

Moral Theory and Practise

Philosophy 230 Section N, Fall 2008

time: T. And Th. 11-12.15

Janni Pedersen

022, Catt Hall Meeting

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Office hrs: T. and Th. 9-10.30 or by appointment

Required text book: Steve Luper/Curtis Brown (Eds.) 2005. *The Moral Life*. 2nd edition. Wadsworth, Thomson Learning Inc.

Supplementary readings as indicated in the schedule and/or in class will be posted on Webct.

Examples of contemporary debate in media and elsewhere with ethical implications will be included when possible and relevant for the discussion in class.

The goal of this course is to introduce the students to central philosophical ethical positions and their arguments as well as to the contemporary debate of ethical issues in society from a philosophical point of view. The historical situation of the classic ethical philosophers will also be taken into account and emphasis will be placed upon developing the students' critical thinking skills in relation to ethical issues in both personal and professional life.

Students will be responsible for all content covered in class, both assigned texts and additional information. Students are responsible for checking information, changes, assignments etc. posted on webct.

Evaluation:

Evaluation will be based upon a midterm exam covering the first half of the semester and a final exam covering the second half. There will also be quizzes during class and 2 take-home assignments which all count towards the grade.

Students that, for a valid reason, are unable to be present at a quiz or exam must schedule an alternative time for the quiz beforehand.

Semester plan (subject to change)

August 26th: Intro to philosophy and philosophical ethics

August 28th: Intro to philosophical ethics

Reading: *Introduction*, p.3

Sept. 2nd: Structure of argumentation

Sept. 4th: Aristotle

Reading: *The Nichomachean Ethics*, p.17

Sept. 9th: Aristotle

Sept. 11th: Immanuel Kant

Reading: *Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals*, p.46

Sept. 16th: Immanuel Kant

Sept. 18th: John Stuart Mill

Reading: *Utilitarianism*, p. 33

Sept. 23rd: John Stuart Mill

Sept. 25th: Virtue ethics, duty ethics, and utilitarianism

Sept. 30th: Euthanasia

Reading: Introduction chap. 9, p. 343, James Rachel: *Active and Passive Euthanasia* ,
p.347

Oct. 2nd: Euthanasia:

Reading: Joseph V. Sullivan: *The immorality of Euthanasia*, p.352

Oct. 7th: Euthanasia,

Reading: Janes Rachels *Euthanasia*, p. 357

Oct. 9th: Abortion

Reading: Introduction chap. 17, R.M. Hare: *A Kantian Approach to Abortion*, p. 585

Oct. 14th: Abortion:

Reading: Judith Jarvis Thomson: *A Defense of Abortion*, 594

Oct. 16th: Review

Oct. 21st: Midterm

Oct. 23rd: Capital punishment

Reading: Introduction chap.10, p.376, Stephen Nathanson: *Do Murders Deserve to Die?*
p. 380

Oct. 28th: Capital punishment

Reading: Jeffrey Reinman: *The Justice of the Death Penalty in an Unjust World*, p. 390

Ernst Van den Haag: *Refuting Reiman and Nathanson*, p. 400

Oct. 30th: Animal ethics

Reading: Introduction to chapter 18, Immanuel Kant: *Duties Towards Animals*, p. 614

Peter Singer: *Animal Liberation*, p.616

Nov. 4th: Animal ethics

Reading: Ruth Cigman: *Death, Misfortune, and Species Inequality*, p.625

Nov. 6th: Animal Ethics

Nov. 11th: Business Ethics

Film: *Ethics and Social Responsibility in Business*

Nov. 13th: Business Ethics

Reading: Ivar Kolstad: *Why Firms Should Not Always Maximize Profits*

Nov. 18th: Business Ethics

Reading: Johan Wempe: *Ethical Entrepreneurship and Fair Trade*

Nov. 20th: Business Ethics

Reading: Ian Holoday: *Doing Business With Rights Violating Regimes*

Nov. 25th and 27th: Thanksgiving Holiday

Nov. 25th: Distributive Justice

Reading: Introduction, chap. 8, John Locke: *Property, Labor, and the State*, p. 317

Nov. 27th: Distributive Justice

Reading: Karl Marx : *A Critique of Capitalism*, p.330

Dec. 2nd: Distributive Justice

Reading: John Rawls: *Justice as Fairness*, p. 335

Dec. 4th: Obligations Towards the Needy: Hunger

Readings: Introduction, chap. 15, Peter Singer: *Famine, Affluence, and Morality*, p.535

Dec. 9th: Obligations Towards the Needy

Dec. 11th: Review

Week of Dec. 15th: Final exam