

San Jose State University
PHIL 061 Moral Issues
Section 01
Fall 2018
Monday & Wednesday 7:30-08:45 AM in Dudley Moorhead Hall 208
Professor John C. Wilhelmsson
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Office Hours: Monday 09:00-09:30 AM

Introduction:

"Moral philosophy covering major ethical theories and contemporary moral issues, such as abortion, euthanasia, animal rights, capital punishment, and sexuality."

San Jose State University Course Description

The first systematic investigation of ethics was done by the philosopher Aristotle in ancient Greece. He identified the purpose, or end, of ethics as being happiness. Only later did most theorists come to see the study of ethics as being a study of certain actions being morally right or wrong. Discussions about many current ethical issues tend to become divisive. There are many reasons for this not the least of which is that we tend to think of ethics in terms of what is right and wrong and not in terms of whether engaging, or not engaging, in a particular act will bring happiness. This course will conduct a study of ethical theory and contemporary moral issues in light of the original purpose of ethics — happiness. The Monday session will usually consist of a reading quiz on the assigned selection in Readings In Classical Ethics followed by a lecture and discussion on same. The Wednesday session will usually consist of a review of the assigned chapter (or chapters) in the Doing Ethics textbook or Ten Universal Principles book.

Required Texts:

The required course texts will be Doing Ethics 3rd edition by Lewis Vaughn, Ten Universal Principles by Robert Spitzer, and Readings In Classical Ethics edited by John C. Wilhelmsson. They should be available in the Spartan Bookstore. Some student supplies you will need are 8 1/2 X 11" paper for the weekly reading quiz a pen or a pencil, and I would also suggest an academic planner to help manage your time well.

Course Requirements & Grading Information

The course evaluations will consist of reading quizzes and a short report on the Supreme Court confirmation hearings, a mid-term test on chapters 1-4 of Doing Ethics and sections I, II, & III of Ten Universal Principles, a paper on the philosophy of happiness, and a final exam project in which you will use the skills you have developed during the semester in order to evaluate a contemporary moral issue.. Each area of evaluation will be worth 25% of your semester grade. More information on these assignments will be given at the appropriate time. Grading for this class will be done on a straight point system. 100=A+, 99-90%=A, 89-80%=B, 79-70%=C, 69-60%=D, below 60%=F. Any score at the high end of a grade range will receive a +. Any score at the low end of a grade range will receive a -.

GE Learning Outcomes

- * Student will develop an understanding of ethics as they relates to human cultures.
- * Student will develop intellectual and practical skills in order to evaluate moral issues.
- * Student will develop the ability to comprehend classic philosophical works.
- * Student will develop the skills of critical analysis and effective argumentation.

Student Learning Outcomes

- * Student will develop an understanding of ethical theories.
- * Student will develop an understanding of moral issues as they relate to ethics.
- * Student will develop the skill to analyze case studies and apply ethical theory to them.
- * Student will develop the skill to present their findings before a large group.

Guidelines for Paper Form:

All papers should be single sided and typed double spaced with a standard 12 or 14 point font. A cover sheet in the following form must be included.

San Jose State University
[6 spaces]
Paper Title
[6 spaces]
PHILOSOPHY 186
[6 spaces]
by [Student Name]

Papers should be done on white 8 1/2 X 11" paper stock stapled together in the upper left hand corner. No clear plastic covers or folders are to be used. If a given student does not have the means to type a paper computer labs are available on campus. Standard fonts should be used in an academic paper. Aesthetically pleasing papers often have a better chance of a good evaluation. Plagiarism is when you take another person's thought, writing or idea and attempt to pass it off as your own. It is not tolerated at this University and will not be tolerated in this course. Therefore, proper citations of all outside sources, including the course reader, are to be done. Students may use whatever style of citation is proper to their chosen major. If you have no preference or simply wish to please the instructor I prefer end notes. Only academic sources should be used in an academic paper. An academic source is one which is in some way subject to an academic editor or editorial board. Wikipedia and other on-line sources are not academic in nature and will not be accepted as academic sources.

