

Philosophy 21001/002/16301
Introduction to Ethics
Spring 2024

11:00 – 12:15 pm, MW, Room: BOW 207
All lectures will be in-person.

Instructor: Clarence G. Uher
Office: Philosophy Department – 320 Bowman Hall, Room M

Office Hours: M W 9:00 - 9:45 AM, and 3:45-5:30 PM and by appointment

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[Important: Please identify the course you are taking (days and times) in your email.]

A. Course Description

This course will focus on Ethical Theory. We will concentrate on some of the major justice-based systems in ethics, as well as a more contemporary care-based system. Our study will include such topics as virtue-based ethics, duty-based ethics, hedonism, utilitarianism, and care ethics. We will examine the structure of each moral system, along with the various social, political, and cultural influences that gave rise to each system. We will also consider the terminology and the influence of some of the predominant philosophers in each system. During our study we will be able to compare the various moral systems. The main objective of this course is to foster a foundational understanding of the terminology, philosophers, and moral systems of ethics. Our analysis should help students to examine, and better understand, our own ethical beliefs as well as those of others.

B. Learning Outcomes

- Students will be able to exercise critical thinking skills to read, evaluate, and compare philosophical arguments in a variety of ethical theories.
- Students will be able to identify and appreciate the strengths and weaknesses of ethical theories that may be significantly different than their own.

C. The Kent Core and Diversity Component

This course may be used to satisfy a Kent Core requirement. The Kent Core as a whole is intended to broaden intellectual perspectives, foster ethical and humanitarian values, and prepare students for responsible citizenship and productive careers.

Philosophy examines the unanswered questions that spring from all facets of humanity. Every discipline represented at the university has a *philosophical element* that is reflected in the ongoing research of that discipline. This course serves as an introduction to that *philosophical element*. Philosophical inquiry involves the exercise of both **critical thinking** and **reading comprehension** skills.

This course may be used to satisfy the University Diversity requirement. Kent State University is committed to the creation and maintenance of equitable and inclusive learning spaces. This course is a learning environment where all will be treated with respect and dignity, and where all individuals will have an equitable opportunity to succeed. The diversity that each student brings to this course is viewed as a strength and a benefit. Dimensions of diversity and their intersections include but are not limited to: race, ethnicity, national origin, primary language, age, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, mental and physical abilities, socio-economic status, family/caregiver status, and veteran status.

D. Required Text

Nicomachean Ethics, Aristotle, tr. Martin Ostwald. (ISBN: 978-0023895302)

Grounding of the Metaphysics of Morals, Kant, Immanuel, tr. by J.W. Ellington. (ISBN: 978-0872201668)

The Classic Utilitarians: Bentham and Mill, ed. by John Troyer. (ISBN: 978-0872206496)

There will be selected material on electronic reserve at the library on Care Ethics.

E. Graded Assignments

- (a) There will be eight (8) quizzes during the term. Your three lowest quiz scores will be dropped. **A missed quiz is counted as a dropped quiz. There are no make-ups offered for missed quizzes until the dropped quizzes are exhausted.** There are exceptions to this policy (e.g.: Military Service, University sanctioned events, participation in University athletics, Band and field trips required by a University course). All the aforementioned **exceptions will require documentation.** (20 points each.)
- (b) Two midterm exams will cover the course material completed up to the date of the exam. (50 points each.)

- (c) The final exam will cover material completed after the last midterm and will follow a similar format as the mid-term exams. (100 points.)
- (d) **Please note; all quizzes and exams will be taken in class.**

Class absence: The Philosophy Department Procedure for handling student absence is in conformity with the Student Academic Policy and Procedures set down as University Policy in the [University Policy Register 3 - 1.2.](#) <http://www.kent.edu/policyreg/administrative-policy-regarding-class-attendance-and-class-absence> Students should contact me as soon as possible (please use your KSU email account) when absent. Keep in mind that any make-up work that you are eligible for will require some form of documentation. Please note: **Attendance is NOT part of your grade** even though your attendance will be recorded on a sign-in sheet every class meeting.

