

PHIL 500 A03
CRN#12755

September – December 2022
TWF: 10:30am – 11:20am

Advanced Ethics: Consequentialism

Instructor: Scott Woodcock [he/they]
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Office Hours: Open hours Wednesdays 1:30pm – 2:30pm
Individual meetings via Zoom by appointment

Course Description:

Consequentialism sometimes looks like a theory so plagued with difficulties that it is not worth serious consideration. Indeed, many students complete their undergraduate degrees in philosophy wondering why anyone still defends the view. They view it as a historical artifact that was put to sleep in the late 20th century when contractualist forms of deontology gained widespread acceptance and virtue ethics began its modern reincarnation. One reason for students adopting this view is that introductory courses expose them to simple formulations of the theory and the many objections that consequentialism invites. Rarely is there time for students to explore the complexity of the theory's contemporary formulations. Our aim will be to correct this deficiency so that students become familiar with the many complicated variations of consequentialism that are currently available. Of course, many students will still not be persuaded that consequentialism is a viable ethical theory. This is entirely acceptable. The aim of the course is not to persuade anyone that consequentialism ought to be endorsed; the aim is rather to ensure that students are fully aware of the resources available to consequentialism when they make their own decision about what normative ethical theory they consider most persuasive.

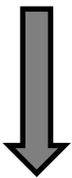
Course Website: Online course materials will be available via Uvic *Brightspace*.

Texts: *Consequentialism* by Julia Driver

Introduction to Utilitarianism by MacAskill, Chappell & Meissner (online)

Readings available online via Uvic *CourseSpaces*

Requirements: Ten Quote & Comment Assignments (10%)



First Writing Assignment (20%)

Class Participation (10%)

Seminar Presentation (10%)

Term Paper Assignment (50%)

Note: Writing assignment due dates and midterm test dates are posted below in the weekly schedule. *You are responsible for knowing these dates.* Plan ahead, and manage your overall personal workload accordingly.

Grading System

Percentage	Letter Grade	Grade Point	Grade Definition
90 – 100	A+	9	An A+, A, or A- is earned by work which is technically superior , shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of an A+ offers original insight and/or goes beyond course expectations. Normally achieved by a minority of students.
85 – 89	A	8	
80 – 84	A-	7	
77 – 79	B+	6	A B+, B, or B- is earned by work that indicates a good comprehension of the course material, a good command of the skills needed to work with the course material, and the student's full engagement with the course requirements and activities. A B+ represents a more complex understanding and/or application of the course material. Normally achieved by the largest number of students.
73 – 76	B	5	
70 – 72	B-	4	
65 – 69	C+	3	A C+ or C is earned by work that indicates an adequate comprehension of the course material and the skills needed to work with the course material and that indicates the student has met the basic requirements for completing assigned work and/or participating in class activities.
60 – 64	C	2	
50 – 59	D	1	A D is earned by work that indicates minimal command of the course materials and/or minimal participation in class activities that is worthy of course credit toward the degree.
0 – 49	F	0	F is earned by work, which after the completion of course requirements, is inadequate and unworthy of course credit towards the degree.

Interpretation of these grade definitions is up to the discretion of the instructor. If you receive a grade during the course that you believe is unfair, please begin by discussing the matter with the instructor (or TA) in a respectful, open-minded manner. Rest assured that if you still believe the grade you received is unfair you can appeal the matter to the chair of the department.

For additional information regarding undergraduate grades, please consult the [Grading](#) section of the Uvic Undergraduate Calendar.

All evaluations of tests and assignments will be calculated according to percentage scores. Letter grades and grade point scores are listed purely for reference.

Final examinations are the property of Uvic and are not returned. They are available for viewing at the Records Office according to Uvic [Examinations](#) procedures and regulations.

Uvic is committed to providing a safe, supportive learning environment for all members. Further information regarding Uvic policies on human rights, equity, discrimination and harassment are located in the Uvic calendar [General University Policies](#), but if you have any particular concerns related to our course please do not hesitate to contact me.

Late Policy: Late assignments (except Q&C's) will be accepted for five working days after the due date; however, late assignments *will not receive any written comments*. After five working days, submitted assignments would require serious extenuating circumstances to be accepted.

