

Kent State University  
Introduction to Ethics  
PHIL 21001 001

**\*\* ASYNCHRONOUS, ONLINE \*\***  
Spring 2025

**Professor: Dr. Kim Garchar (she/her)**

Office: Bowman 320L

Phone: 330.672.0276

**kgarchar@kent.edu**

Office Hours: MW 11:30-12:30, 2:00-3:30 (in person); also available both remotely and by appointment

Class Location: N/A

Meeting Times: online asynchronous

**Graduate Assistants (GAs):**

**Ms. Anya Galperin (she/her)**

Office: Bowman 208

agalper1@kent.edu

Office Hours: Thursday 12:00-3:00  
(online)

**Mr. Karl Palomino-Flores (he/him)**

Office: Bowman 208

kpalomin@kent.edu

Office Hours: Tuesday 1:45-4:45 (online)

*\*\* The best way to reach us is by email or during office hours. \*\**

**Course Description and Goals:**

This course is designed to provide a broad introduction to the philosophical study of ethics in the Western tradition. The course will consist of an examination of several moral philosophies as well as an investigation of the implicit presence and explicit utilization of their theories in contemporary events.

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. This course may also be used to satisfy the University Diversity requirement. Diversity courses provide opportunities for students to learn about such matters as the history, culture, values and notable achievements of people other than those of their own national origin, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, age, gender, physical and mental ability, and social class. Diversity courses also provide opportunities to examine problems and issues that may arise from differences, and opportunities to learn how to deal constructively with them.

*This is a challenging course* both in content and by design. In the course, you will be reading the work of several of the most influential thinkers in Western history. The course is built so that each student will reflect upon her or his convictions and beliefs while learning philosophy. *It is meant to change the way you think about the world.* Notice that the emphasis is on how you think and not what you think; you remain free—and are expected—to draw your own conclusions regarding ethical issues.

To succeed in this course, you must complete the readings on time and as assigned. You must attend lectures, take notes, and participate. You must study, which is more than simply re-reading notes and includes reviewing the assigned readings. You must perform well on your exams, which again requires preparation and thoughtfulness. In other words, you must read closely, listen carefully, think independently, speak genuinely, and write well. If you are unwilling to complete this work, please adjust your expectations regarding grade downward, or find a different class better suited to your objectives.

### **Learning Outcomes:**

- Acquire critical reading, writing, and inquiry skills for the arguments and ethical theories of representative thinkers in the Western tradition.
- Appreciate philosophical views significantly different from one's own.
- Apply ethical arguments and theories to real world situations.

### **Required Texts:**

- *Nichomachean Ethics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, available online via Canvas
- *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*, Immanuel Kant, trans. James Ellington, online via Canvas
- *Utilitarianism*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., John Stuart Mill, online via Canvas
- Additional essays and films provided on Canvas

### **Required Technology:**

- Kent State University email address
- Kent State University Canvas
- Reliable internet access
- Ability to read online articles and pdfs
- Ability to stream movies and recorded videos online
- Access to MS Word or an ability to save word documents from other program as pdfs

### **Intellectual Property:**

Any intellectual property displayed or distributed to students during this course (including but not limited notes, quizzes, assignments, activities, and exams) by the professor (that is, me) remains my intellectual property. Students may not distribute, publish, or provide such intellectual property to any other person or entity for any reason, commercial or otherwise, without my express written permission.

## Course Requirements:

*Readings* – Readings and assigned video recordings are **required** and must be completed by the date listed. Careful and critical reading is crucial for success in the course. **If you do not read the material, the chances of you earning anything higher than a D in the course are minimal.**

*Recordings* – You must watch all recordings and complete the associated quizzes.

*Quizzes* – There are 10 short quizzes either embedded in the lecture recordings or available in Canvas to take after the videos. These quizzes are relatively simple (usually 4-6 multiple choice, true/false, and short answer questions covering material in the videos) and are designed to keep you on track in the class. I will **DROP the LOWEST TWO SCORES** of the 10 quizzes. The remaining nine earned grades will be averaged and that average will account for 20% of your course grade.

*Assignments* – There are four short assignments, usually 2-3 pages in length. Additional information will be provided. Each assignment is worth 12.5% of your course grade (50% total)

*Exams* – There are 2 exams in the course, each will be timed at 75 minutes. Once you begin the exam you will be required to complete it. In one sitting A study guide will be available prior to each exam date. The exams are closed-book and closed-notes. All videos from the previous weeks will be hidden 24 hours before the exam opens. Anti-cheating software will be utilized during each exam. Cheating will be addressed as per the plagiarism and cheating policy, below. The exams each account for 15% of your grade.

