

Sample Syllabus:
Moral Philosophy
PROFESSOR G. CAMPELIA

Course Description

This course will sift through some large and important questions, such as “How should one live?”, “What counts as a right action?”, “What is morality?”, “What are the foundations of morality?” and “Why be moral?” We will begin with two important moral questions: “isn’t it all relative?” and “where does morality come from?” Then we will move onto an in depth study of four major ethical theories: Consequentialism, Deontology, Virtue Ethics and Care Ethics. We will spend a significant amount of time critically investigating primary sources, but we will also utilize various contemporary ethical concerns and dilemmas (such as abortion, pornography, euthanasia, and genetic engineering) to come to a more robust understanding of these theories. Finally, we will end the course with an exploration of fairness and moral luck. Here, we will explore aspects of Rawls’ *Theory of Justice* and question its fairness and inclusivity of women and the family. This will lead us to consider larger questions of moral luck, particularly the influence of social norms (e.g. gender, race and class) on our moral decisions and actions.

Session Readings

Required Texts:

- (1) MacKinnon, B. (2010) *Ethics: Theory and Contemporary Issues*, Concise Edition: 1st Ed. Wadsworth Cengage Learning, Boston.
- (2) Aristotle. *Nicomachean Ethics*. Trans. Terence Irwin (1999). Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company.

Why study ethics? Isn’t it all Relative?

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| Week 1 | (1) MacKinnon: Part 1, Chap 1: Why Study Ethics? What is Ethics?
(2) Mackinnon: Part 1, Chap 2: Relativism
(3) Harman, Gilbert. (1975). Moral Relativism Defended. <i>The Philosophical Review</i> , 84(1): 3-22. |
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Where does morality come from?

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Week 2-3	<ol style="list-style-type: none">(1) Stevenson, C.L. (1937). The Emotive Meaning of Ethical Terms. <i>Mind</i>, 46(181):14-31.(2) Hume "Of the Influencing Motives of the Will" and "Moral Distinctions Not Derived from Reason". In <i>Treatise of Human Nature</i>.(3) Korsgaard, Christine. (1992). The Sources of Normativity: Introduction. <i>The Tanner Lectures on Human Values</i>. Cambridge University.(4) Foot, Phillipa. (1958). Moral Beliefs. <i>Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society</i>, 59: 83-104.
The Moral Theory Rundown:	
(a) Consequentialism	
Week 3-4	<ol style="list-style-type: none">(1) MacKinnon Chap 4: Utilitarianism(2) Mill, J.S. <i>Utilitarianism</i>, Chap 1-4(3) Hooker, B. (2014). Rule Utilitarianism and Euthanasia. In H. LaFollette (Ed.), <i>Ethics in Practice</i>, 4th Ed. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell.
(b) Deontology	
Week 5-7	<ol style="list-style-type: none">(1) MacKinnon: Chap 5: Kant's Moral Theory(2) Kant, E. <i>Metaphysics of Morals</i> (excerpts).(3) Van der Graaf, R. and van Delden, J. J. (2012). Using people merely as a means in clinical research. <i>Bioethics</i>, 26(2):76-83.(4) Thomson, J.J. (2014). A Defense of Abortion. In H. LaFollette (Ed.), <i>Ethics in Practice</i>, 4th Ed. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell.
(c) Virtue Ethics	
Week 8-11	<ol style="list-style-type: none">(1) Aristotle <i>NE</i> Introduction and Book I(2) Aristotle <i>NE</i> Introduction and Book II-III(3) Aristotle <i>NE</i> Introduction and Book VI and VII(4) Hursthouse, R. (2014). Virtue Theory and Abortion. In H. LaFollette (Ed.), <i>Ethics in Practice</i>, 4th Ed. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell.
(d) Care Ethics	
Week 12	<ol style="list-style-type: none">(1) Gilligan, C. (1982). <i>In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development</i>. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. (excerpts)(2) Held, V. (2006). <i>The Ethics of Care: Personal, Political, and Global</i>. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (excerpts)(3) MacKinnon: Chap 8: Euthanasia
Luck and Fairness	

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Session	Readings
Week 13-14	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="375 373 1365 436">(1) Rawls, J. (1999). <i>A Theory of Justice</i>. New York: Oxford University Press. (excerpts)<li data-bbox="375 443 1349 506">(2) Pateman, Carole. (1988). Genesis, Fathers and the Political Liberties of Sons. <i>The Sexual Contract</i>. United Kingdom: Polity Press. (excerpts)<li data-bbox="375 512 1292 575">(3) Nagel, T. (1993) Moral Luck. In D. Statman (Ed.), <i>Moral Luck</i>. State University of New York Press, Albany, New York, pp. 57-71.<li data-bbox="375 581 1414 676">(4) Tessman, L. (2005). Chapter 2: The Damage of Moral Damage. In <i>Burdened Virtues: Virtue Ethics for Liberatory Struggles</i>. New York: Oxford University Press.