INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS

Philosophy 108 - Fall 2015

Lecture: M, Th Noon – 1:20 PM Lucy Stone Hall A143

Professor: Adam Shriver
Teaching Assistant: Eddy Chen
Teaching Assistant: Olivia Odoffin

You are responsible for everything on this syllabus. Read it fully and carefully!

1. LECTURES AND DISCUSSION SECTIONS

The lectures take place every Monday and Thursday from 12 noon to 1:20 PM in Lucy Stone Hall, room A143. Discussion sections meet once every week. All students must be enrolled in one of the following discussion sections:

01 (M, 1:55 – 2:50 PM) in BE-121 – Mr. Chen
02 (M, 1:55 – 2:50 PM) in LSH-B267 – Ms. Odoffin
03 (Th, 1:55 – 2:50 PM) in LSH-B267 – Mr. Chen
04 (Th, 1:55 – 2:50 PM) in TIL-103B – Ms. Odoffin

2. OFFICE HOURS AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Professor Shriver
Office: 106 Somerset St., New Brunswick 5th Floor, Room 541 (College Avenue Campus)
Philosophy Department Office phone: 732-932-9861 (to leave messages only)
E-mail: adam.shriver@rutgers.edu (The best way to contact Prof. Shriver is via email. Please email Prof. Shriver only after discussing your question with your TA.)

Office Hours: Monday and Thursday from the end of class outside the lecture room, Monday from 2:30-4:10 PM at the College Avenue campus office, and other times, by appointment. It’s always wise to contact me in advance, even to see me during regular office hours, to make sure there’s no conflict with another student.
I. Course Goals

“I was first attracted to moral philosophy because, like Socrates, it seems to me that the most important question we face in life is how best to live.”

- David McNaughton

This course will introduce you to philosophical ethics – questions about right and wrong and good and evil that have puzzled and provoked thinkers for hundreds of years. We will read and discuss major Western ethical theories and important moral philosophers, and will also debate controversial moral dilemmas such as abortion and our obligations to help the desperately poor. Your work on these topics will help develop your capacity to analyze texts and issues, to criticize and construct philosophical arguments, to present your thoughts in clear written form, and to become a more creative problem-solver. When you complete the course, you should be better prepared to recognize, confront, and think critically about difficult questions that we all encounter in our daily and professional lives.

Thus the major goals of the course are to:

- familiarize you with major traditional theories, thinkers, and concepts in ethics,

- build your skills in analyzing and solving ethical problems,

- enable you to understand, criticize, and construct philosophical arguments, and defending your views both orally and in writing,

- assist your development of creative problem-solving techniques,

- help you improve your writing through the paper assignments and essay examinations.
Philosophy, like riding a bicycle, is best learned by doing it. For that reason lectures are a poor substitute for engaging in philosophical argument yourself. The discussion sections are your opportunity to participate actively in thinking and arguing about philosophical questions. **Thus attendance is required in the discussion sections.**

You should plan not only to attend but also to contribute to the debates that will take place. (If in the past you’ve been somewhat shy about talking in class, this is a low-stakes chance to practice and develop self-confidence before you have to speak up during job interviews or other high-stakes occasions. Take advantage of it!) What you learn in these sessions can far outlast what you learn in the lectures.

This course meets the following SAS Core Curriculum Goal: "Examine critically philosophical and other theoretical issues concerning the nature of reality, human experience, knowledge, value, and/or cultural production." Assessment will be by an SAS generic rubric embedded in the evaluation criteria laid out in this syllabus.

**Please note: you cannot take both this class and Philosophy 107 for credit.**

II. Course website

Materials relevant for the course will be available on Sakai@Rutgers, the electronic course platform offered by Rutgers. To access these materials, go to [http://sakai.rutgers.edu/](http://sakai.rutgers.edu/) and find the course website for 01:730:108:01. You will need a Rutgers NetID to access Sakai. If you normally use a non-Rutgers email program (e.g., gmail or Yahoo), you should arrange to have your Rutgers email forwarded to your other email address so that you will automatically receive announcements from the course. You must use your NetID to access the course website, for example to retrieve another copy of this syllabus, or to access course assignments or required readings.