F. Grades

Your final letter grade is determined by the **total amount of points** you acquire during the semester. The chart below indicates the minimum point total needed for the corresponding letter grade. Your final grade will be composed of the following:

5 Quizzes @ 20 points each	100 points
2 Midterm Exams @ 50 points each	100 points
Final Exam	100 points
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300 points total	

Minimum Points	0	180	198	210	219	228	240	249	258	270	279
Grade	F	D	D+	C-	C	C+	B-	B	B+	A-	A

G. Make-ups

Please contact me as soon as possible if your absence has caused you to miss graded coursework. Students will be permitted to make up missed quizzes (**after the three dropped quizzes are exhausted**) or exams due to an excused absence (e.g., a doctor's excuse). **If a student does not have the proper documentation, they will not be permitted to take a make-up exam. A request of make-up form must be completed prior to taking the make-up assignment. Make-up work must be completed in a timely manner. In most cases, work must be completed on the day the student returns to class.**

H. Testing Your Faith Act (HB 353)

The University welcomes individuals from all different faiths, philosophies, religious traditions, and other systems of belief, and supports their respective practices. In compliance with University policy and the Ohio Revised Code, the University permits students to request class absences for up to three (3) days, per term, in order to participate in organized activities conducted under the auspices of a religious denomination, church, or other religious or spiritual organization. Students will not be penalized as a result of any of these excused absences.

The request for excusal must be made, in writing, no later than fourteen (14) days after the first day of instruction in a particular course and include the date(s) of each proposed absence or request for alternative religious accommodation. The request must clearly state that the proposed absence is to participate in religious activities. The request must also provide the particular accommodation(s) you desire.

You will be notified by me if your request for accommodation is approved, or, if it is approved with modification. I will work with you in an effort to arrange a mutually agreeable alternative arrangement. For more information regarding this Policy you may contact the Student Ombuds (ombuds@kent.edu).

I. Course Material On-line

There will be some course material found in the course “Modules” on Canvas. Students can find the course syllabus, course notes, and assignments by clicking on the course link. The “course notes” found online are not intended to be an alternative to attending lectures or as a substitute for the student’s own notes on course material. All e-mails are sent to students using the Kent State University e-mail account.

NOTICE OF MY COPYRIGHT AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS. Any intellectual property displayed or distributed to students during this course (including but not limited to power points, notes, quizzes, examinations) by the instructor remains the intellectual property of the instructor. This means that the student may not distribute, publish or provide such intellectual property to any other person or entity for any reason, commercial or otherwise, without the express written permission of the instructor.

J. Conduct in the Classroom

Proper conduct in the classroom will be expected of every member of the class. Let’s make kindness extended to everyone our goal. Personal conversations, frequently coming to class late, or leaving class early are disruptive behaviors that are disrespectful to others in the class. **Cell phones should not be on desktops or in your lap; please keep cell phones in your pocket or in a book bag during the entire lecture.**

Students should request permission to record course lectures and discussions. Use of laptops and notebooks will be permitted in class. Laptops and notebooks must only be used to access course material. Laptops and notebooks must not be used to check e-mail, or “surfing the web”.

K. Cheating and Plagiarism Policy

University policy 3342-3-01.8 deals with the problem of academic dishonesty, cheating, and plagiarism. None of these will be tolerated in this class. The sanctions provided in this policy will be used to deal with any violations. If you have any questions, please read the policy at <https://www.kent.edu/policyreg/administrative-policy-regarding-student-cheating-and-plagiarism> and/or ask.

L. Grievance procedure

The Philosophy Department Grievance Procedure for handling student grievances is in conformity with the Student Academic Complaint Policy and Procedures set down as University Policy 3342-4-16 in the University Policy Register. For information concerning the details of the grievance procedure please see the Departmental Chairperson.

M. Student Accessibility

Kent State University is committed to inclusive and accessible education experiences for all students. University Policy 3342-3-01.3 requires that students with disabilities be provided reasonable accommodations to ensure equal access to course content. Students with disabilities are encouraged to connect with Student Accessibility Services as early as possible to establish accommodations. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on a disability (including mental health, chronic medical conditions, or injuries), please let me know immediately.

