

PHIL 132: ETHICAL THEORY

FALL 2018

Prof. Brown

Course and contact information:

Class day/time: T 3:00-5:45

Class Location: Sweeny Hall, 241

Office hours: MW 2:00-3:00

FOB Room 233

(408) 924-4524

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Course description:

This is a core course in philosophy. We will read all the major ethical theories, virtue ethics, Kantianism, utilitarianism, contractarianism, feminist ethics and a few seminal articles. We will be studying ethics in historical order while being mindful of the development of ethical theory through different periods of time and schools of thought.

Required Text:

Ethics: History, Theory and Contemporary Issues, Steven M. Chan and Peter Markie eds., Oxford University Press, 6th ed, 2016.

Classroom protocol:

NO ELECTRONIC DEVICES!

Course requirements

First research paper assignment, five pages. 25%.
Take-home midterm examination, three essays. 20%.
Second paper assignment, five pages. 25%.
Take home final examination, three essays. 20%.
Class participation. 10%.

Tentative reading schedule

8/28	Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, Books I, II, III.
9/4	Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, Books , VI, VII & X.
9/11	Epicurus, Letter to Menoeceus. Epictetus, Enchiridion, chapters 1-8.
9/18	Epictetus, chapters 9-33.
9/25	Emmanuel Kant, Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Moral, preface, chapter one. Emmanuel Kant, Groundwork, chapter two, up to page 336 (top).
10/2	Kant, pp 336-342. John Stuart Mill, Utilitarianism, chapters I & II.
10/9	John Stuart Mill, Utilitarianism, chapter III, IV &5.
10/16	Friedrich Nietzsche, Genealogy of Morals, first and second essays.
10/23	G. E. Moore, Principia Ethica. H. A Prichard, Does Moral Philosophy Reston a Mistake?
10/30	A. J. Ayer, Language, Truth and logic. C. L. Stevenson, The Emotive Meaning of Ethical Terms.
11/6	J. P Sartre, Existentialism is a Humanism.
11/13	G. E. M. Anscombe, Modern Moral Philosophy.
11/20	John Rawls, A Theory of Justice. David Gauthier, Why Contractarianism?

- 11/27 Julia Annas, Being Virtuous and Doing the Right Thing.
Virginia Held, Feminist Transformations of Moral Theory.
- 12/4 Peter Singer, Famine, Affluence and Morality.
John Arthur, Famine Relief and the Ideal Moral State.