Plagiarism: Review the [University Policy on Academic Integrity](#) *very carefully*, and be aware that anti-plagiarism software may be used in this course. Resources will be provided via *Brightspace* for students seeking guidance about what constitutes plagiarism and how they can avoid it, but *it is the responsibility of each student* to be informed about these details.

Counseling: Many students experience difficulties with mental health during their years as undergraduate students. Make sure you are familiar with Uvic [Student Wellness](#), which is an excellent resource on campus. It is hard to shake the stigma associated with problems like depression and anxiety, but if you can benefit from help with mental health issues, then why not take advantage of this free resource? They are understaffed, but they genuinely want to help.

Important Dates: Please consult the Uvic calendar's [Academic Year Important Dates](#) for information about last possible dates to withdraw from courses without penalty, examinations period start/end dates, etc.

Tech in Class: Some students require laptops/tablets for their learning strategies, so I do not prohibit their use in class. However, studies prove that multi-tasking *reduces performance for nearby students*, so anyone who distracts others will be asked to leave and potentially subject to disciplinary action.

Academic Advising: For information about declaring a program or interpreting a CAPP report, please make an appointment with [Undergraduate Advising](#).

Uvic Sexualized Violence Prevention:

Learn more about preventing sexualized violence by visiting www.uvic.ca/svp. If you or someone you know has been impacted by sexualized violence and needs advice, and/or support, please contact the [Sexualized Violence Resource Office](#).

Territory Acknowledgment

The University of Victoria is committed to acknowledging and respecting the Lekwungen peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands, and the Songhees, Esquimalt and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

For information about support for indigenous students and efforts to foster reconciliation, please visit the Uvic [Office of Indigenous Academic & Community Engagement](#).

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

Note: Dates are subject to change. Page numbers refer to the Driver text. IU sections refer to the *Intro to Utilitarianism* text online. Material should be read *before* class in which it is discussed. Access .pdf's in advance to avoid technical problems. If citation information for readings is not available on first pages, it should be easy to find online.

<u>Week 1</u>	Introduction to Utilitarianism
Sept. 7	First Meeting
Sept. 9	pp. 5 – 16 + Gerald J. Postema: “Bentham’s Utilitarianism” IU: ch. 2 <i>Elements and Types of Utilitarianism</i> s. 1 – 4.
<u>Week 2</u>	Background History
Sept. 13	pp. 16 – 25 + J.S. Mill: <i>Utilitarianism</i> , ch. 2 & 4 Elizabeth S. Anderson, “John Stuart Mill and Experiments in Living”
Sept. 14	Roger Crisp: “Sidgwick and Utilitarianism in the Late Nineteenth Century” Suggested = Robert Shaver: “Sidgwick on Pleasure”
Sept. 16	G.E. Moore: <i>Principia Ethica</i> , ch. 3, s. 49 – 57 Peter Schaber: “Value Pluralism: Some Problems”
<u>Week 3</u>	Hedonism, Desire-Fulfillment, and The Experience Machine
Sept. 20	pp. 26 – 38 + David Sobel: “Varieties of Hedonism” Suggested = Ole Martin Moen: “An Argument for Hedonism”
Sept. 21	Jennifer Hawkins: “The Experience Machine and the Experience Requirement” Chris Heathwood: “Desire-Fulfillment Theory”
Sept. 23	Sharon Hewitt: “What Do Our Intuitions about the Experience Machine Really Tell us about Hedonism?” Suggested = Ben Bramble: “The Experience Machine”
<u>Week 4</u>	Objective List + Teleological Theories of Well-Being
Sept. 27	IU: ch. 4 <i>Theories of Well-Being</i> + Gwen Bradford: “Perfectionism” Suggested = Martha Nussbaum: “Women and Equality: the Capabilities Approach”
Sept. 28	Richard Kim: “Well-Being and Confucianism”
Sept. 30	National Day for Truth and Reconciliation – No Class

