

PHIL 107: Intro to Ethics
Spring 2016, Hardenbergh Hall- B2, Tuesday & Friday, 9:50-11:10

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Office Hours: Tuesday, 11:30 - 12:30, or by appointment (Philosophy
department, Flex space)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course will introduce some of the important questions of moral philosophy: What is it to live a good life? (Is the good life one of happiness, one in which you get what you want, or one in which you accomplish something of value?) What is it to act in a morally right way? (Is it to produce the best consequences possible? Is it to act in accordance with certain moral principles? If so, which principles?) *Why* should we act in a morally right way, especially when doing so appears contrary to our self-interest? What is the relationship between morality and religion, and between morality and human nature? Is there such a thing as objective moral truths, and, if so, how can we know what they are? We'll also consider several contemporary ethical questions: What is the moral status of animals? Is abortion immoral? Is torture ever permissible? Is capital punishment unjust? What are our obligations to relieve world poverty?

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Two Papers: You will write two short (700-800 words) papers. I'll distribute a list of paper topics at least one week before the deadlines, and you'll choose one of these topics for your paper. The first paper is due in class **Monday, February 29** and the second is due in class **Monday, April 11**. Each paper will make up 25% of your course grade.

I'll give some advice about writing philosophy papers when I distribute the paper topics. But you should also look at Jim Pryor's *Writing Guide*, available at <http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html>.

Late papers will be penalized a third of a letter grade per calendar day (so, for instance, an A paper due on Thursday but turned in on Saturday will receive a B+ grade). Papers are due *in class* on the due date. Papers turned in later that day will be counted as one day late. Plagiarized papers will receive a grade of "0", thereby making it highly probable that you'll fail the course. All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Dean of Academic Affairs, and may result in suspension or expulsion from the university. The Philosophy Department's Statement on Academic Honesty appears below.

Final Exam: The final exam will be held during the exam period on **Wednesday, May 11**, from **08:00 am -11:00 am**. It will count for 25% of your course grade. It will cover material from the entire course, but will be focused mostly on material from the second half of the course. There will be review sessions before the final exam.

Attendance and Participation: Students are expected to attend, ask questions, and actively participate in class discussions. Credit will be given for quality contributions to the class. Attendance and participation will constitute 25% of your course grade.

The last day to drop the course without a “W” is Tuesday, January 26. The last day to drop the course with by Withdrawal is Monday, March 21.

Current Academic Integrity Policy:

<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/>

Violations include: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, denying others access to information or material, and facilitating violations of academic integrity. Bottom line: Don't cheat, don't plagiarism. I realize that students are not always clear about what counts as plagiarism. Here is the Rutgers policy:

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 the a course. Some common examples of plagiarism are:

- Copying word for word (i.e. quoting directly) from an oral, printed, or electronic source without property attribution.
- Paraphrasing without proper attribution, i.e., presenting in one's own words another person's written words or ideas as if they were one's own.
- Submitting a purchased or downloaded term paper or other materials to satisfy a course requirement.
- Incorporating into one's work graphs, drawings, photographs, diagrams, tables, spreadsheets, computer programs, or other nontextual material from other sources without proper attribution.

Self-Reporting Absence Application: Students are expected to attend all classes; if you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me.

COURSE TEXT

The Fundamentals of Ethics, 3rd. Edition, by Russ Shafer-Landau (Oxford: Oxford University Press); abbreviated as "FE" below.

The textbook is available in the Rutgers bookstore. You could also order it off of amazon.com.

Tentative Calendar

NB: This calendar is tentative and subject to revision at the instructor's discretion.

I. DOING THE RIGHT THING

Week 1	Morality and Religion
	FE Chapter 5, pp. 61-73

Week1	Natural Law
	FE Chapter 6, pp. 74-88

Week 2	Psychological Egoism & Ethical Egoism
	FE Chapter 7, pp. 89-103
	FE Chapter 8, pp. 104-116

Week 3	Consequentialism: Its Nature and Attractions
	FE Chapter 9, pp. 117-132

Week 3	Consequentialism: Its Difficulties
	FE Chapter 10, pp. 133-153

Week 4	The Kantian Perspective: Fairness and Justice
	FE Chapter 11, pp. 154-167

Week 4	The Kantian Perspective: Autonomy and Respect
	FE Chapter 12, pp. 168-186

Week 5: Movie

Week 6	The Social Contract Tradition: The Theory and Its Attractions
	FE Chapter 13, pp. 187-200

Week 6 The Social Contract Tradition: Problems and Prospects
FE Chapter 14, pp. 201-213

Week 7 Ethical Pluralism and Absolute Moral Rules
FE Chapter 15, pp. 214-231

Week 7 Ethical Pluralism: Prima Facie Duties and Ethical Particularism
FE Chapter 16, pp. 232-251

Week 8 Virtue Ethics
FE Chapter 17, pp. 252-271

Week 8 Feminist Ethics
FE Chapter 18, pp. 272-286

II. The Good Life

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Week 9 Introduction

Week 9 Hedonism: Its Powerful Appeal
FE Chapter 1, pp. 21-29

Week 10 Is Happiness All That Matters?
FE Chapter 2, pp. 30-41

Week 10 Getting What You Want
FE Chapter 3, pp. 42-48

Week 11 Problems for the Desire Theory
FE Chapter 4, pp. 49-58

III. THE STATUS OF MORALITY

Week 11 Ethical Relativism

FE Chapter 19, pp. 289-304

Week 12 Moral Nihilism

FE Chapter 20, pp. 306-319

Week 13 Arguments Against Moral Objectivity

FE Chapter 21, pp. 320-337

IV. MORAL PROBLEMS

Week 13 The Moral Status of Animals

Peter Singer, *Unsanctifying Human Life*
Alastair Norcross, *Puppies, Pigs and People: Eating Meat and Marginal Cases*

Week 14 The Morality of Abortion

Judith Jarvis Thomson, *A Defense of Abortion*
Don Marquis, *Why Abortion is Immoral*

STUDENT-WELLNESS SERVICES:

Just In Case Web App

<http://codu.co/cee05e>

Access helpful mental health information and resources for yourself or a friend in a mental health crisis on your smartphone or tablet and easily contact CAPS or RUPD.

Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS)

(848) 932-7884 / 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901/ rhscaps.rutgers.edu/

CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professional within Rutgers Health services to support students' efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.

Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA)

(848) 932-1181 / 3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 / vpva.rutgers.edu/

The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and

stalking to students, staff and faculty. To reach staff during office hours when the university is open or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181.

Disability Services

(848) 445-6800 / Lucy Stone Hall, Suite A145, Livingston Campus, 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue, Piscataway, NJ 08854 / <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>

The Office of Disability Services works with students with a documented disability to determine the eligibility of reasonable accommodations, facilitates and coordinates those accommodations when applicable, and lastly engages with the Rutgers community at large to provide and connect students to appropriate resources.

Scarlet Listeners

(732) 247-5555 / <http://www.scarletlisteners.com/>

Free and confidential peer counseling and referral hotline, providing a comforting and supportive safe space.