



**COURSE OUTLINE**

**PHIL 120**

**INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS**

**HOURS: 45**

**CREDITS: 3**

PREPARED BY: Matthew Cameron

DATE: August, 2017

APPROVED BY: Andrew Richardson

DATE:

APPROVED BY ACADEMIC COUNCIL: (date)

RENEWED BY ACADEMIC COUNCIL: (date)



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## INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS

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**INSTRUCTOR:** Matthew Cameron

**OFFICE HOURS:** By appointment

**OFFICE LOCATION:** N/A

**CLASSROOM:** A2601

**E-MAIL:** [mcameron@yukoncollege.yk.ca](mailto:mcameron@yukoncollege.yk.ca)

**TIME:** 4:00 - 5:30pm

**TELEPHONE:** (867)-668-8770 (Admin Ast.)

**DATES:** Tues./Thurs. (Sept. 7-Dec. 7)

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### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to essential topics and questions in moral philosophy: How ought we to live our lives? How are right and wrong determined? Are ethical judgments objective or subjective? Are values universal and absolute or culturally relative? What responsibilities do human beings have to one another, to other species, or to the planet? Students will analyze, interpret and evaluate ideas from major schools of ethical thought—including virtue ethics, deontological ethics, and consequentialism—and practice applying theories about ethics to contemporary moral dilemmas.

### PREREQUISITES

None.

### EQUIVALENCY OR TRANSFERABILITY

AI GD 330 (3)

AU PHIL 2xx (3)

CAMO PHIL 100 lev (3)

KPU PHIL 1110 (3)

OC PHIL 1xx (3)

SFU PHIL 120 (3) - B- Hum

TRU-OL PHIL 1021 (3)

TWU PHIL 100 lev (3)

UBC PHIL 1<sup>st</sup> (3)

UBCO PHIL 1<sup>st</sup> (3)

UCW PHIL 202 (3)

UFV PHIL 110 (3)

UNBC PHIL 1xx (3)

UVIC PHIL 100 lev (1.5)

VIU PHIL 112 (3)

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- analyze, interpret, synthesize, and evaluate ideas associated with major schools of ethical thought and/or key figures in the history of moral philosophy
- explain key terms in the field of moral philosophy, among them egoist ethics, virtue ethics, deontological ethics, consequentialism, categorical imperative, rights theory, utilitarianism, and feminist care ethics
- apply specific ethical theories to contemporary moral problems
- understand the importance of ethical decision-making and action in everyday life and in a range of fields: e.g., politics, economics, research, etc.
- draft, organize, format, revise, and edit university-level essays

## COURSE FORMAT

The course will involve a mixture of lectures and classroom group discussion on pre-assigned material.

## ASSESSMENTS

### Attendance & Participation

Attendance is mandatory. Students are expected to actively participate in classroom group discussions.

### Assignments

Students will be assessed on the basis of short written assignments (5 in total), two essays (1500 words each), the final exam, as well as active participation in classroom group discussions. The first essay is due on **Sunday, October 15, 2017**. The second essay is due on **Sunday, Nov. 19, 2017**.

**NOTE: All of the essays and written assignments must be completed in order to pass the course.** Late essays will be penalized by **5% per day to a maximum of 7 days**, after which they will not be accepted unless there is a legitimate excuse approved by the instructor in advance of the deadline.

## Tests

A three-hour final examination will occur between Dec. 8 and Dec. 21, 2017, as scheduled by the School of Liberal Arts.

## Other

The last day to withdraw from credit courses without academic penalty is **Friday, Nov. 10.**

## EVALUATION

Written Assignments	15%
Two Essays	50% (25% each)
Participation	10%
Final Exam	25%
Total	100%

## REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS AND MATERIALS

Selected readings to be made available online (Moodle).

## ACADEMIC AND STUDENT CONDUCT

Information on academic standing and student rights and responsibilities can be found in the current Academic Regulations that are posted on the Student Services/ Admissions & Registration web page.

## PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence. Plagiarism occurs when students present the words of someone else as their own. Plagiarism can be the deliberate use of a whole piece of another person's writing, but more frequently it occurs when students fail to acknowledge and document sources from which they have taken material. Whenever the words, research or ideas of others are directly quoted or paraphrased, they must be documented according to an accepted manuscript style (e.g., APA, CSE, MLA, etc.). Resubmitting a paper which has previously received credit is also considered plagiarism. Students who plagiarize material for assignments will receive a mark of zero (F) on the assignment and may fail the course. Plagiarism may also result in dismissal from a program of study or the College.

## **YUKON FIRST NATIONS CORE COMPETENCY**

Yukon College recognizes that a greater understanding and awareness of Yukon First Nations history, culture and journey towards self-determination will help to build positive relationships among all Yukon citizens. As a result, to graduate from ANY Yukon College program, you will be required to achieve core competency in knowledge of Yukon First Nations. For details, please see [www.yukoncollege.yk.ca/yfnccr](http://www.yukoncollege.yk.ca/yfnccr).

## **ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION**

Reasonable accommodations are available for students requiring an academic accommodation to fully participate in this class. These accommodations are available for students with a documented disability, chronic condition or any other grounds specified in section 8.0 of the Yukon College Academic Regulations (available on the Yukon College website). It is the student's responsibility to seek these accommodations. If a student requires an academic accommodation, he/she should contact the Learning Assistance Centre (LAC) at (867) 668-8785 or [lassist@yukoncollege.yk.ca](mailto:lassist@yukoncollege.yk.ca).

