

Philosophy: Ethics

Instructor: Sahar Joakim

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Aug 26, 2019 - Dec 17, 2019

Tuesdays, Thursdays

Brouster Hall 020

PHIL 2050-03

9:30 am - 10:45 am

PHIL 2050-05

11:00 am - 12:15 pm

Course Description

Everything in this ethics class revolves around what is right and what it is right to do. Through reading, thinking, and discussing, we will contemplate questions such as, *Why should one be moral? Is lying bad? What are the differences between doing and allowing harm? What is the difference between harming and wrong doing? What do we owe to others? Are ethics relative? What responsibilities do we have regarding the environment? Is abortion permissible? Should corporations be held to the same standards as persons? Should the government regulate what people do (drugs, vaccines, etc.)? Is eating meat ethical? Do we owe our enemies something? Is friendship necessary for a good life?*

Your answers to these controversial topics will be expressed verbally and through writing. Through learning how to articulate your answers to these and other questions, you will also learn a lot about yourselves. I expect no student to conform to my views, you will be graded on how well you hold your position (whatever it is). I will expect you to develop and articulate a) a clear understanding of the issues involved, b) your own views, and c) reasons for and against the different positions one can take.

Required Material

(a) All reading material will be provided for free over the internet. *Please contact me if computer or internet access is an issue as I have prepared alternative methods for distributing reading material.* All assigned readings must be read before the class meeting for which they are assigned.

(b) Each student must have their own journal/notebook for the use of **only** this course. This is where you will take notes for the entire course. I will be collecting the journals periodically. **OPTION:** You may have an electronic journal, it must be a Google Drive document with the title: "Lastname_Notes" which you share with me:

saharjoakim@gmail.com

Major Assignments: 3 Exams

There is one midterm exam and one final exam. Both of these exams involve writing one essay. The rubric for the essay will be given ahead of time. The essay prompt is, roughly, to choose one topic we have discussed so far, and to write a persuasive argument in favor of at least one and only one side of the issue. For the final essay, you may develop the theme from the midterm essay upon confirmation with me. There will also be one Multiple-Choice exam that will cover everything in the class until the exam date. These are the three major assignments for the course.

Minor Assignments: Daily Journaling

Students must keep journals for the purpose of engaging the course material in various ways, including short reflection notes and practice essay questions. Every day we have class, I *encourage* you to take notes. Every day after class, you are *required* to answer two questions: (a) What was the most interesting (to you) idea discussed in class today?, and (b) What is your opinion on this?

Grades

Rubrics for each assignment will be available prior to the due date of the relevant assignment. The two essay exams will be graded blindly; that is, I will be grading without knowing whose material it is. Points will be removed from any exam submitted with a student name or without a Banner ID number.

We may *have to* add pop-quizzes due to lacking participation (which signals to me a lack of reading). Otherwise, broken down as follows, your grade for the course is out of 100 points:

Multiple-Choice Exam: 25 points
Essay (Midterm) Exam: 20 points
Essay (Final) Exam: 30 points
Journal: 25 points

After 3 unexcused absences, students may be graded down. Students should be aware of the University's Attendance Policy:

<https://catalog.slu.edu/academic-policies/academic-policies-procedures/attendance/>

Technology policy

Technology is permissible as long as the device is being used for learning purposes (for the purpose of this class). In other words, students may take notes on their electronic devices in class. Anyone caught using a device for any reason beyond this class will have their device confiscated for the remainder of the class without appeal.

Schedule

There is more material here than we will cover. We start with general theories and then work through specific topics.

