

FORDHAM UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

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Philosophical Ethics  
PHIL 1100, Sections R21–R26  
Lecture: Tuesdays 11:30–1:20 (Keating 3rd)  
Discussion: Fridays 11:30–12:20 or 12:30–1:20

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Instructor: Professor John Drummond  
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OFFICE HOURS:  
Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:00 – 4:00 pm  
And by appointment

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*Discussion Section Information*

<i>Section</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Assistant</i>	<i>Discussion Room</i>
R21	11:30–12:20	Christopher Hromas	Keating–B19
R22	11:30–12:20	Ryan Kemp	Keating–B21
R23	11:30–12:20	Bjorn Sayers	Keating–104
R24	12:30–1:20	Christopher Hromas	Keating–B19
R25	12:30–1:20	Ryan Kemp	Keating–B21
R26	12:30–1:20	Bjorn Sayers	Keating–B16

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*Introduction*

This course is the second course in philosophy that you take as part of Fordham’s core curriculum. Fordham’s undergraduate core curriculum is designed to develop the capacity for clear and critical thinking and for correct and forceful expression. It seeks to impart a knowledge of scientific principles and skills, an awareness of historical perspective, an understanding of the contemporary world with its cultural diversity, and an intelligent appreciation of religious, philosophical, and moral values. In this course, we seek to address several of these goals, most notably those having to do with critical thinking and writing about philosophical and moral values in the context of an awareness of the main historical alternatives that have been advanced in ethical theory.

We shall proceed by investigating various ethical approaches: utilitarianism, deontology, and virtue theory. Our investigation will be made more concrete by studying how these approaches help or

hinder our thinking about some of the more important issues of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Our readings will include selections from both major historical figures and contemporary authors.

### *Course Objectives*

1. To awaken the philosophical assumptions at work in our everyday moral understanding and judgments.
2. To introduce the major views of the moral and the major approaches to moral argumentation developed in the history of western philosophy.
3. To develop students' abilities to read moral positions analytically and critically, to make carefully articulated and well-defended moral judgments, and to defend these judgments in speech and writing.

### *Texts*

**N.B.** Please be sure to buy the editions listed so that we will have common translations and common page references. The easiest way to ensure this is to ensure that your copy has the correct ISBN.

Aiken, William and Hugh LaFollette, eds. *World Hunger and Morality*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1996. ISBN: 0134482840. Referred to in the course schedule as *WHM*.  
 Aristotle. *Nicomachean Ethics*. Ed. R. Crisp. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. ISBN: 0521635462. Referred to in the course schedule as *NE*.  
 Kant, Immanuel. *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*. Ed. M. Gregor. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. ISBN: 0521626951. Referred to in the course schedule as *G*.  
 Selected articles on *E-Res*. The course password for the *E-Res* system is "drummond" (without, of course, the quotation marks).

### *Course Schedule*

Date	Lecture Session	Discussion Section
September 4:	Organization and Introduction	
September 8:	John Stuart Mill, "Utilitarianism," <i>E-Res</i> . Philip Pettit, "Consequentialism," <i>E-Res</i> . Peter Singer, "Famine, Affluence, and Morality," in <i>WHM</i> , 26–38.	
September 11:		Garrett Cullity, "The Life-saving Analogy," in <i>WHM</i> , 51–69.

Date	Lecture Session	Discussion Section
September 15:	Brad Hooker, "Rule-Consequentialism," <i>E-Res</i> . J. J. C. Smart, "Extreme and Restricted Utilitarianism," <i>E-Res</i> .	
September 18:		R. M. Hare, "What is Wrong with Slavery," <i>E-Res</i> .
September 22:	John Harris, "The Survival Lottery," <i>E-Res</i> . John Rawls, "Classical Utilitarianism," <i>E-Res</i> . Alan Gewirth, "The Golden Rule Rationalized," <i>E-Res</i> .	
September 25:		Thomas Hill, "Kantian Normative Ethics," <i>E-Res</i> .
September 29:	<b>EXAMINATION</b>	
October 2:		Onora O'Neill, "Ending World Hunger," in <i>WHM</i> , 85–112.
October 6:	Class canceled.	
October 9:		Examinations returned and discussed.
October 13:	No class; Monday schedule	
October 16:		Onora O'Neill, "Kantian Approaches to Some Famine Problems," <i>E-Res</i>
October 20:	<i>G</i> , vii–xv; 1–18.	
October 23:		Christine Korsgaard, "Kant's Formula of Universal Law," <i>E-Res</i> .
October 27:	<i>G</i> , xv–xxv; 19–43.	
October 30:		Rosalind Hursthouse, "Normative Virtue Ethics," <i>E-Res</i> .
November 3:	<i>NE</i> , 3–36.	
November 6:		Martha Nussbaum, "Non-Relative Virtues: An Aristotelian Approach," <i>E-Res</i> .
November 10:	<i>NE</i> , 37–48.	

