

Philosophy 2010
Introduction to Ethics
Fall 2011

Course Description: Ethics is concerned with how we should live our lives and with what separates right from wrong action. In these inquiries, we can focus on overarching normative theories, or else on particular topics to which these theories can be applied; we will spend roughly half the course in each regard. Starting with normative theories, we will consider: the virtue ethics of Plato and Aristotle, the social contract theories of Thomas Hobbes and John Locke, John Stuart Mill's utilitarianism, and Immanuel Kant's deontology. After our survey of normative theories, we will consider a range of topics in applied ethics: abortion, cloning, euthanasia, animal rights, capital punishment, terrorism, and torture. Our study of ethics will be complemented by movies that develop moral themes; a principal focus will be on integrating our abstract inquiries with popular media in the hopes of augmenting the ways in which we think about ethics.

Professor: Dr. Fritz Allhoff
3006 Moore Hall, F 12:30-1:30p
269.387.4503 (w)

TA: Mr. Cameron Gibbs
cameron.a.gibbs@wmich.edu
3020 Moore Hall, M 1:30-2:30p, F 12:30-1:30p

Class: F 1:30-4:50p, 1028 Brown Hall

Text: All readings are available online at <http://www.wmich.edu/library/reserves/>. The first time that you visit that site, you must create an account and add this course to that account. The password is ethics.

Website: elearn.wmich.edu. Lecture notes will be posted on the e-learning website following lecture. Other course materials will be posted here as appropriate. Course announcements will be sent out by email to WMU accounts; students are required to monitor those accounts.

Grading:	Midterm exam	25%
	Final exam	25%
	Response papers	50%

Exams: Both exams are in-class and require blue books. They will test the lectures and readings only and will not incorporate the movies. The final exam is not cumulative and will just cover material from after the midterm. Absent appropriate medical documentation, exams must be taken during the dates and times indicated below; please do not ask for alternative arrangements.

Response Papers: Each week, you will write a 1000-word (\pm 100 words) response paper in which you integrate the lecture and reading(s) with the philosophical themes developed in the movie. Discussion questions may be offered as prompts, but you are encouraged to be creative and to explore the associated ideas as you see fit. Strong papers will *explicitly* reference the assigned reading(s) (e.g., with direct quotes and/or page numbers), as well as *specific* scenes, characters, and/or dialogue from the movies.

Response papers are due at the beginning of class the following week; emailed papers will not be accepted. Papers submitted after the mid-class break or into the TA's mailbox by 500p on Friday will be penalized one letter grade. Papers submitted after 500p on Friday and before the break the next Wednesday will be penalized two letter grades. Papers will not be accepted more than one week late. The last paper is due at the beginning of the final exam and will not be accepted thereafter.

Your lowest two paper grades—whether those papers were submitted or not—will be dropped. In other words, you only have to write 10 of the 12 response papers, though you are invited and encouraged to write all 12. The dropping of two paper grades is meant to accommodate personal exigency as might arise throughout the semester including illness or any other reason for missing class or being unable to complete the assignment. Therefore, please do not ask for make-up assignments or extensions, as, again, reasonable accommodation is already built into the course structure.

Movie Screenings: Every attempt was made to pick movies that are philosophically provocative while being, at the same time, inclusive and appropriate for diverse audiences of different predilections and sensibilities. If some movie would, for whatever reason, be personally challenging for you, feel free to replace it with another from [a list of suggested movies](#), preferably from the same topical category. You may replace up to two movies over the course of the semester; no advance coordination with or notification to the professor or TA is required.

Tentative Lecture Schedule, Reading Assignments, and Movie Screenings:

Week	Date	Topic	Readings	Movie
1	9/9	Introduction to Ethics	N/A	N/A
2	9/16	Plato's <i>Republic</i>	Plato, <i>Republic</i> , Books II-IV	<i>Equilibrium</i>
3	9/23	Virtue Theory	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , Books I-II	<i>Groundhog Day</i>
4	9/30	Utilitarianism	Jeremy Bentham, "Principles of Morals and Legislation"; John Stuart Mill, "What Utilitarianism Is"	<i>Outbreak</i>
5	10/7	Deontology	Immanuel Kant, "Foundations for the Metaphysics of Morals"	<i>The Invention of Lying</i>
6	10/14	Midterm Exam	N/A	N/A
7	10/21	Abortion	Mary Anne Warren, "On the Moral and Legal Status of Abortion"; Don Marquis, "Why Abortion Is Immoral"	<i>Cider House Rules</i>
8	10/28	Cloning	Leon Kass, "The Wisdom of Repugnance"; Gregory Pence, <i>Who's Afraid of Human Cloning</i> (excerpts)	<i>Gattaca</i>
9	11/4	Euthanasia	James Rachels, "Active and Passive Euthanasia"; Dan Brock, "Voluntary Active Euthanasia"; Daniel Callahan, "Physician-Assisted Dying"	<i>The Sea Inside</i>
10	11/11	Animal Rights	Peter Singer, "All Animals Are Equal"; Carl Cohen, "The Case for the Use of Animals in Biomedical Research"	<i>Food, Inc.</i>

11	11/18	Capital Punishment	Ernest van den Haag, "In Defense of the Death Penalty"; H.A. Bedau, "A Reply to van den Haag"	<i>Dead Man Walking</i>
12	11/25	No Class (Thanksgiving)	N/A	N/A
13	12/2	Terrorism	Fritz Allhoff, <i>Terrorism, Ticking Time-Bombs, and Torture</i> , Chs. 1-2	<i>Paradise Now</i>
14	12/9	Torture	Fritz Allhoff, <i>Terrorism, Ticking Time-Bombs, and Torture</i> , Chs. 5-6	<i>Unthinkable</i>
EW	???	Final Exam, TBD		

Statement on Academic Honesty: You are responsible for making yourself aware of and understanding the policies and procedures in the Undergraduate Catalog that pertain to Academic Honesty. These policies include cheating, fabrication, falsification and forgery, multiple submission, plagiarism, complicity and computer misuse. If there is reason to believe you have been involved in academic dishonesty, you will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. You will be given the opportunity to review the charge(s). If you believe you are not responsible, you will have the opportunity for a hearing. You should consult with me if you are uncertain about an issue of academic honesty prior to the submission of an assignment or test.