### Grade Calculation (*there is no extra credit*):

Quizzes (highest eight scores are averaged)	20%
Short assignments (12.5% each)	50%
Exams (15% each)	30%
TOTAL	100%

### Grading Scale:

A	92-100	Excellent, Honors-level work; thorough understanding of material, arguments, & context
A-	90-91	Excellent work; substantial understanding of material, arguments, & context
B+	88-89	Very good, high level of performance; substantial apprehension of material, etc.
B	82-87	Good, solid, and above average performance; apprehends material, arguments, & context
B-	80-81	Good, above average performance; generally apprehends material, arguments, & context
C+	78-79	Average performance; general grasp of material, arguments, & context

C	72-77	Satisfactory, acceptable performance; partial grasp of material, arguments, & context
C-	70-71	Marginally satisfactory performance; limited grasp of materials, arguments, & context
D+	68-69	Passing but unsatisfactory performance; very limited grasp of material
D	60-67	Passing but unsatisfactory performance; minimal grasp of material
F	≤59	Failure; inferior performance and lack of understanding

## Student Resources:

*Office Hours*—Office hours are times set aside by professors and their assistants simply for interactions with students. Please take advantage of this time. You may contact me to discuss any questions or concerns you may have, to further discuss a point you found interesting in class or pursue a philosophical conversation.

### *Academic Success* –

See all of the ways that the Academic Success Center (ASC) can support you this semester by visiting the ASC website: [www.kent.edu/asc](http://www.kent.edu/asc)

Tutoring (from a student who has been successful in the class):

[www.kent.edu/asc/tutoring](http://www.kent.edu/asc/tutoring).

Coaching (including help with study skills and time management):

[www.kent.edu/coaching](http://www.kent.edu/coaching).

Writing (including help with proper source citation): [www.kent.edu/writingcommons](http://www.kent.edu/writingcommons).

Advising (including help with progress toward degree): [www.kent.edu/university-advising](http://www.kent.edu/university-advising).

TRIO Support Services: <https://www.kent.edu/studentsupportservices>

*Student Services* – There is a one-stop website for all student service issues including registration, billing, and financial aid. You can access this at [www.kent.edu/onestop](http://www.kent.edu/onestop).

*Counseling Services* – Free, confidential counseling appointments are available through The Counseling Center. Additional information is available at [www.kent.edu/ehhs/centers/chdc](http://www.kent.edu/ehhs/centers/chdc).

*Mental Well-Being and Basic Needs Support* – Kent State University is committed to supporting the overall well-being of our students. This support may take the form of assisting students with basic needs such as food and housing. We recognize that the absence of secure housing and access to food makes it difficult for students to achieve their best in and out of the classroom. If you, or someone you know, are unable to afford groceries or lack a safe, secure, and reliable place to live, please visit the CARES Center basic needs resource website: <https://www.kent.edu/carescenter/basic-needs-resources>.

Mental health challenges may also make it difficult for students to reach their full potential. KSU's mental health and wellness resource page provides information on education and

awareness, mental health services, and advocacy intervention. To learn more, please visit Kent State's mental health resources and support website at <https://www.kent.edu/mentalhealth>.

*Technical Support and Services* – You are able to access the IT Help Desk by calling 330.672.4357 (HELP) or through live chat via the IT website: [www.kent.edu/it](http://www.kent.edu/it). You can find additional technical support on the following websites:  
[www.kent.edu/onlinelearning/tech-tips](http://www.kent.edu/onlinelearning/tech-tips)  
[www.kent.edu/keeponlearning](http://www.kent.edu/keeponlearning)  
[www.kent.edu/it/get-help](http://www.kent.edu/it/get-help)

### **Course Policies:**

*Late Work* – **Absolutely no late assignments will be accepted and no late exams will be administered unless arrangements have been made prior to the due date.** True emergencies, such as emergency hospitalizations, are the only exceptions to this policy and require documentation. If you foresee requiring a later exam or assignment due date, please do not hesitate to contact me to discuss your situation.

*Assignment Format* – All assignments done outside of class must be typed, double-spaced, standard 10- or 12-point font, 1-inch margins, and contain appropriate citations. If necessary, either the MLA or APA style of citations is acceptable in this class. **All submissions must be submitted in either pdf or docx format.**

*Cheating & Plagiarism* – All work submitted for this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course. To “cheat” means to intentionally misrepresent the source, nature, or other conditions of academic work so as to accrue undeserved credit, or to cooperate with someone else in such misrepresentation. To “plagiarize” means to take and present as one's own a material portion of the ideas or words of another or to present as one's own an idea or work derived from an existing source without full and proper credit to the source of the ideas, words, or works. Cheating and plagiarism constitute fraudulent misrepresentation for which no credit can be given and for which appropriate sanctions are warranted and will be applied. The university affirms that acts of cheating and plagiarism by students constitute a subversion of the goals of the institution, have no place in the university and are serious offenses to academic goals and objectives, as well as to the rights of fellow students.

