

**Rutgers University**  
**PHIL 730:107 Section 2**  
**Introduction to Ethics<sup>1</sup>**  
**Summer 2014**

**Times:** Mon. Tues. Wed. and Thurs. (May 27<sup>th</sup> to July 3<sup>rd</sup>) 10:20am to 12:10pm

**Location:** CI ([School of Communication and Information](#)), Room 101

**Professor:** [Christopher G. Weaver](#)

**E-mail:** cgweaver [at] rcj [dot] rutgers [dot] edu (replacing the term ‘at’ with ‘@’ and the ‘dot’ place-holders with two periods or ‘.’s) Emails to any other address will be ignored.

**Office Hours:** Every Tuesday we have class from 1:00pm to 2:00pm on the 5<sup>th</sup> Floor in office 510 at 106 Somerset St. New Brunswick, NJ (in the [Gateway Building](#)).

**Materials:** Course lecture notes will be emailed to you.

### **I. Course Description**

PHIL 730:107 sect. 2: Introduction to Ethics is an intensive survey course. We will cover virtually every substantive issue peculiar to metaethics and normative ethical theory. “This course satisfies Core Curriculum Goal: ‘o’. Examine critically philosophical and other theoretical issues concerning the nature of reality, human experience, knowledge, value, and/or cultural production.”

### **II. Learning Objectives**

1. Students will develop the skill to properly interpret scholarly literature in the field of ethics and in the subfields of metaethics and normative ethics.
2. Students will develop the ability to write a philosophy paper in the field of ethics.
3. Students will acquire the ability to engage in philosophical inquiry about issues peculiar to ethics.
4. Students will learn all of the leading metaethical theories and normative ethical theories, including, but not limited to moral realism, moral fictionalism, moral error theory, moral cognitivism, moral non-cognitivism, utilitarianism, Kantianism, contractualism, and virtue ethics.

### **III. General Approach**

On designated quiz days (see the schedule below), at the start of class I will administer a quiz over the assigned reading material, as well as the material presented during previous lectures. I will then collect the quizzes and go over the correct answers taking any questions you might have. I will then make a few points about the assigned reading, and subsequently start lecturing through material. On days we do not take a quiz, we will first discuss the assigned reading, and then move into the content of a new lecture. All lectures will be supported by lecture notes or handouts. These lecture notes will, at the latest, be made available to you electronically through email by 8:00am on the day I am scheduled to lecture on the topic the relevant notes cover, though I may decide to provide hard copies in class.

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<sup>1</sup> The Instructor reserves the right to adjust the syllabus when he deems that a change is necessary.

#### IV. Textbooks

The required textbooks for this course are:

1. David Copp (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Ethical Theory* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007). 680pp. ISBN: 0195325915. (Paperback)
2. Russ Shafer-Landau, *The Fundamentals of Ethics*. Second Edition. (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011). 338pp. ISBN: 0199773556. (Paperback)

#### V. Assignments and Grading

##### Preparation and Class Attendance

**10%**

You are expected to read all of the assigned material. You are also expected to ask questions during the lectures and participate in in-class activities. **Missing more than two classes will negatively affect your grade.** If you are absent, you might want to e-mail a classmate and get the notes. It is your responsibility to keep up with any work you miss. Class participation grades will also be negatively affected if disrespect is shown to others.

##### Quizzes

**30%**

These will be given at the beginning of class on designated quiz days (see the schedule below) and will cover material peculiar to the assigned reading and lecture material of the preceding classes. **Your lowest quiz score will be dropped and will not count against you.** If you miss a quiz because you are late to or absent from class, you will receive a zero for that quiz, but remember, your lowest quiz score will not count against you.

##### Short Paper

**25%**

Your short paper must be on an issue in meta-ethics that we discussed in class. Please have your short paper topic approved by Instructor Weaver by February 28<sup>th</sup>. To acquire my approval of your topic, please email me with the subject heading "Short Paper Topic for Approval", then in the body of your email state the thesis you intend to argue for. You should argue for or against a metaethical position, advancing arguments for your position. Your paper should be 3 pages *single spaced*, justified, and in Times New Roman font (size 12), with one inch margins. The paper should be documented in [the University of Chicago of manual of style](#) and should include a bibliography. **Short papers are due in PDF format via email, on June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at 11:00am.** A late paper will be docked five points every hour it is late.