MORALITY

Chelsea Haramia, "Free Will and Moral Responsibility"

<https://1000wordphilosophy.com/2014/06/02/free-will-and-moral-responsibility/>

Rebecca Renninger, "Alternate Possibilities and Moral Responsibility"

<https://1000wordphilosophy.com/2014/09/22/alternate-possibilities-and-moral-responsibility/>

Daniel Miller, "Ignorance and Blame"

<https://1000wordphilosophy.com/2019/02/14/ignorance-and-blame/>

Gary Watson's "Responsibility and the Limits of Evil"

The case of Robert Harris

Thomas Nagel, Moral Luck

<https://rintintin.colorado.edu/~vancecd/phil1100/Nagel1.pdf>

Thomas Metcalf, "Ethical Realism"

<https://1000wordphilosophy.com/2015/11/05/ethical-realism/>

ETHICAL SYSTEMS

<https://opentextbc.ca/ethicsinlawenforcement/chapter/2-1-major-ethical-systems/>

1. Meta ethics (Theoretical ethics)
2. Normative ethics
 - a. Utilitarianism
 - b. Deontology
 - c. Egoism
 - d. Divine command theory
 - e. Moral relativism

LIES AND BULLSHIT

Immanuel Kant, "On a Supposed Right to Lie From Benevolent Motives"

http://www.sophia-project.org/uploads/1/3/9/5/13955288/kant_lying.pdf

Harry Frankfurt, "On Bullshit"

http://www2.csudh.edu/ccauthen/576f12/frankfurt_harry_-_on_bullshit.pdf

Who is America: Photoshoot

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OvbbtGwO1hM>

Who is America: Commercial

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AVCUgw5IPpg>

DOING/ALLOWING HARM

The Trolley Problem (video)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9xHKxrc0PHg>

Philippa Foot, "The Problem of Abortion and the Doctrine of Double Effect"
<https://philpapers.org/archive/FOOTPO-2.pdf>

Judith Jarvis Thomson, "Killing, Letting Die, and the Trolley Problem"
<https://laurenalpert.files.wordpress.com/2014/08/thomson-killing-letting-die-and-the-trolley-problem.pdf>

The Bill of Rights: Second Amendment
<https://billofrightsinstitute.org/founding-documents/bill-of-rights/>

A Concealed Carry (Missouri Gun Laws)
https://www.usconcealedcarry.com/resources/ccw_reciprocity_map/mo-gun-laws/

B Speech on Guns
<https://www.personaldefenseworld.com/2018/04/mark-robinson-pro-gun-speech/>

C Speech on Guns
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L_-N9_tnWBo&app=desktop

KILLING/HARMING

Jason Wyckoff, The Moral Status of Animals
<https://1000wordphilosophy.com/2014/02/03/the-moral-status-of-animals/>

Peter Singer: The Ethics of What We Eat
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UHzwqf_JkrA

Ryan Jenkins, "The Ethics of Drone Strikes"
<https://1000wordphilosophy.com/2014/03/27/the-ethics-of-drone-strikes/>

Deadly Detachment: Brandon Bryant
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mr7LThSL3Lo>

U.S. Citizens killed "legally"?
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jA4jv8lPz38>

Drone Deaths not reported (Trump, 2016)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ptCtf2zJ2kc>

Tiny Flying Killing Drones:
<https://metro.co.uk/2018/02/17/scientists-warn-tiny-flying-killing-drones-called-slaughter-bots-could-be-future-7320987/>

Unmanned: America's Drone Wars
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mpzk7OdbjBw>

Plato's *Republic* The Gyges Ring 417a-b

<https://philosophyintrocouse.files.wordpress.com/2016/04/plato-ring-of-gyges.pdf>

Milgram's (In)Famous Experiment

A <https://www.simplypsychology.org/milgram.html>

B http://faculty.babson.edu/krollag/org_site/soc_psych/milgram_exper.html

LOVE, MARRIAGE, REPRODUCTION

Ryan Jenkins, "Licensing Parents"

<https://1000wordphilosophy.com/2014/01/30/licensing-parents/>

Nathan Nobis, "The Ethics of Abortion"

<https://1000wordphilosophy.com/2016/03/07/the-ethics-of-abortion/>

Kant: the Metaphysics of Morals (Chapter 2, Section 3, parts 22-29)
(Page 426-430 of *The Critique of Practical Reason*)

Aesop's *The Eagle and the Kite*

<http://read.gov/aesop/128.html>

Emma Goldman's [*Love and Marriage*](#)

Emma Goldman: An Exceedingly Dangerous Woman

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lqCDKtNZmDY>

The History of Marriage

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZZZ6QB5TSfk>

The Marriage Decision

https://getpocket.com/explore/item/the-marriage-decision-everything-forever-or-nothing-ever-again?utm_source=pocket-newtab

How to Pick your Life Partner

<https://waitbutwhy.com/2014/02/pick-life-partner.html>

DIVORCE RATES IN THE U.S.

