

# GLOBAL ETHICS

BARUCH COLLEGE

PHI 1700 – LMFA

Class Number 28454

Instructor: Yuval Abrams

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Meeting time: Friday 9:05-12:00

Office hours: F 12-1:15 (by appointment)

Semester: Spring 2018

Classroom: Vertical 9-120

Credits: 3.0

Office: B5-272

## SYLLABUS

### **Introduction**

This course is a broad survey of the Philosophical study of Ethics. It covers the major ethical theories, such as utilitarianism, deontology, virtue ethics, specific moral problems, such as abortion, suicide, euthanasia, war crimes, and genocide, as well as foundational questions in meta-ethics and moral psychology, such as whether moral beliefs can be true or false, objective or subjective.

### **Learning Objectives**

- 1) Students will improve critical thinking by developing skills of explaining, critically examining, and responding to philosophical theories, issues, and claims in the philosophical study of ethics.
- 2) Students will improve writing skills by explaining, exploring, and critically examining philosophical theories, issues, concepts, and arguments relating to the philosophical study of ethics clearly in writing.
- 3) Students will improve communication skills by explaining orally philosophical theories, issues, claims, concepts, and arguments relating to the philosophical study of ethics.
- 4) Students will improve skills of interpreting and evaluating philosophical writings.
- 5) Students will develop an openness to having their beliefs challenged, will learn to hear and comprehend the views of others, and to entertain objections to their own views.
- 6) Students will be able to explain several classic ethical theories, to compare and contrast ethical theories, and to apply these to justify conclusions relating to concrete moral issues.
- 7) Students will acquire a familiarity with and an understanding of some classic and contemporary philosophical literature and some fundamental philosophical issues, and will be able to explain important contributions to the history of philosophy and their relation to present viewpoints.
- 9) Students will be able to show that issues may be regarded from multiple viewpoints, and will be able to present reasons in support of each viewpoint.
- 10) Students will improve reasoning skills and ethical decision making skills by acquiring an understanding of ethical theories and philosophical concepts that will enable them to develop their own opinions on conceptions and practices of moral interaction in society.
- 11) Students will develop a conceptual foundation for future learning by exploring philosophical theories and arguments and will acquire related critical thinking and communication skills.

### **Required Text:**

Louis P. Pojman & James Fieser, *Ethics: Discovering Right and Wrong, 7<sup>th</sup> Ed*, Wadsworth (2012), (Price: \$80.70), ISBN: 978-1111298173

**\* NOTE: The 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> editions of this book are available online, sometimes for cheaper. They are fine. There is a newer edition (8<sup>th</sup>) that is more expensive. Please do not purchase the 8<sup>th</sup> edition without speaking to me first.**

### **Additional Texts:**

There may be additional readings from time to time. These will be posted on Blackboard. I will also post materials on topics in applied ethics for your reference and in preparation for your in-class presentations.

### **Course Blackboard Site:**

There will be a site for this course on Blackboard. The syllabus, some of the readings, and perhaps your grades, will be posted and accessible on that site.

*You are responsible to follow the announcements on the Blackboard site*

### **Course Requirements and Grading**

1. Class participation: Based on attendance and discussions. You may miss up to 3 unexcused classes without penalty **(10%)**
2. First paper: **Due Date March 2<sup>nd</sup> (15%)**
3. Midterm exam: **March 23<sup>rd</sup> (20%)**
4. Outline and Bibliography for Class Presentation: **April 20<sup>th</sup> (5%)**
5. In Class Presentation (date and topic to be determined with me): **(10%)**
6. Final exam: **Friday May 18<sup>th</sup> 10:30AM-12:30 PM (25%)**
7. Final Paper: **Due Date December 20<sup>th</sup> (15%)**

**The final grade will be curved.**

### ***Note on the Requirements***

#### **Class Participation** (10%).

- I will take attendance at the beginning of every class.
- Still, students will need to participate in discussions, in order to get a passing grade for attendance
- Cell phones should be on silent mode.
- Repeated absences will be taken note of.
- **You are allowed 3 unexcused absences without your grade being affecting.**
- Lateness should be avoided, but better that you attend late than not at all. If you must enter late, please make an effort not to disturb the class as you get to your seat.

#### **Paper Assignments** (15+15=30%)

- The first paper assignment will be an essay on an assigned reading and topic.
- The second paper will be on your class presentation. While you are free to argue for one side or another on your topic, you must address the arguments for the other side as well.
- **Papers are to be submitted electronically (via email or Blackboard) only.**

**Presentation** (10% + 5% for bibliography): You will choose a topic in Applied Ethics from a list that I will offer the class. I will offer several topics and you will rank your preferences. Once you've been assigned a topic, I will tell you which side of the debate (pro or con) you will argue. Your presentation will be based on the readings and must relate to them. You may, however, add your own views or a development of them to the presentation, as long as the reading is addressed. Prior to the presentation, you must submit an outline of your presentation and a bibliography. We will discuss this well ahead of time.

#### **Exams** (20+25 = 45%)

- The two exams will consist of several short answer questions and essay questions.
- The final exam will be comprehensive (i.e. cumulative).