##### Final Paper

**35%**

Your final paper should be on a topic covered in class or in one of the textbooks (it should be different from the topic you wrote your short paper on). Please have your final paper topic approved by Instructor Weaver by March 31<sup>st</sup>. To acquire my approval of your topic, please email me with the subject heading "Final Paper Topic for Approval", then in the body of your email state the thesis you intend to argue for. Your paper should be 7 to 10 pages *single spaced*, justified, and in Times New Roman font (size 12), with one inch margins. Your bibliography may not be used to fulfill the length requirement. If the prose or substantive content portion of your paper exceeds 10 pages, that content will be ignored. The paper must be documented in [the University of Chicago manual of style](#)

and should include a bibliography. **Final papers are due in PDF format via email, on July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at 11:00am.** A late paper will be docked five points every hour it is late.

## VI. Schedule for the Summer Session

**(All readings in red are mandatory; all other readings are supplementary and helpful but not required. The underlined readings will be provided for you.)**

### Part 1: Metaethics

**0 (Tuesday, May 27<sup>th</sup>):** Introduction to Ethics

Homework: Read **Simon Blackburn, “Antirealist Expressivism and Quasi-Realism”**, in **David Copp (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Ethical Theory*** (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007) pp. 146-162 and **Mark Eli Kalderon, *Moral Fictionalism*** (Lines of Thought). (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005) and excerpts from **Richard Joyce, “Error Theory and Motivation”**, and **“Error Theory and Reasons”**, from **Richard Joyce, *The Myth of Morality*** (Cambridge Studies in Philosophy) (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 1-52

**1 (Wednesday, May 28<sup>th</sup>):** Moral Non-Cognitivism and Moral Fictionalism (**Quiz Today**)

Homework: **Michael Smith, “Meta-Ethics”**, in **Frank Jackson and Michael Smith (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Contemporary Philosophy***. (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 3-30 and **Terence Cuneo and Sean Christy, “The Myth of Moral Fictionalism”**, in **Michael Brady (ed.), *New Waves in Metaethics*** (New Waves in Philosophy). (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 85-102.

**2 (Thursday, May 29<sup>th</sup>):** Moral Cognitivism

Homework: **Jonas Olson, “In Defense of Moral Error Theory”**, in **Michael Brady (ed.), *New Waves in Metaethics*** (New Waves in Philosophy). (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 62-84.

**3 (Monday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>):** Moral Error Theory (**Quiz Today**)

Homework: **David Enoch, “Doing with Less”**, from **David Enoch, *Taking Morality Seriously: A Defense of Robust Realism***. (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 100-133.

**4 (Tuesday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>):** Against Moral Error Theory

Homework: Read **G.E. Moore, “The Open Question Argument: The Subject-Matter for Ethics”**, in **Andrew Fisher and Simon Kirchin (eds.), *Arguing about Metaethics***. (New York, NY: Routledge Press, 2006), pp. 31-46 and **Terence Horgan and Mark Timmons, “Troubles for New Wave Moral Semantics: The Open Question Argument Revived”**, in **Andrew Fisher and Simon Kirchin (eds.), *Arguing about Metaethics***. (New York, NY: Routledge Press, 2006), pp. 179-199.

**5 (Wednesday, June 4<sup>th</sup>):** The Open Question Argument and the Naturalistic Fallacy (**Quiz Today**)

Homework: Read **William Frankena, “The Naturalistic Fallacy”**, in **Andrew Fisher and Simon Kirchin (eds.), *Arguing about Metaethics***. (New York, NY: Routledge Press, 2006), pp. 47-58.

**6 (Thursday, June 5<sup>th</sup>): Responses to the Open Question Argument**

Homework: Nicholas L. Sturgeon, "Ethical Naturalism" in David Copp (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Ethical Theory* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007) pp. 91-121.

**7 (Monday, June 9<sup>th</sup>): Ethical Naturalism (Quiz Today)**

Homework: Jonathan Dancy, "Nonnaturalism" in David Copp (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Ethical Theory* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007) pp. 122-145.

**8 (Tuesday, June 10<sup>th</sup>): Ethical Non-Naturalism**

Homework: Geoffrey Sayre-McCord, "Moral Realism" in David Copp (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Ethical Theory* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007) pp. 39-62 and David Enoch, *Taking Morality Seriously: A Defense of Robust Realism*. (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011).

**9 (Wednesday, June 11<sup>th</sup>): Moral Realism (Quiz Today)**

Homework: Philip L. Quinn, "Theological Voluntarism" in David Copp (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Ethical Theory* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007) pp. 63-90.

**10 (Thursday, June 12<sup>th</sup>): Course Related Media****11 (Monday, June 16<sup>th</sup>): The Humean Theory**

Homework: Peter Railton, "Humean Theory of Practical Rationality" in David Copp (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Ethical Theory* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007) pp. 265-281.