<p><u>Week 5</u></p> <p>Oct. 4</p> <p>Oct. 5</p> <p>Oct. 7</p> 	<p>Aggregation Puzzles</p> <p>Michael Otsuka: “Prioritarianism and the Separateness of Persons”</p> <p>pp. 67 – 85 + UI: ch. 5 <i>Population Ethics</i> Derek Parfit, <i>Reasons and Persons</i>, ch. 17 – the Repugnant Conclusion</p> <p>Johan E. Gustafsson: “Our Intuitive Grasp of the Repugnant Conclusion”</p> <p>*** First Writing Assignment Due ***</p>
<p><u>Week 6</u></p> <p>Oct. 11</p> <p>Oct. 12</p> <p>Oct. 14</p>	<p>Integrity, Alienation and Moral Psychology</p> <p>pp. 52 – 66 + Bernard Williams: “A Critique of Utilitarianism”, s. 3 – 5 Suggested = Daniel D. Moseley: “Revisiting Williams on Integrity”</p> <p>Elizabeth Ashford: “Utilitarianism, Integrity and Partiality”</p> <p>pp. 102 – 114 + Michael Stocker: “The Schizophrenia of Modern Ethical Theories”</p>
<p><u>Week 7</u></p> <p>Oct. 18</p> <p>Oct. 19</p> <p>Oct. 21</p>	<p>Sophisticated Act-Consequentialism</p> <p>pp. 96 – 102 + Henry Sidgwick, <i>The Methods of Ethics</i>, book IV, ch. III</p> <p>Peter Railton: “Alienation, Consequentialism, and the Demands of Morality”</p> <p>Elinor Mason: “Can an Indirect Consequentialist be a Real Friend?” IU: ch. 8 <i>Objections to Utilitarianism and Responses</i></p>
<p><u>Week 8</u></p> <p>Oct. 25</p> <p>Oct. 26</p> <p>Oct. 28</p>	<p>Indirect Consequentialism</p> <p>pp. 86 – 95 + Brad Hooker: “Rule-Consequentialism” IU: ch. 2 <i>Elements and Types of Utilitarianism</i> s. 5 – 7</p> <p>Holly M. Smith: “Measuring the Consequences of Rules”</p> <p>Tim Mulgan: “Rule Consequentialism and Famine” Brad Hooker: “Rule-Consequentialism and Obligations Toward the Needy”</p>
<p><u>Week 9</u></p> <p>Nov. 1</p> <p>Nov. 2</p>	<p>Effective Altruism and its Critics</p> <p>UI: ch. 6 <i>Utilitarianism and Practical Ethics</i> William MacAskill: “The Definition of Effective Altruism”</p> <p>S. Harding & A. Malavisi: “Women, Gender and... Global Development”</p>

Nov. 4	Elizabeth Ashford: “Severe Poverty as an Unjust Emergency” Suggested = Andreas L. Mogensen: “Maximal Cluelessness”
<u>Week 10</u>	Effective Altruism and its Critics
Nov. 8	Calvin Baker: “Buddhism and Effective Altruism”
Nov. 9-11	Fall Reading Break – No Class
<u>Week 11</u>	Consequentialism and Practical Deliberation
Nov 15	pp. 38 – 52 + Michael Slote: “Satisficing Consequentialism”
Nov. 16	pp. 114 – 144 + Frank Jackson & Robert Pargetter: “Oughts, Options, and Actualism”
Nov. 18	Rob van Someren Greve: “Objective Consequentialism and Avoidable Imperfections”
<u>Week 12</u>	Scalar Consequentialism... and Lives for Headaches
Nov. 22	pp. 145 – 153 + Alastair Norcross: “The Scalar Approach to Utilitarianism”
Nov. 23	Alastair Norcross: “Comparing Harms: Headaches and Human Lives”
Nov. 25	Samantha Brennan: “Moral Lumps” Suggested = Julius Schönherr: “Still Lives for Headaches”
<u>Week 13</u>	Consequentialism and Moral Psychology
Nov. 29	Joshua D. Greene: “Beyond Point-and-Shoot Morality: Why Cognitive (Neuro)Science Matters for Ethics”
Nov. 30	Regina A. Rini: “Making Psychology Normatively Significant”
Dec. 2 	Scott Woodcock: “When Will a Consequentialist Push You in Front of a Trolley?” *** Last Day to Submit Q&C Assignments ***
Dec. 5	Review + Class Debate [Note: this is a Monday]

Term Papers Due Friday, December 9th, 2022 at 4pm