

PHIL 1120 SOCIAL ETHICS

M/W/F 1:30-2:30

Location: Old Main 117.

Instructor

Dr. Rachel Robison

rachel.robison@usu.edu

Office: Eccles Conference Center 108 F

Office Hours: W 12:30-1:30 or by appointment.

Course Description

In this course, we study metaethics, normative ethics, and applied ethics. We will first try to discover the grounding or foundation for ethical judgments and value judgments generally. We will then consider objective moral theories that attempt to provide a framework from which we can judge whether or not an action is moral. Finally, we will discuss contemporary moral issues such as the nature of our obligations to those suffering from lack of access to food, shelter and medical care, the extent of our obligations to non-human animals, ethical issues raised by developing technologies (self-driving cars, use of drones both in war time and at home, etc.), and our moral responsibilities to the environment.

Semester(s) Traditionally Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Learn to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view.
2. Develop a clearer understanding of, and commitment to, personal values.
3. Gain a broader understanding and appreciation of intellectual/cultural activity.

Course Resources

Textbook: *The Moral Life* 6th edition. Edited by Louis P. Pojman and Lewis Vaughn.

ISBN-13 978-0190607845

Course Requirements (1000 points are possible in this class)

1. 20% (200 points) Participation in weekly online discussions. Students must make at least one post AND must offer at last one reply to another persons post every week for the first ten weeks of the course.
2. 30% Ethics Bowl. (300 points) Students will engage in a project that culminates in a series of debates at the end of the semester. This assignment has several components: a) Scoring sheets (40 points, 10 each). Students are required to attend all debates and serve as judges. b) Response to debates (40 points, 10 each). Students are required to attend all debates and offer a response on Canvas to what they witnessed c) Online assignments on Canvas (120 points, 40 each) designed to help students prepare their cases and c) Participation in the Ethics Bowl debate itself (100 points).
3. 25% (250 points) Midterm. Multiple choice, True False, Short Answer.

4. 25% (250 points) Final. Multiple choice, True False, Short Answer.

Grade Scheme

The following grading standards will be used in this class:

Grade	Range
A	100 % to 93.0%
A-	< 93.0 % to 90.0%
B+	< 90.0 % to 87.0%
B	< 87.0 % to 83.0%
B-	< 83.0 % to 80.0%
C+	< 80.0 % to 77.0%
C	< 77.0 % to 73.0%
C-	< 73.0 % to 70.0%
D+	< 70.0 % to 67.0%
D	< 67.0 % to 60.0%
F	< 59.0 % to 0.0%

Course Schedule/Outline (Subject to Change)

Week One

Unit One: Introduction to Philosophy and Logic

Monday, January 7th : Review of Syllabus and Introduction to Ethics.

Wednesday, January 9th: Introduction to Ethics

Friday, January 11th: Metaethics: Divine Command Theory. Reading: Plato's *Euthyphro*. On CANVAS.

Week Two

Unit Two: Ethics

Monday, January 14th: Metaethics: Subjectivism.

Wednesday, January 16th: Subjectivism.

Friday, January 18th: Cultural Ethical Relativism. James Rachels *Is Morality Relative?*

Week Three

Monday, January 21st: Martin Luther King Jr. Day NO CLASS.

Wednesday, January 23rd: Cultural Ethical Relativism.

Friday, January 25th: Cultural Ethical Relativism.

Week Four

Monday, January 28th: Introduction to Normative Ethical Theory.

Wednesday, January 30th: Deontology. Immanuel Kant *The Moral Law*.

Friday, February 1st: Deontology.

Week Five

Monday, February 4th: Consequentialism. Jeremy Bentham *Classical Utilitarianism*.

Wednesday, February 6th: John Stuart Mill *Utilitarianism Revised*.

Friday, February 8th: Utilitarianism.

Week Six

Monday, February 11th : Virtue Ethics. Aristotle *Virtue Ethics*.

Wednesday, February 13th: Virtue Ethics

Friday, February 15th: Care Ethics. Virginia Held *The Ethics of Care*.

Week Seven

Monday, February 18th : President's Day NO CLASS

Wednesday, February 20th: Care Ethics

Friday, February 22nd: Care Ethics

Week Eight

Monday, February 25th: Review

Wednesday, February 27th: **EXAM ONE. Taken in the testing center NO CLASS.**

Friday, March 1st : NO CLASS (Professor away at conference)

Contemporary Moral Issues

Unit One: Global Economic Justice

Week Nine

Monday, March 4th: NO CLASS (Professor away at conference).

Wednesday, March 6th: Peter Singer *Famine, Affluence, and Morality* on CANVAS

Friday, March 8th: *No new reading.*

Week Ten: Spring Break

Monday, March 11th: SPRING BREAK, NO CLASS

Wednesday, March 13th: SPRING BREAK, NO CLASS

Friday, March 15th: SPRING BREAK, NO CLASS

Week Eleven

Monday, March 18th: Poverty. Garrett Hardin *Living on a Lifeboat*.