<https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/life/relationships/a26551655/us-divorce-rate/>

FRIENDSHIP

Aesop's The Ass, The Fox, and The Lion
<https://www.infoplease.com/aesops-fables-88>

Plato's *Lysis* (page 695) 211d-212e
Plato's *Lysis* (page 698) 214b-215d

Aristotle's [*Nicomachean Ethics Book VIII*](#)
On Friendship
(page 1825-1827) Section 1. Read line 1-30;
Section 2.; Section 3, Line 1-21

Kant's *The Metaphysics of Morals*, Chap. II, Sections 2, parts 46 and 47
(page 586-588 of *The Critique of Practical Reason*)

Seneca's Moral Letters (#9) to Lucilius
<http://philosophy.redzambala.com/seneca/9-moral-letters-to-lucilius-seneca.html>

10 types of friendships
<https://waitbutwhy.com/2014/12/10-types-odd-friendships-youre-probably-part.html>

ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

Donald A. Brown, The Ethical Dimensions of Global Environmental Issues
<https://www.amacad.org/publication/ethical-dimensions-global-environmental-issues>

Charts of Climate Crisis
https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/sep/20/the-climate-crisis-explained-in-10-charts?utm_source=pocket-newtab

Global Warming
<https://www.conserve-energy-future.com/GlobalWarmingSolutions.php>

Deforestation
<https://www.conserve-energy-future.com/causes-effects-solutions-of-deforestation.php>

Pollution
<https://www.conserve-energy-future.com/PollutionTypes.php>

Household Waste
<https://www.conserve-energy-future.com/waste-to-energy.php>

VACCINATION

History of Vaccinations
<https://vaccines.procon.org/view.resource.php?resourceID=006479>

Pro and Con List for Vaccinations being Required

<https://vaccines.procon.org/#arguments>

Vaccinations: Exemptions by State

<https://vaccines.procon.org/state-vaccination-exemptions-for-children-entering-public-schools/>

C Despite Measles Warnings, Anti-Vaccine Rally Draws Hundreds of Ultra-Orthodox Jews

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/14/nyregion/measles-vaccine-orthodox-jews.html?fbclid=IwAR2vYA2deEWZzUXn1Yzj37iobm3QOpwPoUWos4NbTXhKsb7Df496ef3FTo0>

BUSINESS ETHICS

A <http://read.gov/aesop/089.html>

The Farmer and his Sons: Industry is itself a treasure.

B <http://read.gov/aesop/141.html>

The Lion's Share: Might Makes Right

Herald of Free Enterprise

<http://www.ship-disasters.com/passenger-ship-disasters/herald-of-free-enterprise/>

The Ethics of Competition

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/5091553_The_Ethics_of_Competition

Jan Boxill, "The Ethics of Competition" (in sports)

<https://philpapers.org/rec/BOXTEO-2>

Grocery Gleaning

A

https://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/18/weekinreview/18martin.html?_r=1&scp=1&sq=into%20the%20trash%20it%20goes&st=cse

B

<https://www.resilience.org/stories/2015-07-24/gleaning-an-ancient-custom-that-may-etern-in-the-future/>

C: *If interested, check this out:*

https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/usda_gleaning_toolkit.pdf

RACE

Abiral Chitrakar Phnuyal, "The Ontology of Race"

<https://1000wordphilosophy.com/2018/06/07/the-ontology-of-race/>

Immanuel Kant, 'On the Different Human Races', in Bernasconi and Tommy Lott, editors. *The Idea of Race*, Hackett, 2000.

