

PHIL2306: Ethics

The University of Texas at El Paso

Fall 2022

Online

Instructor: Chavah I. Schwartz

Email: cischwartz@utep.edu



M.C. Escher, *Day and Night* (1938), woodcut.

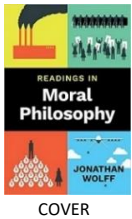
“Philosophic contemplation does not, in its widest survey, divide the world into two hostile camps—friends and foes, helpful and hostile, good and bad—it views the whole impartially.”

- Bertrand Russell, *The Value of Philosophy*

Course Description:

What is ethics? Ethics is a discipline of philosophy aimed at understanding the “good” life. As a field of philosophical study, ethics involves a careful examination of moral life and how one ought to live. A philosophical approach towards ethics means we can investigate the important aspects of moral life by asking questions like, “What is *morality*?” “What is *right* and *wrong*?”, and “What is the *moral* thing to do?” This sort of philosophical contemplation puts us in a position to better understand the moral dilemmas we encounter in our own lives. The goal of this course is to understand what the philosophical study of ethics and morality offers as an academic field of understanding.

Required Text:



COVER

Jonathan Wolff. *Readings in Moral Philosophy (First Edition)*. W.W. Norton Company, 2018.
ISBN-10: 9780393923605 | ISBN-13: 978-0393923605

Grading:

- Discussion Boards – 30%
- Quizzes – 30%
- Midterm – 15%
- Final – 25%

Course Policies:

This is a college level course, and the amount of assigned work reflects that fact. *It is up to each student to maintain their responsibilities to this course.* This is an ‘asynchronous’ online course which allows students the opportunity to move through the material at their own pace, but also means that added discipline is required to ensure they do not fall behind. For this reason, it is important that students understand all course policies and expectations to ensure this course offers an environment where everyone can be successful.

Discussion Board Etiquette – Students are always expected to be courteous and respectful towards one another. Any inappropriate or offensive behavior will not be tolerated. Should this become an issue at any point during the semester, the student will not be permitted to participate in discussion boards and will not receive credit for those missed. Any offenses that violate university policy will be reported to the appropriate authority.

Late Work & Make-up Policy – Any work submitted late will only be eligible for half-credit. Students are responsible for keeping up with all assignments and deadlines. Once a grade has been finalized, additional or retroactive arrangements are no longer possible.

Extra Credit – Please understand there is no obligation to provide extra credit opportunities. Additional arrangements beyond what is detailed here will not be offered. There will be one opportunity for extra credit to count toward the midterm exam and a second opportunity for extra credit on the final exam. More information about these assignments will be provided in Blackboard.

Course Drop – Students are responsible for initiating and completing any course drops. Faculty drops will not be offered. For more information: <https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/registrar/students/registration.html>

Email:

In accordance with university policy, all email correspondence will be done exclusively through our UTEP email addresses. Emails sent from other accounts will not be opened or viewed. Please allow at least a 24-hour window for response. For more information: <https://www.utep.edu/information-resources/iso/policies/>

Academic Integrity/Plagiarism:

“Any student who commits an act of academic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, and any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts. Proven violations of the detailed regulations, as printed in the Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP), and available in the Office of the Dean of Students and on the homepage of the Dean of Students at www.utep.edu/dos, may result in sanctions ranging from disciplinary probation to a failing grade on the work in question, to a failing grade in the course, to suspension or dismissal, among others.” For more information: <http://admin.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=73922>

Graduate Student Requirements:

“Undergraduate courses approved for graduate credit require additional work, the amount and nature of which to be determined by the instructor.” For more information: <http://catalog.utep.edu/grad/the-graduate-school/general-degree-requirements/>

Disability Accommodations:

“UTEP seeks to provide reasonable accommodations for all qualified individuals with disabilities, including learning disabilities. This university will adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required affording equal educational opportunity. *It is the student's responsibility to register with The Center for Accommodations and Support Services within the first two weeks of classes and inform the faculty member to arrange for appropriate accommodations.*”

Retroactive arrangements will not apply. For more information about accommodation policies:
<https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/cass/ada-policies/>

The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS): <http://sa.utep.edu/cass/>
Location: Union East Building, Room 106
Phone: (915) 747-5148
Email: cass@utep.edu

Blackboard:

Blackboard will be used throughout the semester for modules, announcements, assigned readings, assignment submissions, grades, etc. *Make sure to plan appropriately and anticipate technological issues.* Do not hesitate to contact the Help Desk for troubleshooting and assistance with any issues.

Technology Support Help Desk: <http://helpdesk.utep.edu>
Location: 3rd floor of Library, Room 300
Phone: 915-747-HELP (4357)
Email: helpdesk@utep.edu

Modules – Modules will become available on the Home Page in Blackboard beginning on the scheduled date (page 5-6). The learning modules will provide brief outlines of the assigned readings with an emphasis toward the module's goals and objectives. These modules are provided to help clarify the purpose of each assigned reading and to help guide students through the ideas presented. Students are ultimately responsible for keeping up with all assigned readings and should not rely solely on the information provided in the modules to complete assignments.

