html>)

Assignments, Plagiarism, and Late Work

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- You can find details on these topics and more on this section of our NYUL [website](https://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/academic-policies.html) (<https://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/academic-policies.html>) and on [the Policies and Procedures section of the NYU website](https://www.nyu.edu/academics/studying-abroad/upperclassmen-semester-academic-year-study-away/academic-resources/policies-and-procedures.html) for students studying away at global sites (<https://www.nyu.edu/academics/studying-abroad/upperclassmen-semester-academic-year-study-away/academic-resources/policies-and-procedures.html>).

Classroom Conduct

Academic communities exist to facilitate the process of acquiring and exchanging knowledge and understanding, to enhance the personal and intellectual development of its members, and to advance the interests of society. Essential to this mission is that all members of the University Community are safe and free to engage in a civil process of teaching and learning through their experiences both inside and outside the classroom. Accordingly, no student should engage in any form of behaviour that interferes with the academic or educational process, compromises the personal safety or well-being of another, or disrupts the administration of University programs or services. Please refer to the [NYU Disruptive Student Behavior Policy](#) for examples of disruptive behavior and guidelines for response and enforcement.

Disability Disclosure Statement

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

Instructor Bio

Dolores Iorizzo has been teaching philosophy at the University of London, and NYU in London for over a decade. She specializes in ancient and early modern philosophy, and the philosophy of science and medicine. She has been a member of the Ancient Commentators on Aristotle Project at King's College London (<http://www.ancientcommentators.org.uk/>) and a founding member of the Newton Manuscript Project (<http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/>). She has also worked extensively with Martha Nussbaum and Amartya Sen on the development of the Capabilities Approach to Human Welfare at the United Nations. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Capability_approach)