PHGA 7662  
MORAL INTENTIONALITY  
FALL 2010  
TUESDAYS, 2:00 – 4:00 PM  

JOHN J. DRUMMOND  
103 COLLINS HALL  
718-817-3332  
drummond@fordham.edu  
http://faculty.fordham.edu/drummond  

OFFICE HOURS  
Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 10:00 am – Noon  
And By Appointment  

Introduction  

By moral intentionality, I mean the directedness of consciousness to moral phenomena, including our apprehension of what is morally salient in particular situations, our identification of moral goods, our moral appraisals of possible courses of action, our moral judgments regarding actions and agents, and our experience of obligation.  

The approach taken in the course will be phenomenological. We shall investigate the structures of both our moral experience and things taken in their moral significance. In particular, we shall investigate the nature of both evaluative and volitional experience, and we shall examine what it is for an object, state of affairs, action, or agent to be experienced as morally good or bad. While the course will be primarily concerned with developing a phenomenological account of moral intentionality, we shall also investigate the historical background against which such theories were developed and the contemporary theories to which this account might be fruitfully compared.  

In developing this account, we shall focus our attention on those views that emphasize the role of feelings and emotions in the disclosure of what is morally salient in states of affairs and of what (and who) is morally good. Such a view, of course, has connections to eudaimonistic, axiological, and virtue approaches to ethics. We shall explore some of these connections, but we shall also briefly take note of some critiques of these views, especially those that arise out of the view that the notion of the obligatory is prior to that of the good.
**Texts**


Online Readings (E-res course password = intentionality)

For the Aristotle, Hume, and Kant readings, you may use any edition (I am assuming you have one!)

**Schedule**

**Date & Topic** | **Readings**
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**September 7:** Introduction | John Drummond, “Phenomenology: Neither Auto- Nor Hetero- Be,” *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences* 6 (2007): 57–74 ([E-res](#)) and/or John Drummond, “Personal Perspectives,” *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 45 (2007 Supplement): 28–44 ([E-res](#)). [The first paper is an argument against Dennett that clarifies by contrast Husserl’s view of phenomenology; the second paper repeats that argument, while also arguing for the necessity of the first-person perspective against second-person views like those of Levinas and Darwall.]


I. Feelings, Emotions, and Evaluative Intentions

**September 14:** The Aristotelian Context | Aristotle, *On the Soul*, 403a3–403b2; 431b2–9; 432a15–433b30.
Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1102a26–1103a3; 1104b4–14; 1105b18–1106a6; 1106b15–1107a26; 1109a20–29; 1109b20–26; 1112b12–1113b5; 1114b26–1115a3; 1126b4–5; 1139a21–1139b5; 1142a22–1142b35.

**Optional Readings:**


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David Hume, *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, §1; Appendix I.  
*Optional Readings:*  
Peter Railton, “Humean Theory of Practical Rationality,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Ethical Theory*, 264–81 (available online through library’s [electronic catalog](#)).  
*Optional Reading* (for German readers):  
*Optional Reading:*  
Thomas Hurka, “Value Theory”, in *The Oxford Handbook of Ethical Theory*, 357–79 (available online through library’s [electronic catalog](#)).  
*Optional Readings:*  
*Optional Readings* (for German readers):  
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**III. Volition**

|                       | Karl Mertens, “Husserl’s Phenomenology of Will in his Reflections on Ethics,” in *Aliterity and Facticity*, 121–38 (*E-res*).  |
Date & Topic   Readings

IV. The Obligatory

November 30: Deontology
Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork*, sections I–II.
Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, Bk. I, chap. I (up to the deduction of the principles of pure practical reason); chap II (up to the typic of pure practical judgment).

*Optional Readings:*

*Optional Reading (for German readers):*

December 7: Felt Demand
Max Scheler, *Formalism in Ethics and Non-Formal Ethics of Values*, 163–238.

V. Agents, Agency, and the Goods of Agency

December 14: The Duty of Virtue
**Date & Topic**  
December 21: The Good and the Obligatory

**Readings**


**Optional Reading:**


**Requirements**

1. Participation in class discussions; 10%.

2. Presentation paper, 20%: Each student will write one presentation paper (approximately 10 pages) on the readings assigned for the day of the presentation. The paper will be distributed to the class by e-mail no later than midnight of the Friday preceding the class. The paper should not be an exposition of the readings. It should focus on the issues common to and at stake in the readings and form a thesis regarding the readings taken as a whole, or it should raise questions about the readings, or make critical and evaluative remarks. The paper will not be read in class, but its author will be required to present a five-minute to ten-minute summary of its main points.

3. Prepared comments, 10%: Each presentation paper will have a commentator. The commentator should prepare a critical comment of five to ten minutes (approximately 2–4 pages). The comments will be read in class, and the author of the paper will respond. General discussion will follow.

4. Research paper, 60%: Each student is expected to submit a research paper of 5000 to 7000 words. The papers can be on any topic that touches on the themes discussed in the course. I recommend that you discuss your topics with me. The research papers may be based on a presentation paper or comment, but need not be. The paper is due on the last day of class (December 21).