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material: University Policy S12-7, <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: "Common courtesy and professional behavior dictate that you notify someone when you are recording him/her. You must obtain the instructor's permission to make audio or video recordings in this class. Such permission allows the recordings to be used for your private, study purposes only. The recordings are the intellectual property of the instructor; you have not been given any rights to reproduce or distribute the material." **In this course, in order to preserve academic freedom, there shall be no recording of any type whatsoever during any session.** "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."

University Academic Integrity Statement:

Your commitment, as a student, to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. The University Academic Integrity Policy S07-2 at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S07-2.pdf> requires 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 Student Conduct and Ethical Development website is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/>.

Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act:

If you need adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please talk to me as soon as possible, or see me during my office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the Accessible Education Center in order to establish a record of their disability. Special accommodations for exams require notice to the testing office and must be submitted to the instructor well in advance of the exam date.

Guidelines for Classroom Participation:

The first step toward a good classroom participation evaluation is preparedness. Practically speaking this involves getting to class on time, dealing with any problems of logistics (i.e. parking or transportation) well, and either not bringing at all or putting in the silent mode any mobile communication devices which might cause a disturbance (This means "NO PHONE ZOMBIES"). This also involves having completed the assigned readings for the particular class session and having the course reader, a pen or pencil and a notebook on hand. There will be many opportunities for classroom participation in this course. When wishing to participate in a discussion a student should raise their hand and wait for my cue before beginning to speak. Questions having anything to do with the topic at hand are welcome. At all times, and particularly during classroom discussions, students will show a high level of respect and courtesy toward one another and the instructor. This means that when one does not have the floor to speak one should be either listening or taking notes (or both). Keep in mind that in a philosophical discussion persons are not being criticized but rather only thoughts and ideas. Therefore, in a philosophical discussion one must learn to separate their personal ego from their

thoughts and ideas. It is only in this way that a student may embark upon the journey of thoughts, ideas, and meanings that are Philosophy.

Final Thoughts:

I look upon each course I teach as an organic learning community in which the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Therefore, if anything is getting in the way of your feeling that you are a part of this community please bring it to my attention.

COURSE SCHEDULE

08/22/18:	Go over Syllabus
08/27/18 & 08/29/18:	What is Philosophy? / What is Logic?
09/03/18 & 09/05/18:	LABOR DAY Holiday / *Edith Stein: What is Empathy?
09/10/18 & 09/12/18:	*Plato / DE Chapter 1
09/17/18 & 09/19/18:	*Aristotle / DE Chapter 2
09/24/18 & 09/26/18:	*Epicurus / DE Chapter 3
10/01/18 & 10/03/18:	*Seneca / DE Chapter 4
10/08/18 & 10/10/18:	*Augustine / TUP Section I
10/15/18 & 10/17/18:	*Kant / TUP Section II
10/22/18 & 10/24/18:	*Mill / TUP Section III
10/29/18 & 10/31/18:	Assign Paper & Final / Midterm
11/05/18 & 11/07/18:	Abortion Facts / Abortion Laws
11/12/18 & 11/14/18:	VETERAN'S DAY / Abortion Arguments
11/19/18 & 11/21/18:	Go Over Midterm / THANKGIVING
11/26/18 & 11/28/18:	Final Presentations
12/03/18 & 12/05/18:	Final Presentations
12/10/18:	Final Presentations
12/17/18 7:15–9:30 am:	Final Presentations

* Reading quiz on the philosopher of the day will be done in the first 15 minutes of class. There will be no makeups. If you are planning to miss a day the quiz can be taken in advance. Each quiz is worth 4 points

You will also watch and write a short report on the Supreme Court confirmation hearings of Judge Brett Kavanaugh as they relate to the Abortion issue. They begin September 4th. You will be asked to document what questions on the topic are asked and how Judge Kavanaugh responds. Then you will evaluate whether the questions were fair and the answers accurate. This report will be worth 4 points.