Once you're at the Sakai website, log in using your NetID. When you are logged in, you will go to "My Workspace." This is your start page as well as your personal workspace that no one else can see. Across the top of "My Workspace" you will see a series of tabs. These tabs will help you navigate between different class and project worksites on Sakai. The tab for this course is labeled **Intro to Ethics 01 F15.** Click on the tab to enter the class worksite. All students in the course should have been automatically joined to the site. If you cannot find the tab for the class, contact your TA. (Note that if you registered late or are paying tuition late, it will take about 24 hours after you register for a course to get access to Sakai.) Also note that if you subsequently encounter problems with your computer or your financial aid status at the university, your access to Sakai and to your Rutgers email will be temporarily cut off. In addition, occasionally the Sakai site itself goes down temporarily. **For this reason you should make sure you have personal copies of crucial materials from this class, such as the syllabus and paper assignments, either printed or downloaded to your computer.**

On the class website, the "Announcements" tool button will open a page containing
messages to all class members about such events as class cancellations or changes in assignments. Important announcements will also be sent out as emails to each class member. Make sure you set your Sakai options so that you will receive all high-priority announcements. Critically important announcements (such as a class cancellation notice, or your TA’s failure to receive your submitted paper) will be sent to you during the semester, and you must ensure that you will see these, either by frequently checking your Rutgers email account, or by arranging for it to automatically forward messages to your regular non-Rutgers email account.

The "Resources" button will open a page containing a number of folders. The sub-folder labeled "Syllabus and Reading Lists" contains a copy of the course syllabus (and any future revisions of this) and a shorter list of required readings and assignments. The folder “Other required readings” contains required readings that are only available on Sakai. The folder "Paper assignments" will contain copies of the paper assignments. The folder "Grading Information" contains information on the grading scale used in the course, the grading scheme for the in-class quizzes and section attendance, and an explanation how grades on your papers will be determined. The folder “Absence Policies” contains documents explaining the policy on excused absences in the course, and a copy of the form for approving legitimate absences. The folder “Lecture slides” will contain the PowerPoint slides from the lectures.

To view the contents of a folder, click on its name, e.g., "Optional Readings." To return to the "Resources" page from within that folder, click on the small return arrow button near the top of the Sakai page.

Other tools available on Sakai are Gradebook (where your grades will be reported), and Discussion and Private Messages (which you can use as a chat room to continue discussions with your fellow section members, or to raise questions with them). Your TA will not regularly monitor Discussion and Private Messages, so if you have a question for the TA, please email her or him directly.

III. Course texts

(A) You must purchase (or borrow for the semester) an i-Clicker personal response device for use in lecture (Note: “i-Clicker” is a brand name. Other brands of clickers (personal response systems) will not work in this class. You will not be able to use your smartphone as a clicker in this class.) These are available from the Rutgers Barnes & Noble bookstore, from New Jersey Books, and from other sources, including on-line vendors. You must bring your i-Clicker to lecture on September 14 and every lecture thereafter. If you do not bring your i-Clicker to a lecture you will not be able to take the quizzes on that day, and will lose points.

(B) The required readings are listed under "REQ" on the syllabus below, and are
drawn from the following sources, which should be purchased:


“(CP)” = Course pack: additional required readings which are available in a course pack that can be purchased at the Rutgers Bookstore.

“(SAK)” = A few other required readings that will be available on Sakai (in the folder "Other required readings" in the "Resources" tool).

NOTE: Several copies of *Conduct and Character* and of the *Course Pack* will be available in the Douglass Library for those of you who would rather read the materials in the library than purchase them. However, this will not be a very convenient method of accessing these materials. If you know someone who took Philosophy 108 during Spring 2013, the readings in the course pack for that course are identical with the ones in our course pack, so you could buy or borrow this edition second-hand.

IV. Graded assignments

The course includes several different kinds of assignments in addition to the readings:

(A) **Required attendance in discussion section.** “Attendance” means attending the full discussion section, not simply signing the attendance sheet. See Section V, VI and VII below. See also the file “Legitimate and Excused Absences” in the “Grading Information” folder in Sakai Resources.

(B) **In-class quizzes on the various materials we will read**

Every lecture, starting with the lecture on **September 14**, will include two in-class quizzes on the material for the day. Each quiz will consist of one True/False question. The first quiz will be given shortly after class starts and will be based on the readings assigned for the day. The second quiz will be given at the end of class and will be based on the material covered in the lecture.

We are using in-class quizzes because extensive research shows that people understand and remember material much longer if they are asked about it immediately after learning it. Thus this strategy is intended to help you remember the material from the readings and lecture, and alert you to any misunderstandings you might have. This is the reason for giving you 1 quiz point even if you answer a quiz incorrectly. The correct answers will be posted
through a Sakai announcement within 48 hours of the quiz. See the file “Grading Scheme for Quizzes” in the Sakai folder “Grading Information” for more detailed information.

