

Philosophy 102: Contemporary Moral Problems
Summer 2013, B Term
Syllabus

Course Instructor: Amy Reed-Sandoval
Office: Savery Hall 378
Office Hours: TBD
amyjota@uw.edu

Course goals:

This course is an introduction to philosophical thinking about moral topics. It has three main goals:

1. To provide you with an introduction to the concepts and methods used in philosophy.
2. To demonstrate what arguments have been made in the past about disputed moral issues.
3. To give you a chance to apply the tools of philosophy to these issues yourself.

Required Text:

All readings, unless otherwise noted, are from Mark Timmons, *Disputed Moral Issues*, 2d ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.) This book is available at the University Bookstore.

Course Requirements Overview (more specific details to follow):

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 1. Class Participation (in the form of daily in-class exercises): | 15% |
| 2. In-class Quizzes: | 30% |
| 3. Homework Assignments (10 total): | 30% |
| 4. Final Exam: | 25% |

Class Participation:

Given that this is such an intensive course, class participation will comprise a significant part of your grade. To get a perfect grade on participation you should miss no more than one class throughout the term, and you must complete all (but one) in-class activities that are to be turned in at the completion of each session. Once you have missed one class (the one for which you have a “free pass”) you will begin losing points for each additional missed session/in-class activity in terms of the following:

1. **90% of all possible points** – student has missed two classes/failed to complete two in-class exercises
2. **80% of all possible points** – student has missed three classes/failed to complete three in-class exercises

3. **70% of all possible points** - student has missed four classes/failed to complete four in-class exercises
4. **60% of all possible points** - student has missed five classes/failed to complete five in-class exercises
5. **50% of all possible points** - student has missed six classes/failed to complete six in-class exercises
6. **After having missed six classes/in-class exercises, student will receive 0 points for class participation**

In-class quizzes:

There will be three short quizzes per week (generally Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays). You can take all three quizzes and only the top two quiz scores from each week will count for your final grade. Quizzes may contain multiple choice, short answer and essay questions. To do well on the quizzes you should carefully complete and reflect upon the readings for each class prior to the day they were assigned. You should also be attentive during class discussions, as quiz questions may involve themes that emerged during previous classes. **Quizzes will only be administered in class and cannot be made up.**

Homework Assignments:

There will be ten homework assignments over the course of the term. They are designed to help you review and think critically about the materials we will be reading and discussing in class. They will include, but are not limited to, short writing assignments (like reaction papers), researching and reporting to the class on news developments related to course themes, and answering assigned comprehension questions related to the readings. **Late homework assignments will not be accepted.**

Final Exam:

There will be a final exam on **Friday, August 23rd**. You will receive a study guide to help you prepare for the exam, and we will hold a review session on Thursday, August 22nd. The exam will consist of multiple choice, short answer and essay questions.

Rules and Classroom Behavior:

1. Please make every effort to arrive in class on time. Please do not leave the class before the period is over. Please wait for the class to end before you pack up your bag to leave.
2. Turn off your cell phones and other hand-held electronic devices for the classroom period. If a cell phone goes off in class or if you are found texting or using a hand-held electronic device for other purposes, I will ask you to leave the class.
3. Treat your fellow students with respect. Do not demean, shout at, or interrupt other people.
4. Always bring your course materials to class so that we can refer to them during class discussion.
5. Laptop use is permitted in class for note-taking purposes only. If you are found using your laptop for other purposes (email, Facebook, etc.) you will not be permitted to use it in future classes.

6. You have an obligation to learn about **what counts as plagiarism** and avoid it. Most plagiarism isn't deliberate, but the result of misunderstanding what counts as acceptable academic practice. **Any cases of suspected plagiarism will be sent to the Dean's Representative for review.**
7. Please note that these are not exhaustive guidelines. Other forms of disruptive behavior will not be tolerated.

Topics and Readings:

Week 1

Thursday, July 25

Topic: Introduction to the course

Friday, July 26

Topic: Fallacies

Reading: *No Reading*

Week 2

Monday, July 29

Topic: Consequentialism

Reading: *Timmons, 6-11; Jeremy Bentham, "The Principle of Utility" in Timmons, 38-42*

Tuesday, July 30

Topic: Consequentialism (continued)

Reading: *Jonathan Harris, "The Survival Lottery"*

Wednesday, July 31

Topic: Kantian ethics

Reading: *Timmons, 15-20; Immanuel Kant, "The Moral Law" in Timmons, 47-54*

Thursday, August 1

Topic: Kantian Ethics, continued: The Categorical Imperative Parts 1 and 2

Readings: *None*

Friday, August 2

Topic: Kant and after

Reading: *Michael Otsuka, "Killing the Innocent in Self-Defense"*

Week 3

Monday, August 5

Topic: Liberty (Introduction, and Mill on speech and discussion)

Reading: *John Stuart Mill, On Liberty, Chapter 2* – available at <http://www.bartleby.com/130/2.html>

Tuesday, August 6

Topic: Liberty, continued: The Harm Principle and difficulties with Mill's arguments

Reading: *None*

Wednesday, August 7

Topic: Pornography and Liberty

Reading: *Irving Kristol, "Pornography, Obscenity, and the Case for Censorship,"* available on *Catalyst*

Thursday, August 8

Topic: Pornography and Liberty, continued

Reading: *Catharine MacKinnon, "Pornography, Civil Rights, and Speech,"* available on *Catalyst*

Friday, August 9

Topic: Punishment

Reading: *Immanuel Kant, "Punishment and the Principle of Equality" in Timmons, 478-481; Ernst Van Den Haag, "A Defense of the Death Penalty" in Timmons, 487-492; and Hugo Adam Bedau, "The Case Against the Death Penalty,"* available at <http://users.rcn.com/mwood/deathpen.html>

Week 4

Monday, August 12

Topic: Introduction: Labor and Exploitation

Reading: *Iris Marion Young, "The Five Faces of Oppression," available on Catalyst*

Tuesday, August 13

Topic: Markets in Women's Sexual Labor

Reading: *Debra Satz, "Markets in Women's Sexual Labor," available on Catalyst*

Wednesday, August 14

Topic: Domestic Labor

Reading: *Joan Tronto, "The Nanny Problem in Feminism," available on Catalyst*

Thursday, August 15

Topic: Sweatshops

Reading: *Chris Meyers, "Wrongful Beneficence: Exploitation and Third World Sweatshops," available on Catalyst; Nicolas D. Kristof, "Where Sweatshops Are a Dream," New York Times, January 14, 2009 – available at*

http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/15/opinion/15kristof.html?_r=0

Friday, August 16

Topic: Recap of week; in-class film

Reading: *none*

Week 5

Monday, August 19

Topic: Abortion, Part 1

Reading: *Judith Jarvis Thomson, "A Defense of Abortion," in Timmons, 391-400; Don Marquis, "Why Abortion is Immoral," in Timmons, 400-405*

Tuesday, August 20

Topic: Abortion, Part 2

Reading: *Pope John Paul, "The Unspeakable Crime of Abortion," in Timmons, 381-384; Mary Anne Warren, "On the Moral and Legal Status of Abortion," in Timmons, 384-391*

Wednesday, August 21

Topic: International Ethics

Reading: *Peter Singer, "Famine, Affluence and Morality," available on Catalyst*

Thursday, August 22

Review for Final Exam

Friday, August 23

Final Exam