<https://blackcentraleurope.com/sources/1750-1850/kant-on-the-different-human-races-1777/>

Joshua Glasgow. 2009. 'Racism as Disrespect', *Ethics* 120(1): 64-93.

https://drive.google.com/open?id=1NMpEaE6LZ61na50UWzjZ31ntr_vD-c9y

Martin Luther King, 'Letter from a Birmingham Jail'

<https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/king-papers/documents/letter-birmingham-jail>

Original footage from Civil Rights sit-in movement

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OT9gILdTaWo>

Joseph Frigault, "Reparations for Historic Injustice"

<https://1000wordphilosophy.com/2019/05/08/reparations-for-historic-injustice/>

EDUCATION

Nathan Nobas, "Ethics and Extra Credit"

<https://1000wordphilosophy.com/2018/02/25/ethics-and-extra-credit/>

Title IX

Saint Louis University and its faculty are committed to supporting our students and seeking an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you have encountered any form of sexual misconduct (e.g., sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, domestic or dating violence), we encourage you to report this to the University. If you speak with a faculty member about an incident that involves a Title IX matter, **that faculty member must notify SLU's Title IX coordinator (or that person's equivalent on your campus) and share the basic facts of your experience.** This is true even if you ask the faculty member not to disclose the incident. The Title IX contact will then be available to assist you in understanding all of your options and in connecting you with all possible resources on and off campus.

For most students on the St. Louis campus, the appropriate contact is Anna R. Kratky (DuBourg Hall, room 36; anna.kratky@slu.edu; 314-977-3886). If you wish to speak with a confidential source, you may contact the counselors at the University Counseling Center at 314-977-TALK. To view SLU's sexual misconduct policy, and for resources, please visit the following web addresses: <https://www.slu.edu/here4you> and <https://www.slu.edu/general-counsel>.

Disability Accommodations

Students with a documented disability who wish to request academic accommodations must formally register their disability with the University. Once successfully registered, students also must notify their course instructor that they wish to use their approved accommodations in the course. Please contact Disability Services to schedule an appointment to discuss accommodation requests and eligibility requirements. Most students on the St. Louis campus will contact Disability Services, located in the

Student Success Center and available by email at Disability_services@slu.edu or by phone at 314.977.3484. Once approved, information about a student's eligibility for academic accommodations will be shared with course instructors by email from Disability Services and within the instructor's official course roster. Students who do not have a documented disability but who think they may have one also are encouraged to contact Disability Services. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is honest, truthful and responsible conduct in all academic endeavors. The mission of Saint Louis University is "the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity." Accordingly, all acts of falsehood demean and compromise the corporate endeavors of teaching, research, health care, and community service through which SLU fulfills its mission. The University strives to prepare students for lives of personal and professional integrity, and therefore regards all breaches of academic integrity as matters of serious concern. The full University- level Academic Integrity Policy can be found on the Provost's Office website at:

https://www.slu.edu/provost/policies/academic-and-course/policy_academic-integrity_6-26-2015.pdf.

Student Success Center

The Student Success Center assists students with academic-related services and is located in the Busch Student Center (Suite, 331). Students can visit <https://www.slu.edu/life-at-slu/student-success-center/> to learn more about tutoring services, university writing services, disability services, and academic coaching. University Writing Services University Writing Services offers one-on-one consultations that address everything from brainstorming and developing ideas to crafting strong sentences and documenting sources. For more information, visit <https://www.slu.edu/life-at-slu/student-success-center/> or call the Student Success Center at 314-977-3484.

Basic Needs Security

Students in personal or academic distress and/or who may be specifically experiencing challenges such as securing food or difficulty navigating campus resources, and who believe this may affect their performance in the course, are encouraged to contact the Dean of Students Office (deanofstudents@slu.edu or 314-977-9378) for support. Furthermore, please notify the instructor if you are comfortable in doing so, as this will enable them to assist you with finding the resources you may need.