

Philosophy 61  
Contemporary Moral Issues  
Spring 2016  
T TH 1:30-2:45, DMH 208

Professor Rita Manning  
FO 210  
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Office Hours: T,TH 11-1 and by appt

## SYLLABUS

### Course Content

This course is designed to help you to think about, dialogue about and constructively resolve controversial moral issues.

*GE (C letters) SLOs:*

1. recognize how significant works illuminate enduring human concerns
2. respond to such works by writing both research-based critical analyses and personal responses
3. write clearly and effectively.

**Texts:** *Contemporary Moral Issues*, ed. Hinman (CMI); *Practical Ethics*, Manning and Stroud (in Canvas) (PE), other readings in Canvas (C). Lecture Notes (LN) in Powerpoint and pdf are also in Canvas.

### Week 1

1/28: Topic: Introduction. Do self quiz in CMI, p.xxii.

### Week 2 LN: PP slide 1-9

2/2: Topic: Law and morality in the U.S. Reading: PE, Ch. 1

2/4: Topic: Misconduct. Reading: "Fair Game" (C). Journal 1 due.

### Week 3 LN: 10-27

2/9: Topic: Moral Reasoning. Reading: PE, Ch. 2,

2/11: Topic: Moral Reasoning: "Guns, Tears..." (C). Journal 2 due.

### Week 4 LN: 28-39

2/16: Topics: Ethical Theory—Buddhist Ethics. Reading:

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ethics-indian-buddhism/>

2/18: Topic: Abortion, Reading: pp. 55-70, English, Padawer (all in CMI).

Journal 3 due.

### Week 5 LN: 40-66

2/23: Topic: Ethical Theory—Kant and Moral Rights. Reading: PE Ch. 3 13-24, "The Supreme Court and a life barely lived" (C)

2/25: Topic: Supreme Court (SCOTUS) and abortion Reading: *Roe v. Wade*  
<https://www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/410/113> (optional). Journal 4 due.

Week 6 LN: 67-77

3/1: Topic: Aid in Dying and SCOTUS and dying. Reading: “Philosopher’s Brief” (C), Rachels (CMI)

3/3: Topic: Aid in Dying. Reading: Gawande (CMI). Journal 5 due.

Week 7 LN: 78-82

3/8: Topic: Ethical Theory--Utilitarianism

3/10: Topic: Paper Assigned, Presentation explained. Reading: Start reading briefs for *Fisher v University of Texas*:

[http://www.americanbar.org/publications/preview\\_home/2015\\_2016\\_briefs/14-981.html](http://www.americanbar.org/publications/preview_home/2015_2016_briefs/14-981.html)

Week 8 LN: 83-93

3/15: Topic: Ethical Theory---Virtue. Reading: PE, Ch. 3 pp. 25-32

3/17: MIDTERM

Week 9 LN: 94-107

3/22: Topic: Ethical Theory---Care. Reading: PE, Ch. 4

3/24: Topic: SCOTUS and Sexual Orientation. Reading: Nussbaum (CMI).

Journal 6 due.

Week 10 LN: 108-115

4/5: Topic: Ethical Theory—Justice Reading: PE, Ch. 5

4/7: Topic: World Hunger and Poverty. Reading: pp. 364-378, Pogge (both in CMI), PE, Ch. 10. Journal 7 due.

Week 11 LN: 116-119

4/12: Topic: More Global Theories. Reading: PE Ch. 6

4/14: Topic: Environment Ethics and Living with Animals, Reading: pp. 409-413 and 439-442, Momaday (all in CMI). Journal 8 due. DRAFT OF PAPER DUE.

Week 12 LN: 120-126

4/19: Topic: Punishment. Reading: “Criminal Attempts” (C); Justice Breyer dissent (C)

4/21: Topic: Capital Punishment, Reading: Prejean, Gelernter, Reiman (all in CMI). Journal 9 due.

Week 13 LN: 127-134

4/26: Topic: War and Terrorism. Reading: CMI, pp. 173-195

4/28: Topic: War and Terrorism. Reading: “Pentagon will extend...” (C), Dershowitz (CMI). Journal 10 due.

Week 14 LN: 135-138

5/3: SCOTUS on Affirmative Action. Reading: Brief for Petitioner Abigail Noel Fisher, Brief for Respondents University of Texas at Austin, et al.

[http://www.americanbar.org/publications/preview\\_home/2015\\_2016\\_briefs/14-981.html](http://www.americanbar.org/publications/preview_home/2015_2016_briefs/14-981.html)

5/5: Presentations on Affirmative Action

Week 15

5/10: Topic: Affirmative Action presentations

5/12: Topic: Affirmative Action presentations

Week 16

5/16: Review for Final. FINAL PAPER DUE

Final Exam: Thursday, 5/19. 12:15 to 2:30.