Course Assignments & Requirements:

Discussion Boards:

Students will be responsible for participating in four discussion boards worth a total 30% of the final grade. Each discussion board will detail the necessary requirements for full credit and must be completed by the scheduled deadline (page 5-6). The purpose of this assignment is to see that students understand the ideas presented in the assigned readings and can substantially contribute to an academic discussion about those ideas with their peers. Late submissions will only be eligible for half-credit and will not be accepted beyond the scheduled availability.

Quizzes:

Students will be responsible for completing four quizzes worth a total 30% of the final grade. Each quiz will cover the assigned readings from the module and must be completed by the scheduled deadline (page 5-6). The purpose of this assignment is to see that students are keeping up with the assigned readings and can answer questions about the ideas presented in the readings. Late submissions will only be eligible for half-credit and will not be accepted beyond the scheduled availability.

Midterm Exam:

Students will be responsible for completing a midterm exam worth 15% of the final grade due on **Friday, October 14th, 2022**. The exam will cover material from modules 1-3 and consist of multiple-choice questions. The exam will become available in the module on the scheduled date beginning at midnight and must be completed and submitted by the due date. Any exams submitted late will only be eligible for half

credit and will not be accepted beyond the scheduled deadline. More details will be provided in the module before the exam date.

Final Exam:

Students will be responsible for completing a final exam worth 25% of the final grade due on **Friday, December 2nd, 2022**. The final exam will be comprehensive and consist of multiple-choice questions. The exam will become available in the module on the scheduled date beginning at midnight and must be completed and submitted by the due date. Any exams submitted late will only be eligible for half-credit and will not be accepted beyond the scheduled deadline. More details will be provided in the module before the exam date.

**Failure to complete any of the requirements will negatively impact the final grade for this course.*

Grading Scale:

A: 90-100%

B: 80-89%

C: 70-79%

D: 60-69%

F: 59% and below

SCHEDULE: (Provisional)

| WEEK(S): | ASSIGNED READING(S): *Key: RMP – Readings in Moral Philosophy BB – Blackboard | ASSIGNMENT(S): *All deadlines are at 11:59 p.m. MST unless stated otherwise. |
|-----------------------------|--|---|
| 1: 8/22 – 8/26 | <u>Introduction:</u> Syllabus (BB) | |
| 2-3: 8/29 – 9/9 | <u>Module 1: Why ethics?</u> “The Value of Philosophy” – Russell (BB) “Moral Philosophy & Moral Reasoning” – Wolff (BB) “Right and Wrong” – Nagel (RMP) “Patterns of Culture” – Benedict (RMP) “Trying Out One’s New Sword” – Midgley (RMP) | Discussion Board 1 & Quiz 1 – due 9/9 |
| 4-5: 9/12 – 9/23 | <u>Module 2: What is morality?</u> “Inventing Right and Wrong” – Mackie (RMP) “God and Morality” – Plato (RMP) “The Problem of Evil” – Augustine (BB) “Utopia” – More (BB) “The State of Nature” – Hobbes (RMP) | Discussion Board 2 & Quiz 2 – due 9/23 |
| 6-7: 9/26 – 10/7 | <u>Module 3: What is right and wrong?</u> “The Categorical Imperative” – Kant (RMP) “Duties Towards Animals” – Kant (RMP) “All Animals Are Equal” – Singer (RMP) “The Land Ethic” – Leopold (RMP) “Elegy for a Garden” – Light (BB) | Discussion Board 3 & Quiz 3 – due 10/7 |
| 8: 10/10 – 10/14 | <u>Module 4: Midterm</u> Review for Midterm Exam | Midterm Exam – due 10/14 |
| 9-10: 10/17 – 10/28 | <u>Module 5: What is right and wrong? contd.</u> “An Introduction to the Principles of Morals & Legislation” – Bentham (RMP) “Utilitarianism” – Mill (RMP) “The Subjection of Women” – Mill (BB) “The Experience Machine” – Nozick (RMP) “The Myth of Sisyphus” – Camus (BB) | Discussion Board 4 & Quiz 4 – due 10/28 |
| 11-12: 10/31 – 11/11 | <u>Module 6: What is the moral thing to do?</u> “Famine, Affluence, and Morality” – Singer (RMP) “Dead Aid” – Moyo (RMP) “Politics” – Aristotle (BB) “Civil Disobedience” – Thoreau (RMP) “Taxpayers vs. Citizens” – Kemmis (BB) | Discussion Board 5 & Quiz 5 – due 11/11 |

| | | |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
| <p>13-14: 11/14 – 11/25</p> | <p><u>Module 7: What is the <i>moral</i> thing to do? contd.</u> “The Caring Person” – Held (RMP) “What is Feminist Ethics?” – Lindemann (BB) “Active and Passive Euthanasia” – Rachels (RMP) “Euthanasia” – Foot (RMP) “The Ethics of Emergencies” – Rand (RMP)</p> | <p>Discussion Board 6 & Quiz 6 – due 11/25</p> |
| <p>15: 11/28 – 12/2</p> | <p><u>Module 8: Final</u> Review for Final Exam</p> | <p>Final Exam – due 12/2</p> |

*9/5: Labor Day – University closed

11/24-11/25: Thanksgiving Holiday – University closed

12/2: Dead Day – University closed