**12 (Tuesday, June 17<sup>th</sup>): The Kantian Theory of Practical Rationality (Quiz Today)**

Homework: Stephen Darwall, "Morality and Practical Reason: A Kantian Approach" in David Copp (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Ethical Theory* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007) pp. 282-320.

**13 (Wednesday, June 18<sup>th</sup>): Divine Command Theory**

Homework: Thomas Hurka, "Value Theory" in David Copp (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Ethical Theory* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007) pp. 357-379.

**Part 2: Normative Ethics****14 (Thursday, June 19<sup>th</sup>): Value Theory (Short Paper due Today) (Quiz Today)**

Homework: James Dreier, "Moral Relativism and Moral Nihilism" in David Copp (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Ethical Theory* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007) pp. 240-264.

**15 (Monday, June 23<sup>rd</sup>): Ethical Relativism (Quiz Today)**

Homework: David McNaughton and Piers Rawling, "Deontology" in David Copp (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Ethical Theory* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007) pp. 424-458.

**16 (Tuesday, June 24<sup>th</sup>): Deontology**

Homework: David O. Brink, "Some Forms and Limits of Consequentialism" in David Copp (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Ethical Theory* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007) pp. 380-423.

**17 (Wednesday, June 25<sup>th</sup>): Consequentialism (Quiz Today)**

Homework: Russ Shafer-Landau, "Consequentialism: Its Nature and Attractions" and "Consequentialism: Its Difficulties" from Russ Shafer-Landau, *The Fundamentals of Ethics*. Second Edition. (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 117-153; Derek Parfit, "Consequentialism", from Derek Parfit, *On What Matters*. Volume One (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 371-403.

**18 (Thursday, June 26<sup>th</sup>): Utilitarianisms**

Homework: Thomas E. Hill, Jr. "Kantian Normative Ethics" in David Copp (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Ethical Theory* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007) pp. 480-514 and Derek Parfit, "Respect and Value"; "Universal Laws"; "What if Everyone Did That?"; "Impartiality", from Derek Parfit, *On What Matters*. Volume One (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 233-257; 275-342.

**19 (Monday, June 30<sup>th</sup>): Kantian Ethics (Quiz Today)**

Homework: Julia Annas, "Virtue Ethics" in David Copp (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Ethical Theory* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007) pp. 515-536.

**20 (Tuesday, July 1<sup>st</sup>): Virtue Ethics**

Homework: T.M. Scanlon, "Contractualism and Utilitarianism", in Stephen Darwall, Allan Gibbard, and Peter Railton (eds.), *Moral Discourse and Practice* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 267-286; T.M. Scanlon, *What We Owe to Each Other* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000); Derek Parfit, "Contractualism", in *On What Matters*. Volume One (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 343-370; and Derek Parfit, "Scanlonian Contractualism" in *On What Matters*. Volume Two (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 213-243.

**21 (Wednesday, July 2<sup>nd</sup>): Contractualism (Quiz Today)**

Homework: Russ Shafer-Landau, "Ethical Pluralism and Absolute Moral Rules" and "Ethical Pluralism: Prima Facie Duties and Ethical Particularism" from Russ Shafer-Landau, *The Fundamentals of Ethics*. Second Edition. (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 214-251.

**22 (Thursday, July 3<sup>rd</sup>): Ethical Pluralism**

Homework: Russ Shafer-Landau, "Ethical Egoism", from Russ Shafer-Landau, *The Fundamentals of Ethics*. Second Edition. (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 104-116.

**Final papers are due in PDF format via email, on July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at 11:00am.**

**VII. Current Academic Integrity Policy**

To view the current academic integrity policy, visit the link [here](#). All students are expected to abide by that policy.

**VIII. 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 [the instructor].”

**IX. Food, Cell Phone, and Computer Use Policies**

I do not allow students to consume food in class. Moreover, because the lecture notes will be provided for each student, I will not allow cell phone and computer use in class during lecture time. When lecture begins, all computers and cell phones must be stored.

**X. Email Correspondence Policy**

All email correspondence with your instructor must be done using your academic (usually the one provided for you by Rutgers University) email address (that’s an email address ending with .edu). Correspondence from your instructor to the entire class will be performed via [R.A.M.S.](#) Email correspondence received from non-academic email addresses will be ignored. Email correspondence sent to any other email address besides cgweaver [at] rci [dot] rutgers [dot] edu (replacing the term ‘at’ with ‘@’ and the ‘dot’ place-holders with periods or ‘.’s) in an attempt to communicate with me will be ignored.