Student Accessibility Services (SAS) Contact Information:

Location: University Library, Suite 100

Email: sas@kent.edu

Phone: 330-672-3391

Web: www.kent.edu/sas

Students who are using SAS should meet with me to discuss their accommodations and how those accommodations will be implemented for this course.

N. Registration Requirements

The last day to “Add” or change sections of courses for Spring 2024 is **1/22/2024 (Monday)**. The course withdrawal deadline (without a “W”) is **1/29/2024 (Monday)** and (with a “W”) is **4/1/2024 (Monday)**. *University policy requires all students to be officially registered in each class they are attending. Students who are not officially registered for a course by published deadlines should not be attending classes and will not receive credit or a grade for the course. Each student must confirm enrollment by checking his/her class schedule (using Student Tools in FlashLine) prior to the deadline indicated. Registration errors must be corrected prior to the deadline.*

The course withdrawal deadline is 4/1/2024.

There are **no prerequisites** for this course.

Requirements for **success** in this course:

1. **Please complete the reading assignment BEFORE the lecture.** Bring the textbook or article that is being used in that day's lecture.
2. Take reading notes as you complete the reading assignment. This is the first step for learning philosophy. Try to identify: important questions that arise, definitions, and concepts that are discussed in the reading.
3. Ask questions during the lecture, or during office hours, that will help you conceptualize the topics we are discussing.
4. **See me for help**, if you have low quiz or exam scores. Please do this early, so we can discuss how you might become more effective at studying philosophy.

Tentative Reading & Exam Schedule

Week Dates (M-F)	Assignment
1 (1/15 - 1/19)	Introduction to the course & syllabus review.
2 (1/22 - 1/26)	First Day Lecture & Terminology Notes on Canvas Introduction to Aristotle, pp. xi-xxiv, <i>Nic. Ethics, Bk I</i> , pp. 3-31.
3 (1/29 - 2/2)	Finish <i>Nic. Ethics, Bk I</i> , pp. 3-31. <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , Book II, pp. 32-51.
4 (2/5 - 2/9)	<i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , Book III, pp. 52-67. <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , Book III, pp. 68-77. SKIP BK IV
5 (2/12 - 2/16)	<i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , Book V, pp. 111-145. <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , Book VI, pp. 146-173.
6 (2/19 - 2/23)	Finish Book VI, pp. 146-173 & Review for Midterm #1. Midterm Exam #1.

7 Intro to Kant, *Groundwork*, pp. V-XIII & 1-5.
(2/26 – 3/1) *Groundwork*, pp. 7 -14.

8 *Groundwork*, pp. 14 - 27.
(3/4 – 3/8) *Groundwork*, pp. 27 – 42.

9 *Groundwork*, pp. 42 – 48.
(3/11 – 3/15) *Groundwork*, pp. 49 – 62.

10 Finish *Groundwork*, Review for exam.
(3/18 – 3/22) **Midterm Exam #2**

Spring Break! (3/25 - 3/29)

11 Bentham, *Principles*, pp. 1-22.
(4/1 – 4/5) Finish Bentham, *Principles*, pp. 1-22.

12 **Solar Eclipse, 4/8, Monday Ethics Class Canceled.**
(4/8 – 4/12) Mill, *Utilitarianism*, pp. 95-108.

13 Mill, *Utilitarianism*, pp. 108-122.
(4/15 – 4/19) Mill, *Utilitarianism*, pp. 122-134.

14 Mill, *Utilitarianism*, pp. 134-145.
(4/22 – 4/26) “What is the Justice/Care Debate Really About?”

15 “What is the Justice/Care Debate Really About?”
(4/29 - 5/3) Review for Final Exam

Final Exam — Monday, May 6, 2024, at 10:15-12:30 pm.

The instructor reserves the right to change, correct, or amend the syllabus and reading schedule during the semester. It is the responsibility of students to check email messages and course announcements to stay current in the course.