(C) Mid-Term examination

The mid-term examination will be given during class on October 22. It will cover all the materials covered in the course up to that date. It will consist of several 20-minute essay questions, and you will have some choice of questions.

(D) Papers

There are two paper assignments. The first will be three–five pages long, while the second will be five–seven pages long (double-spaced and printed, not hand-written). Topics will be assigned later, but will involve your analysis and argument about one of the topics discussed in class. No outside reading will be required. The first paper is due October 12, while the second paper is due November 19. It will not be possible to rewrite your paper for a different grade. Papers must be submitted electronically to your TA. In order to reassure you that others are not cheating by plagiarizing materials in their papers, you will also be asked to submit your paper to Turnitin.com. Instructions for Turnitin.com submissions will be included on the paper assignment sheet. You must turn in the two required papers in order to pass the course. To count as being “turned in,” a paper must represent a substantial effort to engage with the paper topic.

NOTE: If you would like to improve your writing generally, you should avail yourself of the free personal tutoring, or the Online Writing Lab, available through the Plangere Writing Center (for information, check http://plangere.rutgers.edu). Drop-in tutoring is not available (except through the Online Writing Lab), so if you would like to use the personal tutoring service, sign up for the relevant start date for fall term sessions.

(E) Final examination

The final examination will be held in our classroom on Monday, Dec 21, from 12 noon to 3 PM (note: we might look into other options). The examination will emphasize the material after the midterm examination. It will consist of essay questions. You must take the final exam to pass the course.

V. Grading

All grading will be done "blind" to avoid any inadvertent biases in assessing your work. Your papers and examinations will be identified by your student number, not your name.
Syllabus - 8/30/15 Edition

The rubric (set of criteria) we will use for evaluating your papers is available in the "Grading information" folder on the Sakai site under "Resources." You should read this before starting to write each paper.

The grading scale is also available in the "Grading information" folder on the Sakai site under "Resources."

For each assignment and again at the end of the term, we will utilize a rough curve in order to even out any systematic differences in evaluations by different teaching assistants. Note this may mean that your final course grade is slightly lower than you expected, given your grades on individual assignments.

See the “Grading Scheme for In-Class Quizzes” and “Grading Scheme for Section Attendance” (in the "Grading information" folder on the Sakai site under "Resources") for details about how the quizzes and section attendance will be graded.

In calculating your overall grade, weights ascribed to each of the assignments for the course are as follows:

- Attendance in discussion section (cumulative) ........ 5 %
- In-class quizzes (cumulative).................................15 %
- 1st paper..................................................................20 %
- Mid-term examination.............................................20 %
- 2nd paper.................................................................20 %
- Final examination....................................................20 %

In addition, if your overall grade is on a borderline, your TA will favorably take into account your classroom participation. In other words, if you have been an active and constructive participant in classroom discussion, this will help your grade if it would otherwise be on the borderline between two grades. Asking questions that you worry might be “stupid” questions will not penalize you (and remember, if you’re puzzled by something, it’s a good bet that other students in the class are also puzzled). So plunge into the discussions!

VI. Late submissions and missed examinations

If you have a doctor's or other serious excuse (such as a severe family emergency) for submitting your paper late, you will not be penalized. Your TA has the final authority to decide whether or not you have a legitimate excuse for late submission of papers or missed examinations. Whenever possible it is wise to discuss an expected absence in advance with your TA. If you submit your paper late without such an excuse, your grade will be lowered.

If you have a doctor's or other official excuse for having to miss the mid-term
examination or the final examination, we will arrange for you to take a make-up examination at a different time.

VII. Attendance policy

Philosophy is difficult, and not readily learned on one's own. Moreover, it is best learned by engaging in discussions about it. Your role in discussion section is not only to enhance your own learning, but also to help other students learn by engaging them in discussion. Although most of the readings are relatively short, many of them are dense and difficult. For these reasons we **require attendance in all the discussion sections starting in the third week of the semester, i.e., September 14/17.** Cumulative attendance in discussion section will provide 5% of your grade. If you have an approved legitimate excuse for missing a discussion section or the quizzes in a lecture, it will not count against your grade. **See the important “Legitimate and Excused Absences” policy in the “Absence Policies” file in Sakai Resources.** Legitimate absences from Lecture or Section **must be approved by Professor Shriver, using the “Legitimate Absence Form” in the Absence Policies file in Sakai Resources.**

We also strongly encourage (but do not require) attendance in all the lectures. If you must miss one of the lectures, you would be wise to arrange to obtain notes from another student. Although attendance at the lecture is not required, poor attendance will adversely affect your understanding of the material and your ability to earn a strong grade. Note also that your grade will be directly diminished if poor attendance prevents you from taking many of the daily in-class quizzes.

