

Moral Problems of Contemporary Society

INFORMATION SHEET

Ph 232 A02 Fall 2019

CRN XXXX

Instructor: Thomas Heyd, Ph.D.
Office: Clearihue B 309
Class meetings: Tue, Wed, Fri 1:30-2:20
Classroom: TBA
Office Hours: Tues and Fri 11:30-12:20
Tel.: (250) 853 3767
e-mail: heydt@uvic.ca



Course description

In this course we discuss ethically significant issues of our societies with a philosophical perspective. We begin with a discussion of the distinction between ethics and applied ethics, the role of arguments in ethics, and the relation of ethics to religion and to law. Throughout the remainder of the course key ethical principles and theories are introduced and applied to contemporary issues such as euthanasia, abortion, poverty, uranium mining and sexual relations. Students from all faculties are welcome.

Course objectives

- To learn about ethical theories and their application to the complexities of issues of our contemporary world.
- To carefully examine the philosophical arguments that arise surrounding the controversial issues discussed in the course.
- To sharpen our ability for critical analysis of assumptions and arguments, and how to assess their strength and weaknesses, supported by consideration of realistic cases.

Texts and Coursespaces readings

Required text: **A Coursepack**, plus selected texts to be downloaded from **Coursespaces** (see details on the schedule of lectures below). Be attentive to announcements in class and on *Coursespaces*. Recommended optional: Anthony Weston, ***A Rulebook for Arguments*** (Hackett).

Graded student activities

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| 1. Participation, including weekly assignments | 10% |
| 2. Experiential group project and presentation | 20% |
| 3. Mid-term test | 30% |
| 4. Final take-home exam | 40% |