

# PHIL 335

## Contemporary Moral Philosophy



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**Office:** Clearihue B314  
**Office Hours:** Wednesdays 12:30–2:00 and by appointment

### Course Description

In this course we will attempt to develop a solid understanding of four of the competing normative ethical theories in Western philosophy: contractarianism, Kantian ethics, consequentialism and contractualism. We will begin with the classic texts in each tradition and move through contemporary attempts to explain, develop and critique these different conceptions of ethics. We will try to understand the intuitions and problems that motivate these accounts, the reasoning that supports them and some of the issues they have yet to resolve. Throughout, we will be asking whether any of these theories help us to understand what makes an action right or wrong or help us to answer the pressing questions of what kind of people we should be and how we ought to live our lives.

### Texts

Available in the book store:

Stephen Darwall (ed.) **Consequentialism** Blackwell Publishing. 2002.

Stephen Darwall (ed.) **Contractarianism/Contractualism** Blackwell Publishing. 2002.

Immanuel Kant **Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals** edited and translated by Allen W. Wood. Yale University Press. 2002.

All other readings for the course will be available on-line through Course Spaces.

To access the readings and other course information on Course Spaces go to [coursespaces.uvic.ca](https://coursespaces.uvic.ca) and log in with your regular network ID.

### Course Work

#### Five Quote and Comment Assignments 5% each

These will be very short written responses to the reading assigned for the day they are due. Details are available on the Course Spaces page. Dates on which quote and comment assignments are due are marked with a **Q/C** on the schedule below. Quote and comment assignments will only be accepted in class on the day they are due. No quote and comment assignments will be accepted for class meetings you do not attend.

If you miss a quote and comment assignment due to illness or accident, let me know right away and I will give you an alternate assignment.

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## Two Exams Exam One 30% and Exam Two 15%

The exams will be in-class exams covering material from the readings and class discussion. They will be a combination of short answer questions and essay questions. Review questions for the exams will be posted on the Course Spaces page.

## One Essay 30%

The essay will be a maximum of 2500 words. I will give you a list of suggested essay topics, but you are very welcome to propose your own topic. If you intend to write on a topic of your own devising you need to submit your idea *for approval*. You must get your proposed topic to me in writing (email is fine) by the last day of classes. Further details about the essay assignment are available on the Course Spaces page.

### Late Essays

I will accept, without grade penalty, essays (but not quote and comment assignments) that are submitted up to five days after the due date. However, essays that are submitted in this period will not receive any comments. After this grace period unexcused late essays will not be accepted.

### Academic Integrity

Please familiarize yourself with the University Policy on Academic Integrity. It will be enforced in this course. You can find it online in the UVIC Calendar at <https://web.uvic.ca/calendar2017-09/undergrad/info/regulations/academic-integrity.html#>

## Grading

Grades for the course will be assigned using this scheme:

Percentage	Grade
90 - 100	A+
85 - 89	A
80 - 84	A-
77 - 79	B+
73 - 76	B
70 - 72	B-
65 - 69	C+
60 - 64	C
50 - 59	D
Below 50	F

For N and DEF status, please see Department of Philosophy Policies posted in glass cabinets adjacent to CLE B315.

Information regarding accommodation of religious observance can be located in the UVIC Calendar at <https://web.uvic.ca/calendar2017-09/undergrad/info/regulations/religious-observanc.html>

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## Course Schedule

Please note that this schedule is tentative.

Any changes will be announced in class and posted on the Course Spaces page.

Letters in parenthesis after each reading indicate where the reading can be found.

(CC) Contractarianism/Contractualism      (C) Consequentialism  
(G) Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals      (S) Course Spaces

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### *The Moral Outlook and Moral Motivation*

W 1/3	Introduction
F 1/5	Hume from <i>A Treatise of Human Nature</i> , Book III.I.i Moral Distinctions Not Derived from Reason, and Book II.III.iii Of the Influencing Motives of the Will (S)
T 1/9	McDowell Are Moral Requirements Hypothetical Imperatives? (S)
Q/C W 1/10	Plato from <i>Republic</i> , Book II (S)
F 1/12	Hobbes <i>Leviathan</i> , Part One, Chapter XIII (CC)

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### *Contractarianism*

T 1/16	Hobbes <i>Leviathan</i> , Part One, Chapters XIV and XV (CC)
W 1/17, F 1/19	Gauthier Why Contractarianism? (CC)
Q/C T 1/23	Held Feminist Transformations of Moral Theory (S)

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### *Kantian Ethics*

W 1/24	Kant Preface, <i>Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals</i> (G)
F 1/26	Kant First Section, <i>Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals</i> (G)
Q/C T 1/30	Baron Acting from Duty (G)
W 1/31	Kant Second Section of <i>Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals</i> (G)
F 2/2	Herman Mutual Aid and Respect for Persons (S)
T 2/6, W 2/7	Korsgaard The Right to Lie: Kant on Dealing with Evil (S)
F 2/9	Slote The Problem We All Have with Deontology (S)
M 2/12– F 2/16	Reading Break (no class)

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## *That at which all things aim*

T 2/20	Bentham from <i>An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation</i> (C)
W 2/21	Nozick The Experience Machine (S)
<b>Q/C</b> F 2/23	Griffin Utilitarian Accounts: State of Mind or State of the World? (S)
T 2/27, W 2/28	MacIntyre The Nature of the Virtues (S)
F 3/2	<b>Exam One</b>

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## *Consequentialism*

T 3/6, W 3/7	Sidgwick from <i>The Methods of Ethics</i> (C)
F 3/9	Mill from Doctor Whewell on Moral Philosophy (C) Hooker Rule-Consequentialism (S)
T 3/13	Williams Consequentialism and Integrity (S)
W 3/14	Railton Alienation, Consequentialism, and the Demands of Morality (C)
F 3/16	Rawls Classical Utilitarianism (C)
<b>Q/C</b> T 3/20	Parfit The Repugnant Conclusion, The Non-Identity Problem (S)
W 3/21	Norcross Comparing Harms: Headaches and Human Lives (S)
F 3/23	Kagan Kantianism for Consequentialists (G)

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## *Contractualism*

T 3/27	Rawls from <i>A Theory of Justice</i> (CC)
W 3/28	Scanlon Contractualism and Utilitarianism (CC)
F 3/30	<b>Easter Break (no class)</b>
T 4/3	Hampton Feminist Contractarianism (S)
W 4/4	Radzik Justice in the Family: A Defence of Feminist Contractarianism (S)
F 4/6	<b>Exam Two</b>

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<b>TH 4/12</b>	<b>Essay Due at 5 p.m.</b>
M 4/16	Last day to submit the essay for credit – 5 p.m. cutoff