## **THE LORENE ROBERTSON WRITING CENTRE**

All students are encouraged to make the Writing Centre a regular part of the writing process for coursework. The Lorene Robertson Writing Centre is staffed by helpful writing coaches from across the College and offers one-on-one appointments to students in need of writing support.

The Lorene Robertson Writing Centre can help you:

- Get started on an assignment and focus your ideas
- Outline and plan your assignment
- Write clearly, logically and effectively
- Address specific needs and writing problems
- Revise the first and final drafts of your project
- Gain confidence in your writing

For in-person appointments, the Centre coaching office is located in the Academic Support Centre in room A2302. You can also participate in coaching appointments over the phone or online. see the Academic Support Centre schedule for English and writing support times.

## TOPIC OUTLINE AND READING SCHEDULE

**Note:** The schedule is subject to revision. All readings are available on Moodle.

Week	Dates	Topics/Assignments	Readings
1	Sept 7	<b>Introduction and Course Overview</b>	None
2	Sept 12  Sept 14	<b>Meta-Ethics: Why be moral?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Plato, “The Immoralist’s Challenge”</li> <li>▪ Joel Feinberg, “Psychological Egoism”</li> <li>▪ James Rachels, “Ethical Egoism”</li> </ul>
3	Sept 19  Sept 21	<b>Ethical Theory: Consequentialism</b>  <b>Written Assignment #1 Due: Sunday, Sept. 24</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Jeremy Bentham, “An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation” (ch. 1 and ch. 4)</li> <li>▪ John Stuart Mill, “Utilitarianism”</li> <li>▪ J.J.C. Smart, “Extreme and Restricted Utilitarianism”</li> <li>▪ Brad Hooker, “Rule Consequentialism”</li> </ul>
4	Sept 26  Sept 28	<b>Ethical Theory: Consequentialism (Continued)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Peter Singer, “Famine, Affluence and Morality”</li> <li>▪ John Harris, “The Survival Lottery”</li> <li>▪ W.D. Ross, “What Makes Right Acts Right?”</li> <li>▪ Bernard Williams, “A Critique of Utilitarianism”</li> </ul>
5	Oct 3	<b>Applied Ethics: Animal Ethics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Immanuel Kant, “We Have No Duties to Animals”</li> <li>▪ Peter Singer, “All Animals are Equal”</li> </ul>

	Oct 5	<b>Written Assignment # 2 Due: Sunday, Oct. 8</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Joel Feinberg, “The Rights of Animals and Unborn Generations”</li> <li>▪ Film: The Ghosts in Our Machines</li> </ul>
6	Oct 10  Oct 12	<b>Ethical Theory: Deontological Ethics</b>  <b>FIRST PAPER DUE: SUNDAY, OCT. 15</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Immanuel Kant, “Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals”</li> <li>▪ Onora O’Neill, “Kantian Approaches to Some Famine Problems”</li> <li>▪ Robert Nozick, “The Rationality of Side Constraints”</li> </ul>
7	Oct 17  Oct 19	<b>Ethical Theory: Deontological Ethics (Continued)</b>  <b>Written Assignment #3 Due: Sunday, Oct. 22</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Alan Gerwith, “The Golden Rule Rationalized”</li> <li>▪ Philippa Foot, “The Problem of Abortion and the Doctrine of the Double Effect”</li> <li>▪ Judith Jarvis Thomson, “Killing, Letting Die, and the Trolley Problem”</li> </ul>
8	Oct 24  Oct 26	<b>Applied Ethics: Environmental Ethics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Garth Hardin, “The Tragedy of the Commons”</li> <li>▪ Lynn White Jr., “The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis”</li> <li>▪ Stephen M. Gardiner, “Ethics and Global Climate Change”</li> <li>▪ The Ethical Implications of Global Climate Change (UNESCO Report; optional reading)</li> </ul>
9	Oct 31  Nov 2	<b>Ethical Theory: Virtue Ethics</b>  <b>Written Assignment #4 Due: Sunday, Nov. 5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Aristotle, “The Nature of Virtue”</li> <li>▪ Martha Nussbaum, “Non-relative Virtues: An Aristotelian Approach”</li> </ul>
10	Nov 7	<b>Ethical Theory: Virtue Ethics (Continued)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Julia Annas, “Being Virtuous and Doing the Right Thing”</li> </ul>



	Nov 9		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Julia Annas, “Virtue Ethics and Social Psychology”</li> </ul>
11	Nov 14  Nov 16	<b>Applied Ethics: Indigenous Rights</b>  <b>SECOND PAPER DUE: SUNDAY NOV. 19</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ United Nations Declaration of Human Rights</li> <li>▪ United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples</li> <li>▪ Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow</li> </ul>
12	Nov 21  Nov 23	<b>Meta-Ethics: The Status of Morality</b>  <b>Written Assignment #5 Due: Sunday, Nov. 26</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ David Hume, “Of the Influencing Motives of the Will” and “Moral Distinctions Not Derived from Reason”</li> <li>▪ A.J. Ayer, “A Critique of Ethics”</li> <li>▪ G.E. Moore, “The Subject-Matter of Ethics”</li> </ul>
13	Nov 28  Nov 30	<b>Review</b>	
14	Dec 5  Dec 7	<b>Review (Continued)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Film: This Changes Everything</li> </ul>