Wednesday, March 20th: *No new reading*.

Friday, March 22nd: Poverty. William W. Murdoch and Allan Oaten *A Critique of Lifeboat Ethics*.

Unit Two: Ethics and Animals

Week Twelve

Monday, March 25th: Ethics Bowl Cases *Destroying Wildlife to Save It* and *Nonhuman Persons*

Wednesday, March 27th: Ethics and Animals. *Animal Liberation: All Animals are Equal*

Friday, March 29th: Carl Cohen *The Case Against Animal Rights*.

Week Thirteen: Ethics and Technology

Monday, April 1st: *Reading TBA*

Wednesday, April 3rd: *Reading TBA*

Friday, April 5th : *Reading TBA*

Week Fourteen:

Monday, April 8th:

Wednesday, April 10th: Review

Friday, April 12th: EXAM TWO In testing center NO CLASS

Week Fifteen:

Monday, April 15th: Ethics Bowl One

Wednesday, April 17th: Ethics Bowl Two

Friday, April 19th: Ethics Bowl Three

Week Sixteen

Monday, April 22nd: Ethics Bowl Four

Other Course Policies

Classroom Civility.

Utah State University supports the principle of freedom of expression for both faculty and students. The University respects the rights of faculty to teach and students to learn. Maintenance of these rights requires classroom conditions that do not impede the learning process. Disruptive classroom behavior will not be tolerated. An individual engaging in such behavior may be subject to disciplinary action. Read [Student Code Article V Section V-3 \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](#) for more information.

Nonattendance Policy

Students May Be Dropped For Nonattendance

If a student does not attend a class during the first week of the term or by the second class meeting, whichever comes first, the instructor may submit a request to have the student dropped from the course. (*This does not remove responsibility from the student to drop courses which he or she does not plan to attend.*) This option is typically used for classes that are full and the instructor is trying to make a seat available for another student, but may be considered for other courses. Requests must be made during the first 20 percent of the course and will be considered on an individual student basis. Students who are dropped from courses will be notified by the Registrar's Office through their preferred e-mail account (see [2018-2019 General Catalog \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](#)).

Assumption of Risk

All classes, programs, and extracurricular activities within the University involve some risk, and certain ones involve travel. The University provides opportunities to participate in these programs on a voluntary basis. Therefore, students should not participate in them if they do not care to assume the risks. Students can ask the respective program leaders/sponsors about the possible risks a program may generate, and if students are not willing to assume the risks, they should not select that program. By voluntarily participating in classes, programs, and extracurricular activities, a student does so at his or her own risk. General information about University Risk Management policies, insurance coverage, vehicle use policies, and risk management forms can be found at: [http://www.usu.edu/riskmgt/ \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](http://www.usu.edu/riskmgt/)

Library Services

All USU students attending classes in Logan, at our Regional Campuses, or online can access all databases, e-journals, and e-books regardless of location. Additionally, the library will mail printed books to students, at no charge to them. Students can also borrow books from any Utah academic library. Take advantage of all library services and learn more at [libguides.usu.edu/rc. \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](http://libguides.usu.edu/rc. (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.)

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University Policies & Procedures

Academic Freedom and Professional Responsibilities

Academic freedom is the right to teach, study, discuss, investigate, discover, create, and publish freely. Academic freedom protects the rights of faculty members in teaching and of students in learning. Freedom in research is fundamental to the advancement of truth. Faculty members are entitled to full freedom in teaching, research, and creative activities, subject to the limitations imposed by professional responsibility. [Faculty Code Policy #403 \(Links to an external site.\)](#)[Links to an external site.](#) further defines academic freedom and professional responsibilities.

Academic Integrity – "The Honor System"

Each student has the right and duty to pursue his or her academic experience free of dishonesty. To enhance the learning environment at Utah State University and to develop student academic integrity, each student agrees to the following Honor Pledge:

"I pledge, on my honor, to conduct myself with the foremost level of academic integrity."

A student who lives by the Honor Pledge is a student who does more than not cheat, falsify, or plagiarize.

A student who lives by the Honor Pledge:

- Espouses academic integrity as an underlying and essential principle of the Utah State University community;
- Understands that each act of academic dishonesty devalues every degree that is awarded by this institution; and
- Is a welcomed and valued member of Utah State University.

