

San José State University
Department of philosophy
061, “Moral Issues”, Section 08, Fall 2018

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	David McReynolds
Office Location:	FOB
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Email:	David.McReynolds@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	Fridays 11:30am- 12:30 pm
Class Days/Time:	Friday 12:30pm-3:15pm
Classroom:	Dudley Moorhead Hall room 149B
GE/SJSU Studies Category:	C2

Technology Intensive, Hybrid, and Online Courses

This is not one of those courses thus, no special technology or hardware required for this course. This course will be primarily lecture, based off of weekly readings. All that you will need to succeed in this course is the required textbooks, pen and paper and an open mind.

Course Description

Moral philosophy covering major ethical theories and contemporary moral issues, such as abortion, euthanasia, animal rights, capital punishment, and sexuality. GE Area: C2

Morality is one of the main branches of philosophy and a cornerstone in the philosophical investigation. Morality is more than simply right and wrong; it encompasses the way in which we think about our lives and act in relation to others. Classical thinkers like Aristotle taught that to be moral one must strive to be virtuous and therein lays a happy life. This course will take one through such classical thinkers like Aristotle and continue on to discuss contemporary issues via modern Ethical theories of Kant and Mill.

Course Goals

Course goals: Philosophy 61 satisfies the C2 general education requirement

- Students will cultivate knowledge of philosophy in general with an emphasis on moral theory.
- Students will understand and discuss how differing moral theories apply to various situations.

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to: Within the particular moral content of the course, the student will be able to:

- Demonstrate basic critical thinking on moral issues in both verbal and written forms.
- Distinguish between differing ethical theories and how they apply to decision making.

Required Texts/Readings

Textbooks

“Readings In Classical Ethics” by John Wilhelmson, Chaos to Order Publishing ISBN# 978-0990723110 available at the Spartan Bookstore

“The Moral of the Story an Introduction to Ethics” Seventh Edition by Nina Rosenstand McGraw-Hill Press ISBN# 978-0-07-803842-6 available through Amazon (rental preferred)

Other Readings

If you are interested in further pursuit of these ideas please inquire, I would be happy to point you in the right direction.

Course Requirements and Assignments

You will be expected to write 2 essays. They will each be approximately 700/750 words in length. Topics and guidelines will be handed out well before the due dates. There will be reading assigned for each class, some of which is quite long so I will give you specific pages to read. It is important to attend class and read the assigned material before class. On the tests, you will be responsible for information contained in the readings as well as in the class lectures. Active participation is important. Students are encouraged to ask questions, contribute ideas, and engage in discussion of the course material. Each section will end with a discussion period during which all are expected to participate.

“Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practice. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.”

Final Examination or Evaluation

During the final examination period you will turn in your final paper to me before taking the final exam. The exam will be a short answer test based on the reading from the “Moral of the Story” textbook. I will hand out a study guide the prior week so that you will be prepared to discuss in written form the ideas from the book.

Course Grade Breakdown

Essay #1 (Classical Ethics) 20%

Essay #2 (Modern Ethics) 20%

Midterm #1 18%

Final Exam 18%

Class participation 6%

There will be no extra credit options.

If you are unable to complete assignments on time please talk to me in person. Late work will be penalized.

Grading Information:

All assignments will be graded out of 100 points. They will be weighted as indicated above. Final grades will be assigned according to the following grade schema:

93-100 = A, 90-92 = A-, 87-89 = B+, 83-86 = B, 80-82 = B-, 77-79 = C+,

73-76 = C, 70-72 = C-, 67-69 = D+, 63-66 = D, 60-62 = D-, 0-59 = F

Classroom Protocol

In a philosophy class (especially an Ethics course) the material can be controversial; in order to keep the conversation flowing, students must remain open to all perspectives, including those that they disagree with. It is paramount that we be respectful to those that are sharing a particular point of view and provide feedback based on reason and or logic as opposed to an emotive response.