All cases of suspected plagiarism and/or cheating will be investigated and reported. **In cases where plagiarism and/or cheating have been clearly established, the sanction imposed will be determined by the professor and will be severe; the standard minimum penalty is a failing grade for the entire course.** Possible sanctions include failing the course, disciplinary probation, suspension, or dismissal from the university. University guidelines require that all infractions be reported to the Student Conduct Officer on our campus. Kent State University

policy on academic honesty can be found at: <https://www.kent.edu/policyreg/administrative-policy-regarding-student-cheating-and-plagiarism>

*Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI)* – Your thoughts, opinions and personal experiences are integral to the learning process. As such, **the use of GAI is prohibited in this class**. Any student who is believed to have engaged in any form of academic dishonesty, INCLUDING THE USE OF GAI, will be held accountable to the guidelines stated in the university’s policy on student cheating and plagiarism (3342-3-01.8 in the policy register). **Please see the Cheating & Plagiarism Policy, above.**

*Accommodation for Religious Holidays* – The University welcomes individuals from all different faiths, philosophies, religious traditions, and other systems of belief, and supports their respective practices. Students may request class absences for up to three (3) days, per term, to participate in organized activities conducted under the auspices of a religious denomination, church, or other religious or spiritual organization. If you predict a conflict between the observation of a religious holiday and an assignment, please see me so we can make appropriate arrangements. For more information regarding this Policy you may contact the Student Ombuds ([ombuds@kent.edu](mailto:ombuds@kent.edu)).

*Registration Requirement* – University policy requires all students to be officially registered in each class they are attending. Students who are not officially registered for a course 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 FlashFast) prior to the deadline, which is the midnight on the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the semester. If you are considering withdrawing from this course, please consult with an advisor since withdrawal from a course may affect financial aid, student status, or progress within your major toward degree.

*Student Accessibility Policy:*

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. Please visit the Student Accessibility Services website at [www.kent.edu/sas](http://www.kent.edu/sas); in person in the Library (Suite 100), email [sas@kent.edu](mailto:sas@kent.edu); or call 330-672-3391 (videophone 330-968-0490).

## Schedule of Readings and Assignments:

\*\*\* Please note that I reserve the right to alter the following schedule of readings and assignments as needed. All changes will be announced in class and emailed to students using "kent.edu" email addresses. \*\*\*

Wk	Dates	Topic	DO THESE THINGS
1	01/13-01/17	Introduction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. *** Watch video: Introduction &amp; Navigation ***</li> <li>2. Review course syllabus</li> <li>3. Familiarize yourself with the course website</li> <li>4. Quiz #1 due, Thursday, Jan. 16 11:59 pm</li> <li>5. Watch video, "What Is Philosophy?"</li> <li>6. Watch video "Philosophical Argument"</li> </ol>
2	01/20-01/24	Ethics, philosophical argument, and the failure of relativism	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read Plato, "Crito"</li> <li>2. Watch video "The Gadfly"</li> <li>3. Read Rachels, "The Challenge of Cultural Relativism"</li> <li>4. Watch video "The Failure of Relativism" + embedded Quiz #2 due Friday, Jan. 24 11:59 pm.</li> </ol>
3	01/27-01/31	Virtue and human flourishing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Watch video "Aristotle and Virtue Ethics: Philosophy Crash Course" (~10 minutes)</li> <li>2. Read Aristotle, Nichomachean Ethics, Book I, pp. 1-18</li> <li>3. Watch video "Aristotle Part 1: Eudaimonia"</li> </ol>
4	02/03-02/07	Virtue and human flourishing, cont.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read Aristotle, Nichomachean Ethics, Book II, pp. 18-30</li> <li>2. Watch video "Aristotle Part 2: Virtue" + embedded Quiz #3 due Feb. 6, by 11:59 pm.</li> <li>3. Review Aristotle, Books I &amp; II</li> </ol>
5	02/10-02/14	Anti-racism and human flourishing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review Aristotle, Books I &amp; II</li> <li>2. Watch video, "Aristotle Part 3, Character Development"</li> <li>3. Watch video "I Have a Dream" (look for examples of virtues and vices employed by MLK)</li> <li>4. Short assignment #1 "Virtue and Vice" due Friday, Feb. 14, by 11:59 pm</li> </ol>

