

PHIL 1104

Philosophy and Social Ethics

M-F 9:50-11:30 in Oak 111

Instructor: Jenelle Salisbury

E-mail: jenelle.salisbury@uconn.edu

Office Hours: W 12:00-2:00 *or by appointment*

Course Overview

This course is designed to give you an introduction to some basic theoretical and applied ethical issues, and to acquaint you with traditional philosophical methods for addressing these questions and/or problems. These questions include how to live a good life, how to be a good person, how to evaluate actions in terms of rightness and wrongness, and how to think about deep ethical disagreements when they arise.

We will be reading and critically analyzing both ancient and contemporary philosophical works, discussing them as a group, and discussing, workshopping, and debating ethical topics. Your instructor is there to help guide you through these texts, and to help you in clarifying and articulating your own viewpoints on the issues we will address.

Learning Outcomes

- Students will obtain a basic understanding of the tradition in philosophy for addressing ethical questions.
- Students will gain an appreciation for the complexity (and importance) of careful moral reasoning.
- Students will improve their written and verbal communication skills.
- Students will be better equipped for ethical decision making and civil discourse about controversial issues.
- Students will sharpen their critical thinking skills.

Grading Scheme

Item	Date(s)	Percentage
Participation	Each class day	15%
Reflections	7/11, 7/16, 7/23, 7/30	20%
Midterm Exam	7/25	20%
Final Paper	8/5	20%
Final Exam	8/7	25%

More information:

- **In-class participation** is an important way for me to assess your engagement with the course material. This can come in the form of asking questions, making connections, or providing objections to content from the reading for that day or content from lecture. We will also have miscellaneous in-class activities that will be part of your participation score.
- **Course readings** will be accessible via Husky CT - visit lms.uconn.edu, click the link for this course, and navigate the site until you find the readings
- **Office hours** are drop in times when you don't need to make an appointment to come talk to me about anything at all. Visiting office hours is considered class participation (it is not required, but if you don't actively participate during lecture this is a good alternative). I do recommend making a habit of regularly visiting your professors' office hours during your college career.
- Each week you will turn in a **reflection** on course content. The first week is a little different - you will be asked to respond to a reading before we have discussed it in class. In the following 3 weeks, each Tuesday you will submit a 1-2 page reflection on a reading of your choice from the previous week. The reflection in week 2 can be on any reading we have done up until that point (not just the ones after the first reflection was due).
- Your **final paper** will be due in the last week of class and will be a 4-5 page critical examination of an ethical theory or applied issue. We will discuss more about this assignment as it gets closer.
- You will have both a **midterm** and a **final exam** testing your mastery of the course content through a combination of fill-in-the blank, short essay, and possibly multiple choice.

Policies and Expectations

- **No phones** in the classroom. If I see you on your phone, unless I have specifically said they can be out for an in class activity, you may have participation points deducted for that day.
- I have a strict no-tolerance policy when it comes to **academic dishonesty and plagiarism**. If any of your written work is plagiarized, you will not only receive a 0 for that assignment, but the infraction will also be reported and may result in further penalties or a mark on your record. Do not consult online forums for your reflections or papers, as this may result in plagiarism whether accidental or intentional. More information about UConn's academic misconduct policy can be found here:
<https://community.uconn.edu/academic-misconduct/#>
- **Late work policy** - I will accept reflections late for a 20% grade deduction per day. The final paper will not be accepted late without documentation of a serious emergency.
- **Special accommodations**: Special accommodations are available on a needs-basis. If you suspect you have a need for an accommodation, I suggest you work with the center for students with disabilities (CSD) in order to work out what, if any, these may be. More information can be found at <http://csd.uconn.edu>

Schedule

Week 1 - *Introduction*

Monday 7/8 - Intro to the course

Tuesday 7/9 - Plato's *Euthyphro*

Wednesday 7/10 - Midgley "Trying out One's New Sword," [Optional] Rachels, "The Challenge of Cultural Relativism"

Thursday 7/11 - Evaluating Moral Arguments

Reflection #1 due

Friday 7/12 - Moral Theories

Week 2 - *Theory Part 1*

Monday 7/15 - Consequentialism

Tuesday 7/16 - Utilitarianism. **Reflection #2 due**

Wednesday 7/17 - Deontology

Thursday 7/18 - Kantianism

Friday 7/19 - Kantianism and Utilitarianism Contrasted

Week 3 - *Theory Part 2*

Monday 7/22 - Aristotle's virtue theory

Tuesday 7/23 - Virtue Theory continued. **Reflection #3 due**

Wednesday 7/24 - Feminist ethics and the ethics of care

Thursday 7/25 - Midterm Examination

Friday 7/26 - Racism, Equality, Discrimination

Week 4 - Applied Topics

Monday 7/29 - Racism continued, Affirmative Action debate

Tuesday 7/30 - AA continued; Abortion **Reflection #4 due**

Wednesday 7/31 - Abortion

Thursday 8/1 - Abortion

Friday 8/2 - Sexual Morality

Week 5 - Applied Topics - TBA

Monday 8/5 - **Final Paper due**

Drugs, Guns, and Personal Liberty - Debate

Tuesday 8/6 - Immigration - Debate

Wednesday 8/7 (Final Exam 9:50-11:50)