VIII. Classroom conduct

This is a very large lecture class. Discourteous student conduct in large lectures has the potential to seriously degrade the ability of other students to focus on the material being discussed. Such activities as holding private conversations, passing notes, texting or talking on cell phones, arriving late, reading newspapers, checking Facebook pages, and taking naps all create an atmosphere in which high quality teaching and serious learning are very difficult. To foster an atmosphere more conducive to thinking and learning, the following policies will be in effect in this course:

- Cell phones, pagers, and similar devices must be turned off before the class begins. In a serious emergency (such as grave family illness) you may leave your cell phone on if you anticipate a call connected with the emergency. Please place your phone in “vibrate” mode. In this case, sit at the end of a row near an exit, and leave the lecture room immediately to answer the phone.

- Private conversations and such activities as passing notes, texting, playing video games, reading newspapers, taking naps, browsing the web, and checking Facebook or other websites not related to the course are not
If you anticipate that you will not be able to stay awake and attentive during class on any particular day, don’t come to class. Your sleeping in class is rude to the instructor and distracting to other students.

- Students are expected to arrive on time and to stay for the entire class.

- Audio and video recording of lectures is not permitted.

- Some students wish to take notes on their laptops. Unfortunately this can be highly distracting to other students. If you want to use your laptop to take notes, please sit in the outside seats or the back rows (but not the very back, which will be reserved for the TAs)

- I will end the class on time. Do not start packing up your papers until the class has been dismissed.

**IX. Disability accommodation**

If you need a disability accommodation, please make arrangements with Professor Shriver at the beginning of the semester, or (for newly arising conditions) as soon as you become aware that your situation requires accommodation. You must present an official Letter of Accommodation to be entitled to accommodation services.

**X. Cheating and plagiarism**

Cheating on tests or plagiarizing materials in your papers deprives you of the educational benefits of preparing these materials appropriately. It is personally dishonest to cheat on a test or to hand in a paper based on unacknowledged words or ideas that someone else originated. It is also unfair, since it may give you an undeserved advantage over your fellow students who are graded on the basis of their own work. In this class we take cheating very seriously. All suspected cases of cheating and plagiarism will be automatically referred to the Office of Student Conduct, and we will recommend penalties appropriate to the gravity of the infraction. Possible penalties include failing the course, suspension, or even permanent expulsion from Rutgers. The university’s policy on Academic Integrity is available at http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/files/documents/Al_Policy_9_01_2011.pdf. I strongly advise you to familiarize yourself with this document, both for this class and for your other classes and future work. To help protect you, and future students, from plagiarism, we require all papers to be submitted through Turnitin.com.

Since what counts as cheating and plagiarism is not always clear, I quote the definitions given in Rutgers’ policy of various infractions that might occur in this course:

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is the use of another person’s words, ideas, or
results without giving that person appropriate credit. To avoid plagiarism, every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or appropriate indentation and both direct quotation and paraphrasing must be cited properly according to the accepted format for the particular discipline or as required by the instructor in a course.

**Cheating:** Cheating is the use of inappropriate or prohibited materials, information, sources, or aids in any academic exercise. Cheating also includes submitting papers, research results and reports, analyses, etc. as one’s own work when they were, in fact, prepared by others.

**Fabrication:** Fabrication is the invention or falsification of sources, citations, data, or results, and recording or reporting them in any academic exercise.

**Facilitation of Dishonesty:** Facilitation of dishonesty is knowingly or negligently allowing one’s work to be used by other students without prior approval of the instructor or otherwise aiding others in committing violations of academic integrity. A student who intentionally facilitates a violation of academic integrity can be considered to be as culpable as the student who receives the impermissible assistance, even if the facilitator does not benefit personally from the violation.

**TWO SPECIAL NOTES:**

- Students often assume that because information is available on the Web, it is public information, does not need to be formally referenced, and can be used without attribution. This is a mistake. **All** information and ideas that you derive from other sources, whether written, spoken, or electronic, must be attributed to their original source. Such sources include not just written or electronic materials, but people with whom you may discuss your ideas, such as your roommate, friends, or family members. They deserve credit for their contributions too!

- Bringing in an iClicker for a friend in order to take the quizzes for him or her counts as **Facilitation of Dishonesty**. This is a form of cheating just like taking a midterm exam for a friend. If you bring in a friend’s iClicker, you are just as culpable as your friend. **The penalty I will recommend in such cases is an automatic deduction of two letter grades from both students’ cumulative quiz grades** (thus, if you would have received an A for your cumulative quiz scores, you will instead receive a B).