Date	Lecture Session	Discussion Section
November 13:		Michael Slote, "Famine, Affluence, and Virtue," <i>E-Res.</i>
November 17:	<i>NE</i> , 81–102.	
November 20:		Julia Annas, "Virtue Ethics," <i>E-Res.</i>
November 24:	<i>NE</i> , 103–142.	
November 27:		No class; Thanksgiving holiday.
December 1:	<i>NE</i> , 143–82.	
December 4:		Review discussion.
December 8:	<i>NE</i> , 183–204.	
	<b>FINAL EXAMINATION</b>	

### *Course Policies*

1. **Academic Integrity:** Review carefully the "Fordham Arts and Sciences Policy on Academic Integrity." It is published in your Student Handbook. The policy defines plagiarism and its various forms. Ignorance will not be counted as an excuse. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated in this course and will automatically result in a failing grade for the course.
2. **Internet:** In accordance with the academic integrity policy, you must cite all sources, including internet sources. But that does not mean you should use internet sources. The internet sources that are acceptable for citation in this class are those that can be accessed through the University Library. The only exception to this rule is the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, which can be accessed at <http://www.stanford.edu>.
3. **Attendance:** Because attendance and active involvement are essential for learning, students are expected to attend all classes. You are responsible to check in at each class with the assistant assigned to your discussion section. Absences will be excused if and only if I receive written documentation from an appropriate authority (e.g., the Dean or a physician) that the absence was unavoidable due to illness, death in the immediate family, or participation in an official College activity. More than *two* unexcused absences may result in a judgment that the requirement for class participation was not satisfied.
4. **Computers and phones:** *No* computers may be used during class. Mobile phones must be turned *off* (not merely silenced) or left at home. Any visible electronic equipment will be confiscated until the end of class, and anyone checking e-mail or web sites or text messaging during class will be marked absent for the day.
5. **E-mail:** Official class documents and announcements (e.g., this syllabus) will on occasion be sent to you via e-mail at your official Fordham address. You must be sure to check this account regularly or

set it up to forward all your Fordham e-mail to the account you regularly check. Any communications or announcements will also be posted on the course's Blackboard site.

6. **Disability:** Under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973, all students, with or without disabilities, are entitled to equal access to the programs and activities of Fordham University. If you believe that you have a disabling condition that may interfere with your ability to participate in the activities, coursework, or assessment of the object of this course, you may be entitled to accommodations. Please schedule an appointment to speak with someone at the Office of Disability Services (O'Hare Hall, Lower Level, x0655). To receive accommodations (e.g., time extensions for test taking), you must declare yourself to the Office of Disability Services and bring a letter from that office to the instructor of the course.

### *Requirements*

1. **Class Participation:**

Students are expected (*a*) to arrive at class having read the assigned materials, (*b*) to have prepared any writing assignments for the day, and (*c*) to take part in our classroom discussions. I strongly suggest reading each assignment at least twice—once quickly to get a sense of the text, then again for detail. When reading for detail, you should try to identify the author's arguments (i.e., the claim being made and the reasons given in support of that claim); you should outline the text, and note any questions or reactions you have.

I realize that some students are more reticent than others; hence, I consider office visits or e-mails to raise questions or discuss issues forms of class participation. However, since philosophical positions are refined in dialogue, I urge everyone to take part in our communal discussions in the classroom. Class participation will count for 15% of your final grade.

2. **Examinations**

- a. Midterm Examination: September 29; 10% of your final grade.
- b. Final Examination; 15% of your final grade.

3. **Papers:**

Over the course of the semester you will be required to submit several written assignments of differing complexity and different lengths.

- a. Due September 11: in no more than two pages, write a paper whose first paragraph states the life-saving analogy Cullity is discussing as well as the conclusion of his paper and the remainder of which details the argument Cullity presents regarding the life-saving analogy; 10% of your final grade.
- b. Due October 16: in no more than three to four pages, identify what position you think Onora O'Neill would take regarding Peter Singer's claims about our moral obligations regarding hunger and famine. Be sure that your paper includes a reconstruction of the argument you think O'Neill would make in favor of her view. Do you think her position effectively criticizes Singer? Why or why not?; 15% of your final grade.
- c. Due November 13: in no more than four pages, identify Michael Slote's arguments against the view held by Peter Singer and why an Aristotelian approach to virtue ethics cannot provide a similar response. Do you think Slote's criticism effective? Why or why not? 15% of your final grade.
- d. Due December 4: a four to five-page paper on a topic of your own choosing. It would be wise to discuss your topic either with me or your section leader before writing; 20% of your final grade.

**N.B. You have not completed the course (and no passing grade can be given for a course not completed) until you have completed *all* the requirements.**

### *Writing Philosophical Essays*

Since you have fairly extensive writing assignments in this course, it might be useful to have some do's and don'ts in regard to them. The do's of writing essays for this course are simple in theory (less simple to achieve):

- (1) write clearly, precisely, concisely, and to the point; and
- (2) do what you are assigned to do, i.e., analyze, evaluate, respond, argue, or some combination of these.