Academic Dishonesty

The instructor of this course will take appropriate actions in response to Academic Dishonesty, as defined the University's Student Code. Acts of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to:

- **Cheating:** using, attempting to use, or providing others with any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, examinations, or in any other academic exercise or activity. Unauthorized assistance includes:
 - Working in a group when the instructor has designated that the quiz, test, examination, or any other academic exercise or activity be done "individually;"
 - Depending on the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments;
 - Substituting for another student, or permitting another student to substitute for oneself, in taking an examination or preparing academic work;
 - Acquiring tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty member, staff member, or another student without express permission;
 - Continuing to write after time has been called on a quiz, test, examination, or any other academic exercise or activity;
 - Submitting substantially the same work for credit in more than one class, except with prior approval of the instructor; or engaging in any form of research fraud.
- **Falsification:** altering or fabricating any information or citation in an academic exercise or activity.

- **Plagiarism:** representing, by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person as one's own in any academic exercise or activity without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes using materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in the sale of term papers or other academic materials.

For additional information go to: [ARTICLE VI. University Regulations Regarding Academic Integrity \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](#)

Sexual Harassment/Title IX

Utah State University is committed to creating and maintaining an environment free from acts of sexual misconduct and discrimination and to fostering respect and dignity for all members of the USU community. Title IX and [USU Policy 339 \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](#) address sexual harassment in the workplace and academic setting.

The university responds promptly upon learning of any form of possible discrimination or sexual misconduct. Any individual may contact USU's [Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity \(AA/EO\) Office \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](#) for available options and resources or clarification. The university has established a complaint procedure to handle all types of discrimination complaints, including sexual harassment ([USU Policy 305 \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](#)), and has designated the AA/EO Director/Title IX Coordinator as the official responsible for receiving and investigating complaints of sexual harassment.

Withdrawal Policy and "I" Grade Policy

Students are required to complete all courses for which they are registered by the end of the semester. In some cases, a student may be unable to complete all of the coursework because of extenuating circumstances, but not due to poor performance or to retain financial aid. The term 'extenuating' circumstances includes: (1) incapacitating illness which prevents a student from attending classes for a minimum period of two weeks, (2) a death in the immediate family, (3) financial responsibilities requiring a student to alter a work schedule to secure employment, (4) change in work schedule as required by an employer, or (5) other emergencies deemed appropriate by the instructor.

Students with Disabilities

USU welcomes students with disabilities. If you have, or suspect you may have, a physical, mental health, or learning disability that may require accommodations in this course, please contact the [Disability Resource Center \(DRC\) \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](#) as early in the semester as possible (University Inn # 101, (435) 797-2444, drc@usu.edu). All disability related accommodations must be approved by the DRC. Once approved, the DRC will coordinate with faculty to provide accommodations.

Diversity Statement

Regardless of intent, careless or ill-informed remarks can be offensive and hurtful to others and detract from the learning climate. If you feel uncomfortable in a classroom due to offensive language or actions by an instructor or student(s) regarding ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation, contact:

- Division of Student Affairs: <https://studentaffairs.usu.edu> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site., (435) 797-1712, studentservices@usu.edu, TSC 220
- Student Legal Services: <https://ususa.usu.edu/student-association/student-advocacy/legal-services> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site., (435) 797-2912, TSC 326,

- Access and Diversity: <http://accesscenter.usu.edu> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site., (435) 797-1728, access@usu.edu; TSC 315
- Multicultural Programs: <http://accesscenter.usu.edu/multiculture> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site., (435) 797-1728, TSC 315
- LGBTQA Programs: <http://accesscenter.usu.edu/lgbtqa> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site., (435) 797-1728, TSC 3145
- Provost's Office Diversity Resources: <https://www.usu.edu/provost/diversity> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site., (435) 797-8176

You can learn about your student rights by visiting:

The Code of Policies and Procedures for Students at Utah State

University: <https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

Grievance Process

Students who feel they have been unfairly treated may file a grievance through the channels and procedures described in the Student Code: [Article VII \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](#)

Full details for USU Academic Policies and Procedures can be found at:

- [Student Conduct \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](#)
- [Student Code \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](#)
- [Academic Integrity \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](#)
- [USU Selected Academic Policies and Procedures \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](#)
- [USU Academic Policies and Procedures \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](#)
- [Academic Freedom and Professional Responsibility Policy \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](#)

Emergency Procedures

In the case of a drill or real emergency, classes will be notified to evacuate the building by the sound of the fire/emergency alarm system or by a building representative. In the event of a disaster that may interfere with either notification, evacuate as the situation dictates (i.e., in an earthquake when shaking ceases or immediately when a fire is discovered). Turn off computers and take any personal items with you.

Elevators should not be used; instead, use the closest stairs.

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 - Substituting for another student, or permitting another student to substitute for oneself, in taking an examination or preparing academic work;
 - Acquiring tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty member, staff member, or another student without express permission;
 - Continuing to write after time has been called on a quiz, test, examination, or any other academic exercise or activity;
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