**Requirements:** You will be required to take one *midterm* and one *final*.

*Paper:* You will write one paper and turn in a draft and final version on the dates indicated. Your grade will be based on the final version of the paper. **YOU MUST TURN IN YOUR DRAFT BY 4/14 AND YOUR FINAL PAPER BY 5/16 IN ORDER TO GET FULL CREDIT.**

*Presentation.* You will do a final group presentation.

*Participation:* This class will be roughly 50% lecture and 50% discussion/activity. It is very important for you to come to class prepared to discuss the material and participate in the discussion/activity. You will sometimes be discussing in small groups and reporting to the entire class and sometimes discussing as a class.

*Journals:* Discussion will be based on questions assigned as journals which you will do as homework. You will find these questions in Canvas. You will bring a copy of your journal to class on the dates listed on the syllabus. **LATE JOURNALS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED** without a serious excuse accepted by instructor.

**Grading:** Your midterm will count for 20 points, the final for 30, the paper for 20. The journal, final group presentation and class participation count for 10 points each.

## **Academic Policies and Resources**

### **Library Contact:**

Rebecca Feind: 408-808-2007

Rebecca.Feind@sjsu.edu

### **Learning Assistance Resource Center**

The Learning Assistance Resource Center (LARC) is located in Room 600 in the Student Services Center. It is designed to assist students in the development of their full academic potential and to motivate them to become self-directed learners. The center provides support services, such as skills assessment, individual or group tutorials, subject advising, learning assistance, summer academic preparation and basic skills development. The LARC website is located at <http://www.sjsu.edu/larc/>.

### **SJSU Writing Center**

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Room 126 in Clark Hall. It is staffed by professional instructors and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the seven SJSU colleges. Our writing specialists have met a rigorous GPA requirement, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. The Writing Center website is located at <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/>.

### **Peer Mentor Center**

The Peer Mentor Center is located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of Clark Hall in the Academic Success Center. The Peer Mentor Center is staffed with Peer Mentors who excel in helping students manage university life, tackling problems that range from academic challenges to interpersonal struggles. On the road to graduation, Peer Mentors are navigators, offering “roadside assistance” to peers who feel a bit lost or simply need help mapping out the locations of campus resources. Peer Mentor services are free and available on a drop –in basis, no reservation required. Website of Peer Mentor Center is located at <http://www.sjsu.edu/muse/peermentor/>

### **Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act**

#### **Accessible Education Center:**

“If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with AEC to establish a record of their disability.” [Academic Senate Policy F06-2](#)

### **Student Technology Resources**

Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of Clark Hall and on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library.

A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include digital and VHS camcorders, VHS and Beta video players, 16 mm, slide, overhead, DVD, CD, and audiotape players, sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

### **Dropping and Adding**

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, etc. Information on add/drops are available at <http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/soc-fall/rec-298.html>. Information about late drop is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/sac/advising/latedrops/policy/>. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for adding and dropping classes.

### **Workload Expectations**

“Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of forty-five hours over the length of the course (normally 3 hours per unit per week with 1 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities including but not limited to internships, labs, clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.” *Academic Senate Policy S 12-3*

### **General Expectations, Rights and Responsibilities of the Student**

As members of the academic community, students accept both the rights and responsibilities incumbent upon all members of the institution. Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with SJSU’s policies and practices pertaining to the procedures to follow if and when questions or concerns about a class arises. See [University Policy S90-5](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S90-5.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S90-5.pdf>. More detailed information on a variety of related topics is available in the [SJSU catalog](http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/catalog/rec-12234.12506.html), at <http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/catalog/rec-12234.12506.html>. In general, it is recommended that students begin by seeking clarification or discussing concerns with their instructor. If such conversation is not possible, or if it does not serve to address the issue, it is recommended that the student contact the Department Chair as a next step.

### **Academic integrity**

Students should know that the University’s Academic Integrity Policy is available at [http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/download/judicial\\_affairs/Academic\\_Integrity\\_Policy\\_S07-2.pdf](http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/download/judicial_affairs/Academic_Integrity_Policy_S07-2.pdf). Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University and the University’s integrity policy, require you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The website for Student Conduct and Ethical Development is available at [http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial\\_affairs/index.html](http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html). Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person’s ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include in your assignment any material you have

submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU's Academic Policy F06-1 requires approval of instructors.

**Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material**

[University Policy S12-7](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf), <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf>, requires students to obtain instructor's permission to record the course and the following items to be included in the syllabus:

- “Course material developed by the instructor is the intellectual property of the instructor and cannot be shared publicly without his/her approval. You may not publicly share or upload instructor generated material for this course such as exam questions, lecture notes, or homework solutions without instructor consent.”