Be sure to give reasons in support of your position. But remember that not everything counts as a good reason (e.g. "Well, I dunno, it just seemed that way at four in the morning...", or "My father, who minored in philosophy, told me that Hume's empiricism was right on target...", and the like). Bad reasons frequently begin with "I feel..." or "It seems to me...". Bad reasons are among the primary don'ts. Also many students in writing philosophy essays try to become Grand Orators and indulge in things like "Philosophy, the search for man's place in the web of being—or, at least, on the World Wide Web—weds itself in dialectical matrimony to life, purveyor of finitude, blah, blah, blah," or "Man has always sought answers to the riddles of existence, that fragile flower of the blooming of civilizations among the galaxies, blah, blah, blah," or "Aristotle, one of the greatest philosophers in the history of humankind, pondered an extraordinary range of fundamental questions in his search for the intelligibility not only of the world but of ourselves." There are many reasons for grand oratory, not the least of which is that they fill up the maximum amount of paper with the least amount of effort and thought. Even when what you say might contain some truth, this practice also belongs high on the list of don'ts.

You will be graded on how **clearly** and **precisely** you write and on how **well** you **present and defend your position**, not on whether I agree with you. When thinking about clarity, ask yourself "Is my main point clear? Is it stated at the beginning or near the beginning of paper? Do I stick to defending it throughout the paper? Is it easy to follow the development of my paper?" Remember as well that you are not assigned to guess what the person who grades your paper thinks; you are assigned to figure out your own position and to present it. Remember, of course, that not all positions are defensible and not all arguments are good. But on *some* issues, more than one defensible position can be found; state one and defend it. If you do this well, you will receive a good grade, even if we think you are wrong (although we'll likely tell you we think you wrong!). Except for the first paper (where the concern is to see how well you read an article), I am asking for your view (even when, as part of the paper, I ask you to expound or construct someone else's view). Expounding another's view is a way of helping you express your own beliefs or make your own argument. Say why your view is correct and why another's isn't correct or needs to be strengthened or is just perfect. But whenever you discuss another's views, you must do so fairly and in a balanced way. You need to think about what they might say about your position, how they would criticize it, and how you would defend it in response. Don't, in other words, be one-sided in your discussion of an issue. Even if your view isn't perfect, tell me why it's better than the alternatives.

Finally, for the final paper where you choose your topic, consideration will be given to the degree of difficulty in your paper. Consider those sports where an easy exercise can be done well (e.g., a dive or a gymnastics maneuver) but scored low whereas a difficult exercise, even if not as technically good, can wind up with a higher score. Same in philosophy: the best papers are technically good (clear, precise,

well-argued) and deal with difficult or complex material. For this paper, grades in the ‘A’ range are given for **well-written essays that clearly and precisely state a position on a difficult and complex topic and defend it well**. Grades in the ‘B’ range are given for essays that state and defend a position well, but are not so well written, or for essays that are well written but do not defend their position as well or whose issues are not so difficult. Grades in the ‘C’ range are given for essays that give OK but not terribly well defended answers or that are not particularly well written or tackle an uninteresting question. Grades in the ‘D’ range are given for superficial, badly defended, and not well written answers. An ‘F’ is for a poorly written, incompetent answer showing little or no understanding of the material.

### *Service Learning Option*

Service-learning is an academic program that allows students to unite their academic reflections with community service. The service-learning program intends to deepen a student’s understanding of their academic studies through direct service experience. Upon successful completion of the program’s requirements, a student will earn one additional credit.

The requirements of the program are as follows:

1. 40 hours of community service;
2. Writing 2 reflective essays;
3. E-mailing weekly updates on service experiences;
4. Attending 1 small group session during the semester;
5. Attending a mid-semester seminar with other service-learning credit students; and
6. Additional requirements can be added by the course professor (i.e., journal or class presentation).

To participate in the service-learning program a student must:

1. Fill out the service-learning agreement, available in the Community Service Program office (McGinley 101);
2. Get approval from the course instructor and have the course instructor sign the agreement;
3. Present the agreement to the agency supervisor who must also sign the agreement;
4. Make a copy of the agreement for oneself and one’s instructor and then return the agreement to the Community Service Program office.

The service-learning agreement deadline is Friday, September 11, 2009. No agreements will be accepted after this date.

### *A Final Word of Advice (or, rather, Three)*

1. Read each assignment more than once. Read a passage through quickly once in order to get the “lay of the land.” Then review it in detail, outlining it, isolating its argumentative structure, and taking notes on it (Keep a reading notebook separate from your class notes!). A third, quick review to make sure you have not missed anything would not hurt, nor would a re-reading after our class discussion.
2. Keep up with the daily assignments. If you get behind, you are likely to rush to catch up and you will simply be unable to do the reading adequately or participate well in class.
3. If you encounter difficulties with the material or the course, **see me!** I will not bite, and probably won’t even bark.