  Judgments about plagiarism can be subtle. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask for guidance from your TA.
Read selections before the lecture for which they are assigned, so that you are prepared for the in-class quiz, the lecture, and your discussion section. Because philosophical argumentation can be unfamiliar and difficult, you should plan on reading each selection at least twice in order to maximize your understanding of it. Ideally, read it before lecture or discussion section, and then again afterwards.

Please note: Details on this Class Schedule may be changed from time to time. Such changes will be announced in lecture and through Sakai Announcements.

Sept 3: Introduction


Sept 8 (special Tuesday with a Monday Schedule): Psychological Egoism

REQ: Timmons, Chapter 2 "Egoism": readings by Plato and part of Shoemaker, up to (but not including) the Section titled “Ethical Egoism,” pp. 17 – 25.

Sept 10: Ethical Egoism; Evaluating Moral Theories [Bring your i-Clicker to lecture starting today!]

REQ: Timmons, Chapter 2 "Egoism": remainder of Shoemaker selection, pp. 25 – 35.


Sept 14: Consequentialism I [First graded in-class quiz] [Attendance in section is required starting this week]

REQ: Timmons, first three readings (Bentham, Mill, and Nozick) in Chapter 5 "Consequentialism,” pp. 109 – 123.

Sept 17: Consequentialism II

REQ: Timmons, part of third reading (Darwall) in Chapter 5 "Consequentialism," up to (but not including) Section titled “Rule Utilitarianism,” pp. 124 – 130.

Sept 21: Ross’s Pluralism


Sept 24: Rule Utilitarianism

REQ: Timmons, remainder of Darwall (Section titled “Rule Utilitarianism”) and final reading (Hooker) in Chapter 5 "Consequentialism," pp. 130 – 139.

Sept 28: Applied Issue II: The Duty to Aid the Poor


Oct 1: Applied Issue II: The Duty to Aid the Poor, continued


Oct 5: The Duty to Aid the Poor: Presentation by Giving What We Can

Oct 8: The Divine Command Theory

REQ: Timmons, first and second readings (Mortimer and Timmons) from Chapter 3 "Ethics by Authority," pp. 37 – 55.

Oct 12: Cultural and Ethical Relativism FIRST PAPER DUE

REQ: Timmons, third and fourth readings (Benedict and Rachels) from Chapter 3 "Ethics by Authority," pp. 55 – 68.

Oct 15: The Role of Psychology and Evolution in Ethics


Oct 19: REVIEW SESSION

Oct 22: MIDTERM EXAMINATION

Oct 26: Natural Law Theory I

**REQ:** Timmons, first two readings (St. Thomas Aquinas and C.E. Harris) from Chapter 4 "The Natural Law Theory," pp. 69 – 93.

Oct 29: Natural Law Theory II

**REQ:** Timmons, third and fourth readings (Philippa Foot and Michael Gorr) from Chapter 4 "The Natural Law Theory," pp. 93 – 108.

Nov 2: Killing vs. Letting Die


Nov 5: Kant’s Moral Theory I

**REQ:** Timmons, first two readings (Kant and Glasgow) from Chapter 6 "Kantian Ethical Theory," pp. 140 – 165.

Nov 9: Kant’s Moral Theory II

**REQ:** Timmons, third and fourth readings (O’Neill and Feldman) from Chapter 6 "Kantian Ethical Theory," pp. 166 – 177.

Nov 12: Kant’s Moral Theory III

**REQ:** Timmons, continue third and fourth readings (O’Neill and Feldman) from...
Chapter 6 "Kantian Ethical Theory"

Nov 16: Applied Issue III: Our Duties Towards Animals


Nov 19: Particularism SECOND PAPER DUE

REQ: Timmons, all readings (Sartre, McNaughton and Hooker) in Chapter 11 "Particularism," pp. 336 – 358.

Nov 23: Virtue Ethics I


Nov 30: Virtue Ethics II

REQ: Timmons, third and fourth readings (Johnson and Adams) from Chapter 8, "Virtue Ethics," pp. 253 – 275.

Dec 3: Contract Theory


Dec 7: Applied Issue IV: Abortion I


Dec 10: Applied Issue IV: Abortion II


The Final Exam will be held in our regular classroom on Monday, Dec 21, from 12 noon - 3 pm. Any changes will be announced in class and on Sakai.