6	02/17-02/21	Anti-racism, human flourishing, and justice	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read MLK, "Letter from a Birmingham Jail"</li> <li>2. Watch video "MLK Part 1: Virtue, Character, and Justice"</li> <li>3. Watch video "MLK Part 2: Nonviolent Action" + embedded Quiz #4 due Thursday, Feb. 20, by 11:59 pm</li> </ol>
7	02/24-02/28	Human flourishing, justice, and institutionalized racism	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review MLK's "Letter"</li> <li>2. Watch video, "Racism and DMC"</li> <li>3. Watch video, "How False News Can Spread" (~4 minutes)</li> <li>4. Watch video, "How to Choose Your News" (~5 minutes)</li> <li>5. Watch "The Truth About Unbiased News" (~12 minutes)</li> <li>6. Read short online comic, "The Backfire Effect"</li> <li>7. Quiz #5 after video and reading due Wednesday, February 26, by 11:59 pm</li> <li>8. Short assignment #2 "BLM" due Saturday, March 1, by 11:59 pm</li> </ol>
8	03/03-03/07	MIDTERM EXAM and intro to deontological ethics & Kant	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. MIDTERM EXAM OPENS MONDAY, MARCH 3 AT 7:00 AM, DUE BY 11:59 PM. 90 minute time limit, must be completed in one sitting.</li> <li>2. Watch video "Kant and Categorical Imperatives: Crash Course Philosophy" (~10 minutes) (ignore or skip first 40 seconds and note that the Elvira and Tony example isn't great)</li> <li>3. Read Kant, Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals, "First Section," pp. 1-17</li> <li>4. Watch video "Kant Part 1: Universal Ethics or: Stop Making Excuses for Yourself"</li> </ol>
9	03/17-03/21	The supreme moral principle and the Categorical Imperative	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Watch video "Kant Part 1: Universal Ethics or: Stop Making Excuses for Yourself"</li> <li>2. Read Kant, Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals, "Second Section," pp. 19-44</li> <li>3. Watch video "Kant Part 2: Universalism, Reason, and Duty" + embedded Quiz #6 due Thursday, March 20, by 11:59 pm</li> <li>4. Review and re-read Kant</li> <li>5. Watch video "Kant Part 3: Categorical Imperatives"</li> </ol>
10	03/24-03/28	Respect for persons & universal ethics, intro to utilitarianism	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Watch video "Kant Examples and Discussion"</li> <li>2. Watch FILM, "Ex Machina"</li> <li>3. Watch Video "The Terror of Ex Machina Explored"</li> <li>4. Short assignment #3 "The CI and AI" due Wednesday, March 26, by 11:59 pm</li> <li>5. Watch video "Utilitarianism: Crash Course Philosophy" (~ 10 minutes)</li> <li>6. Read Mill, Utilitarianism, Chaps. 1-2, pp. 1-26</li> </ol>



11	03/31-04/04	Utilitarianism and intro to the social contract	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Watch video "Mill Part 1: Consequentialism" + embedded Quiz #7 due</li> <li>2. Review and re-read Mill, Utilitarianism, Chaps. 1-2, pp. 1-26</li> <li>3. Watch video "Mill Part 2: Utilitarian Calculus"</li> <li>4. Watch video "Contractarianism: Crash Course Philosophy" (~10 minutes)</li> </ol>
12	04/07-04/11	Contractarianism, cont. and morality v. legality	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read Hobbes, selection from Leviathan (pdf on Canvas)</li> <li>2. Watch video "Hobbes Part 1: States of Nature and War" + embedded Quiz #8 due</li> <li>3. Watch video "Hobbes Part 2: Contracts, Legality, and Morality"</li> </ol>
13	04/14-04/18	Sex & gender and intro to care	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Watch, "The Diversity of Sex, Gender, and Sexual Orientation" (18 minutes)</li> <li>4. Watch video "Carol Gilligan on Women and Moral Development"</li> <li>5. Watch video "Carol Gilligan on Psychological Differences between Men and Women"</li> <li>6. Quiz #9 Friday, due</li> </ol>
14	04/21-04/25	Care Ethics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read Gilligan, excerpt from In a Different Voice</li> <li>2. Watch video "Care Ethics Part 1" + embedded Quiz #10 due</li> <li>3. Watch video "Care Ethics Part 2"</li> </ol>
15	04/28-05/02	Vulnerability, the human condition, and care	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Watch video, "On Vulnerability"</li> <li>2. Watch film, "Arrival"</li> <li>3. Short assignment #4 "Care, Contracts and Heptapods" due</li> </ol>
16	6-May	FINAL EXAM	FINAL EXAM OPENS TUESDAY, MAY 6 AT 7:00 AM AND MUST BE COMPLETED BY 11:59 PM.