



PHIL 2306: ETHICS

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY – COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

The University of Texas at El Paso



CRN: 13766

Semester: Fall 2023

Instructor: Dr. Manuela Gomez

Email: magomez51@utep.edu

Location: UGL 126

Time: Tuesday/Thursday 10:30-11:50 a.m.

Office Hours: Worrell Hall 308, by appointment

Teaching Assistants: Emma Keppler, ekkeppler@miners.utep.edu and Ana Sanchez, agsanchez37@miners.utep.edu

A-M Keppler, **N-Z** Sanchez

UTEP Course Description:

An introduction to topics and core problems relating to the moral evaluation of human motivation and action. The course examines the positions of classical philosophers such as Aristotle, Hume, Kant, Mill, and Sartre, as well as contemporary moral problems that relate to human rights, animal rights, and environmental ethics.

Instructor Course Description:

Every single day we are confronted with ethical dilemmas. We all have opinions on issues such as abortion, capital punishment, euthanasia, homosexuality, pornography, racism, war and terrorism, genetic engineering, drug usage, sexuality, freedom of speech, and feminism among

others. In this class, we will analyze your own beliefs, but more importantly learn ethical theories that will help you question, reshape, or reconfirm your beliefs in a more logical way.

This course will introduce you to the central problems of ethics through the works of traditional and contemporary philosophers. The emphasis will be on the examination of various ethical positions rather than on a particular ethical outlook. You will learn about nonconsequentialism, consequentialism, virtue, and feminist ethics.

Course Format:

This is a face-to-face course that will be organized around readings, lectures, and discussions. Students are expected to complete all reading materials before class and are encouraged to participate by asking questions and providing informed comments.

Guiding Questions:

- What is ethics?
- Do historical and cultural contexts shape ethics or are there universal ethical principles?
- What are the main ethical theories to evaluate and resolve ethical issues?

Learning Outcomes:

- Demonstrate knowledge of major arguments and problems in ethics.
- Recognize, evaluate, and develop arguments in ethics.
- Develop critical thinking skills by reading, understanding, and critically evaluating various philosophical materials concerning ethics.
- Define and appropriately use important terms such as relativism, virtue, duty, rights, utilitarianism, natural law, egoism, altruism, autonomy, and care ethics.
- Present and discuss well-reasoned ethical positions.

Required Texts:

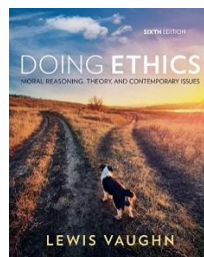
Required Text: **Doing Ethics: Moral Reasoning and Contemporary Issues.**

6th Edition

Author: Lewis Vaughn

Publisher: W. W. Norton, Incorporated

9780393885903



Videos and Films:

Most videos and films for this course will be presented in class by the instructor and/or be posted on Blackboard.

Course Policies:

- Attendance is required, and the roll will be taken at random. If absent, students must obtain class materials and assignments from obliging classmates, the TAs will **NOT** personally email students and tell them what they missed. Do not email the instructor asking for assignments or late assignment extensions.
- **Late assignments will not be accepted under any circumstances.**
- There will be a 10-minute tolerance period to arrive late to class. After that, unless you have a reasonable excuse it will affect your participation. It is your responsibility to talk to the TAs after class to inquire whether points were deducted for tardiness.
- Cell phones must be turned off or silent during class.
- Recording lectures or class discussions are not permitted. Taking photographs is also prohibited. Doing so will result in disciplinary action.
- All pedagogical materials used in this course are protected by copyright law. The course resources are only for the use of students currently enrolled in this course and may not be further reproduced or distributed.
- It is your responsibility to drop this course if you will not continue in the class successfully.

Email Policy:

Before you email a TA with a question, please check to see if the answer is not already posted on the syllabus or Blackboard. Understand that there are many other students with questions and that the TAs are not in front of their computers all day. Their online availability is M-F. Please expect 24-48 hours, in some cases longer for a response. Always use your UTEP account, and include your name, student ID, and course information in your inquiries. In the rare case that you need help that requires a face-to-face appointment, please send me an email to schedule it or come speak to me after class. I will be glad to help.

Anti-racism, Anti-sexism, Anti-hate Policy:

I encourage your comments and contributions as well as any differences of opinion, but we must conduct ourselves in a respectful manner. This is a safe place to learn where everyone's ideas, comments, and contributions are welcome as long as they are not racist, sexist, or hateful. We are here to discuss ideas in a logical way.

Any rude or disruptive behavior while in class will not be tolerated and will result in a deduction to your grade in the form of an entire letter grade. The professor determines what is rude, disrespectful, or hateful and has the right to remove students from the classroom or drop them from the course entirely if they violate this policy. No offensive language is allowed. I expect complete respect from everyone in the classroom.

Course Assignments:

Participation and Attendance: 5%

This course will require a lot of **participation** and **discussion** which will be graded. Participation requires a balance between listening and talking. Students who participate ask interesting questions and make thoughtful comments. Participation will be evaluated based on the degree of your effort, interaction, and contribution toward each of the topics we discuss. Everything we do in class counts towards participation. For you to be able to participate, you must complete all the assigned course readings before class and come to class with a summary of the readings including questions you have. When any video is shown in class, I expect you to actively take detailed notes for discussion. Every time you participate, please state your name beforehand.

Written Assignments: 20%

You will be required to submit a total of **four** written assignments. Not only will you present the philosophical ideas from the assigned readings and discussions, but you will also reflect on your own thoughts, observations, and objections about the topic. All assignments must be typed, double-spaced, in 12 pt. Times New Roman font. Detailed instructions and due dates will be provided in class.

