Introduction to Ethics
Phil 107 (Hybrid), Summer 2015

Instructor: Stephanie Leary
Time: Wednesdays 1:15-4:30ish pm
Location: Scott Hall, Room 106

Course Description
This course is a survey-style introduction to the three main subfields of philosophical ethics: meta-ethics, applied ethics, and normative theory. For example, some of the questions we will discuss are:

(Meta-ethics) Are there some moral claims that are true independently of any particular person or group’s moral judgments?

(Applied ethics) Is it our moral duty to donate money to poor people in developing countries?

(Normative theory) What are the underlying features of an action that make it morally right or wrong?

We will do careful readings of contemporary philosophical texts that provide arguments for different answers to these questions and evaluate those arguments by having classroom discussions, small group activities, and written assignments.

Course Goals
The primary goal of this course is to develop the following philosophical skills: (1) how to read philosophical texts and understand arguments, (2) how to critically evaluate arguments, (3) how to express your views in a clear and well-reasoned way in conversation and written work, and most importantly, (4) how to be reflective about moral questions that you face in your everyday lives. The secondary goal of this course is to have fun while discussing these interesting and important topics!

Contacting Instructor
Email: stem.leary@gmail.com
Office hours: Wednesdays after class at Hidden Grounds Coffee (106 Easton Ave)

Sakai
There is a Sakai site for this course, which is where all the readings, assignments, grades, and announcements will be posted, as well as where you will turn in writing assignments. So, you need to make sure that you can access the site and that Sakai has the relevant email address that you use, so that you get email alerts when things have been posted. We will have a tutorial on how to use the site on the first day of class, but after that it is your responsibility to make sure you know how to use it. So don’t hesitate to ask questions!

“Online” Portion
The “online” portion of this course will consist of doing the readings and making arguments.
maps for the readings. You are welcome (in fact, required) to work on your argument maps with your classmates, but anything that you submit for a grade must be completed by you, in your own words, and free from plagiarism. (See section on Plagiarism below.)

In-class Portion
There will be some lecture time and open class discussion during the in-class portion of this course. But we mostly will be doing a lot of team based learning. You will be assigned to a team on the first day of class (for the entire course), and at every class meeting you will take a short multiple choice quiz on the reading both individually and as a team, you will compare and revise your argument maps with your teammates, and you will do various activities with your team throughout the course. This means that you need to come to every class on time and prepared – having done all the readings and argument maps in advance. Halfway through the course, you will turn in anonymous evaluations of each of your teammates (evaluating their preparedness and participation), and your teammates’ evaluations of you will contribute toward 5% of your overall grade.

Requirements & Grades
• Argument maps: you will be required to make three argument maps for the readings, which you will turn in during class for a grade (on 7/15, 7/22, and 8/5).
• Quizzes: at the beginning of every class session, there will be a short multiple-choice quiz about the reading. You will first take the quiz individually, and then you will take the quiz as a team. Both your individual and the team quiz scores will contribute toward your overall grade (distribution for individual and team quiz grades below).
• Short writing assignment: There will be a short writing assignment (1-2 pages) due at 11:59 pm on Wednesday 7/29, which will prepare you for writing the term paper. This assignment must be turned in through Sakai and Turnitin.com (plagiarism detection website).
• Term paper: A 4-5 page paper (double-spaced) will be due at 11:59 pm on Wednesday 8/12, which you must turn in through Sakai and Turnitin.com. You will have the opportunity to choose from a selection of writing prompts for the term paper, which I will make available on Sakai.

| Individual Quiz Score | 10% |
| Team Quiz Score | 10% |
| Peer Evaluations | 5% |
| Argument Maps | 30% (Due on 7/15, 7/22/ and 8/5) |
| Short Writing Assignment | 15% (Due by 11:59 pm on Friday 7/31) |
| Term Paper | 30% (Due by 11:59 pm on Wednesday 8/12) |

Absence Policy
You are expected to attend all classes, unless you have an extremely serious excuse. Students who miss a class without such an excuse will lose .25 grade points from their overall grade. If you need to miss a class because you have a very serious issue, you must email me in advance and provide some documentation of your excuse (e.g. photo of detached limb).

Late Work Policy
Late work will not be accepted.
Phone/Laptop Policy
Cell phones must be turned off or silenced during class time. If your cell phone rings during class, I have the right to answer it for you and turn it off. You are also not allowed to use a laptop, tablet, smartphone, or any other kind of electronic device during class time. You may use these things during the breaks, but they must be out of sight during class time. This means that you need to print the readings and bring them to class with you, so that you can reference them during class without a computer.

Plagiarism
All work you submit for this course must be your own. Do not submit someone else’s work; do not copy-and-paste from websites or articles. Every quote you use needs to be marked as a quote and references need to be provided. If you paraphrase text from an article or website that is not your own, mark this appropriately and specify the reference in a footnote. In order to receive credit for your written work, it must be turned in through Turnitin.com and receive a low plagiarism score.

Meta-policy
I reserve the right to amend the schedule and policies as the course progresses. I will only do so fairly, for very good reasons, and with plenty of warning.

Tentative Schedule

7/8 – Introduction
  Sakai tutorial and introduction to arguments

7/15 – Moral Relativism
  Reading: James Rachels’s “Ethical Cultural Relativism”
  *Argument map due in class

7/22 – Duties to the poor
  *Argument map due in class

7/29 – Consequentialism
  Readings: Russ Shafer-Landau’s “Consequentialism: It’s nature and it’s attractions”; “Consequentialism: it’s difficulties”
  *Short writing assignment due by 11:59 pm

8/5 – Alternatives to consequentialism: W.D. Ross’s Ethical Pluralism and Particularism
  Readings: TBD
  *Argument map due in class

8/15 – Final applied ethics issue TBD (affirmative action, vegetarianism, legalization of drugs?)
  *Term paper due by 11:59 pm