While I know how important it is to stay in touch with the outside world via social media, the ‘be respectful’ clause from above extends to cell phone use as well. Keep notifications on silent, any class room interruptions of this nature are unacceptable. Please step out of the room for all pressing matters via technology.

Also, please arrive to class on time, having done the assigned readings/writings and ready to discuss with the class. While attendance is not mandatory, missing the lecture and discussion could prove detrimental to your success in this class. Much of the ideas in philosophy are found through discussion and examples from either me or your classmates.

University Policies

Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop, grade forgiveness, etc. Refer to the current semester’s [Catalog Policies](http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html) section at <http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html>. Add/drop deadlines can be found on the current academic year calendars document on the [Academic Calendars webpage](http://www.sjsu.edu/provost/services/academic_calendars/) at http://www.sjsu.edu/provost/services/academic_calendars/. The [Late Drop Policy](http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/>. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes.

Information about the latest changes and news is available at the [Advising Hub](http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/>.

Academic integrity

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](http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/>.

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. Cheating on a test will result in the assignment of a score of zero on the test. Consulting any notes, paper or electronic device, during a test is considered cheating. There will be no use of smart phones during a test for any reason. No smart phones should be visible during a test. All phones should be turned off and put away. Using a smart phone, for any reason, during a test will be considered cheating.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is an egregious form of academic dishonesty. If I discover any assignment is plagiarized, I will assign a score of zero for that assignment. There will be no opportunity for making up that assignment. Downloading or copying any content from websites, texts, or previously submitted papers, even partial copying, is considered plagiarism. In both cases, I will, without exception, file a report with the office of Student Conduct. It will be up to them to decide if any further action is necessary.

Attendance and Participation

Attendance per se shall not be used as a criterion for grading. However, students are expected to attend all meetings for the courses in which they are enrolled as they are responsible for material discussed therein, and active participation is frequently essential to ensure maximum benefit to all class members. In some cases, attendance is fundamental to course objectives; for example, students may be required to interact with others in the class. Attendance is the responsibility of the student. Participation may be used as a criterion for grading when the parameters and their evaluation are clearly defined in the course syllabus and the percentage of the overall grade is stated. The full policy language can be found at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F15-3.pdf>

Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material

[University Policy S12-7](#), 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.”

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make 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 the [Accessible Education Center](#) (AEC) to establish a record of their disability.

061 / “Moral Issues, Fall Semester 2018, Course Schedule

Reading should be done before the class meeting for which it is scheduled. “CE” = *Readings in Classical Ethics*, “MS” = *The moral of the Story*. The reading schedule is subject to change with advanced notice.

Week 1	Aug. 24	Introduction “What is Philosophy” Edith Stein’s Philosophy of Empathy
Week 2	Aug. 31	Plato CE pg.35-55
Week 3	Sept. 7	Aristotle CE pg. 57-82 Assign paper #1
Week 4	Sept. 14	Epicurus CE pg.83-95 Seneca CE pg. 97-116
Week 5	Sept. 21	Augustine CE pg 119-143
Week 6	Sept. 28	John Dewey CE pg. 145-154 Confucius CE pg. 155-175
Week 7	Oct. 5	1 st paper due MS Ch.1 Thinking About Moral Values
Week 8	Oct. 12	MS Ch. 3 Ethical Relativism
Week 9	Oct. 19	MS Ch. 4 Myself and Others
Week 10	Oct. 26	MS Ch. 5 Utilitarianism
Week 11	Nov. 2	MS Ch.6 Kant’s Deontology Assign final paper Midterm!!! Second half of class
Week 12	Nov. 9	MS Ch. 7 Personhood, Rights and Justice
Week 13	Nov. 16	MS Ch. 10 Contemporary Perspectives

Week 14	Nov. 23	Happy Holidays No Class
Week 15	Nov. 30	MS Ch. 12 Different Gender, Different Ethics?
Week 16	Dec. 7	Course conclusion Last day of class
Week 17	Dec 17	Final Exam @ 12:15pm—2:30pm DMH 149B