Midterm Reflection: 15%

You will be required to submit a 2–4-page midterm reflection on the differences between consequentialism and nonconsequentialism. Detailed instructions and rubrics will be provided in class.

Citation:

APA citation will be used for this course. The University Writing Center can assist you with any writing needs. You may visit them at the UTEP Library, room 227, email them at: uwc@utep.edu, or call 915-747-5112 if you have any questions.

Exams: 60%

You will have 2 exams this semester. These will be completed on Blackboard. You will get two attempts and I will keep your highest score.

- Exam 1 (Chapters 1-4)
- Final Exam (All chapters)

Grading:

Participation		5%
Written Assignments	(4)	20%
Midterm Reflection	(1)	15%
Exams	(2) 30 points each	60%
Total		100%

Grade Scale:

A: 90-100%

B: 80-89%

C: 70-79%

D: 60-69%

F: 0-59%

Course Content:

We will read, listen, watch, and discuss sensitive topics and some of you may be triggered emotionally. In philosophy courses, we are required to critically engage with this type of material, but if you feel that you cannot interact with certain topics, we can discuss alternate readings and assignments ahead of time.

Course Resources:

Recommended Podcasts

Philosophy Bites

<https://philosophybites.com/>

Philosophy Talk

<https://www.philosophytalk.org/>

Markulla Center for Applied Ethics

<https://www.scu.edu/ethics/ethics-resources/ethics-podcasts/>

The Unmute Podcast

<http://www.myishacherry.org/the-unmute-podcast-2/>

Useful Websites

How to Read Philosophy

<https://psyche.co/guides/how-to-read-philosophy-with-an-adversarial-approach>

How to Write a Philosophy Summary

<https://penandthepad.com/write-philosophy-summary-paper-8651128.html>

Wireless Philosophy

<http://www.wi-phi.com/>

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy

<https://plato.stanford.edu/>

Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy

<https://www.iep.utm.edu/n/>

Philosophy Papers

<https://philpapers.org/>

The American Philosophical Association

<https://www.apaonline.org/default.aspx>

Academic dishonesty:

Often, students are unaware of the seriousness of plagiarism and sometimes unintentionally plagiarize. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. In addition to being illegal, it demeans your learning experience by having you learn less than you could and should. Violations of this policy will result in a “0” on that assignment and may result in further disciplinary action. Using a reference as a part of your study is necessary. Using the words from that reference, rather than creating your own work is considered cheating/plagiarism. I do not recommend you copy and paste anything into your assignments. ChatGPT is not allowed for any assignments in this course.

Students with Disabilities:

If you have a disability and believe you may need services or assistance, you are encouraged to contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS). This center aspires to provide students with disabilities, accommodations, and support services to help them pursue their academic, graduation, and career goals. CASS is located in Union East Bldg. Room 106. For more information, email them at: cass@utep.edu or call: (915) 747-5148.

Course Calendar:

* This calendar is **tentative**; any changes will be discussed in the class ahead of time.

WEEK 1 (August 28)
T Course Introduction and Course Expectations
TH Chapter 1 Ethics and the Examined Life. What is Ethics?
Types of Ethics Assignment (5)
WEEK 2 (September 4)
T Socrates and the Socratic Method
TH Euthyphro/ Creation of Socratic Dialogue (in-class)
WEEK 3 (September 11)
T Chapter 3 Evaluating Moral Arguments/ Socratic Dialogue part 1 (5)
TH Deduction/ Induction
WEEK 4 (September 18)
T Logical Fallacies

TH Logical Fallacies/ Logical Fallacies in Socratic Dialogue part 2 (5) (in-class)
WEEK 5 (September 25)
T Chapter 2 Subjectivism, Relativism, and Emotivism
TH Cultural Relativism
Cultural Relativism Assignment (5)
WEEK 6 (October 2)
T Chapter 4 The Power of Moral Theories
TH Chapter 5 Consequentialist Theories/ Egoism/ What would you do?
Exam 1 (Chapters 1-4) 30 points
WEEK 7 (October 9)
T Utilitarianism
TH Chapter 6 Nonconsequentialist Theories/ Kant's Ethics/ Natural Law
WEEK 8 (October 16)
T Comparison of Consequential and Nonconsequential Theories
TH Chapter 7 Virtue Ethics
Comparison of Consequential and Nonconsequential Midterm Reflection 15 points
WEEK 9 (October 23)
T Chapter 8 Feminist Ethics and Ethics of Care
TH Chapters 9 and 10 Abortion/Euthanasia
WEEK 10 (October 30)
T Chapter 11 Delivering Healthcare
TH Chapter 12 Ethical Treatment of Animals
WEEK 11 (November 6)
T Chapter 13 Environmental Ethics
TH Chapter 14 Racism and Discrimination

Documentary Extra Credit
WEEK 12 (November 13)
T Chapter 15 Sexual Morality
TH Chapter 16 Tolerance, Civility and Free Speech
WEEK 13 (November 20)
T Chapter 17 Drugs, Guns, and Personal Liberty
TH Chapter 18 Capital Punishment
WEEK 14 (November 27)
T Chapter 19 War, Terrorism, and Torture
TH Chapter 20 The Ethics of Immigration
WEEK 15 (December 4)
T Chapter 21 Global Economic Justice
TH Final Exam Review
WEEK 16
T Final Exam 30 (December 11)
TH End of course reflections