

PHIL 132: ETHICAL THEORY

FALL 2018

T 3:00-5:45
Sweeny Hall 241
Prof. Brown

This is a core course in philosophy through which we will raise such questions as: Why should one be moral, especially if doing the right thing is contrary to one's self-interest? Are we selfish by nature? How do we determine what is right or wrong? Should morality be based on religion or can it be secularly derived? If morality is indeed secularly derived, is it relative or universal? When it comes to making moral decisions what are important motivating factors? Considerations of consequences, intentions, one's character or moral emotions?

We will consider these questions through reading major ethical theories, such as virtue ethics, Kantianism, utilitarianism, contractarianism, meta-ethics, feminist ethics, Buddhist ethics, and a few seminal articles in applied ethics. We will be studying ethical theories in historical order while being mindful of the development of ideas through different periods of time and in different schools of thought.

We will use the following anthology: *Ethics: History, Theory and Contemporary Issues*, Steven M. Chan and Peter Markie eds., Oxford University Press, 2012.