#### ***Miscellaneous***

- Because this class meets for 3 hours once a week, we will have class on exam days after the exam.
- Absence from classes does not affect the due dates for the assignments or your exam dates. If you miss an exam your grade will be zero for that exam, unless you contact me beforehand in an attempt to work out an alternative.
- Late assignments handed in **within 2 weeks** of the due date (i.e. before I return the papers to the rest of class) will receive a **single letter-grade deduction** unless an extension has been granted prior to the due date. **Assignments handed in later than that will only be accepted after talking to me first.**

### **Please be aware of the NY State Education Law, which provides that:**

1. Any student in an institution of higher education who is unable, because of their religious beliefs, to attend classes on a particular day or days shall, because of such absence on the particular day or days, be excused from any examination or any study or work requirements.

2. It shall be the responsibility of the faculty to make available to each student who is absent from school, because of religious beliefs, an equivalent opportunity to make up any examination, study or work requirements which they may have missed because of such absence on any particular day or days
3. Any student who is aggrieved by the alleged failure of any faculty or administrative officials to comply in good faith shall be entitled to maintain an action or proceeding in the supreme court of the county in which such institution of higher education is located for the enforcement of their rights

### **CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity**

#### ***Baruch College's Statement of Academic Integrity:***

Academic integrity in its best form involves upholding the principles and expectations of doing one's own work and giving credit to others for theirs. Academic integrity strengthens the educational environment by valuing original work and providing a fair environment for all students. (<http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/studentaffairs/AcademicIntegrity/>)

#### ***Baruch College's Statement on Academic Dishonesty:***

Academic dishonesty is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Cheating, forgery, plagiarism and collusion in dishonest acts undermine the college's educational mission and the students' personal and intellectual growth. Baruch students are expected to bear individual responsibility for their work, to learn the rules and definitions that underlie the practice of academic integrity, and to uphold its ideals. Ignorance of the rules is not an acceptable excuse for disobeying them. Any student who attempts to compromise or devalue the academic process will be sanctioned.

For more information on the definitions of Academic Dishonesty, see here  
[https://www.baruch.cuny.edu/academic/academic\\_honesty.html](https://www.baruch.cuny.edu/academic/academic_honesty.html)

### **CUNY Policy on Disability Services**

Baruch College is committed to providing access to all programs and curricula to all students. Students with disabilities who may need classroom accommodations are encouraged to register with the Office of Students with Disabilities. For more information, please contact the Office of Students with Disabilities, One Bernard Baruch Way, Newman Vertical Campus, Room 2-271, New York, NY 10010, phone number, 646-312-4950 or visit  
<https://www.baruch.cuny.edu/studentaffairs/ossd/disabilityServices.htm> .

### **Student Academic Consulting Center (SACC)**

SACC's mission is to help undergraduates of Baruch College succeed academically and in their chosen professions. This includes tutorial services. For more information, visit  
<https://www.baruch.cuny.edu/sacc/>

**Reading Schedule** (All Readings are in the Pojman text 7<sup>th</sup> edition, unless indicated otherwise. **Note: In some editions the chapter order may be different. Please make sure you read the chapter with the right heading!**) (This list is tentative and is subject to revision)

<b>Week 1</b>	<b>February 2: Introduction to the Class / What is Ethics?</b> READING: Chapter 1
<b>Week 2</b>	<b>February 9: Ethical Relativism</b> READING: Chapter 2
<b>Week 3</b>	<b>February 16: Moral Objectivism</b> READING: Chapter 3 <b>First Paper Prompt (Paper Due March 2<sup>nd</sup>)</b>
<b>Week 4:</b>	<b>February 23: Value and the Quest for the Good</b> READING: Chapter 4
<b>Week 5</b>	<b>March 2: Utilitarianism</b> READING: Chapter 7 <b>First Paper Due (15%)</b>

- Week 6:**           **March 9: Kant and Deontological Theories**  
READING:       Chapter 8
- Week 7**           **March 16: Social Contract Theory and the Motive to be Moral**  
READING:       Chapter 5
- Week 8**           **March 23: **MIDTERM EXAM (20%)** / Preliminary Discussion about Applied Ethics**  
**Topics for Debate**
- Week 9**           **March 30: **NO CLASS (SPRING BREAK)****
- Week 10**          **April 6: **NO CLASS (SPRING BREAK)****
- Week 11**          **April 11 (Wednesday): Egoism, Self-Interest, and Altruism**  
READING:       Chapter 6
- Week 12**          **April 13: Virtue Theory / Applied Ethics – Introduction and Sample Topic**  
READING:       Chapter 9
- Week 13**          **April 20: Religion and Ethics / The Fact-Value Problem**  
READING:       Chapter 11-12  
**Outline of Applied Ethics Presentations Due (5%)**
- Week 14**          **April 27: Moral Realism and the Challenge of Skepticism // Moral Psychology**  
READING:       Chapter 13  
                      Haidt, *The Righteous Mind* (Chapters 1-3) (Available on Blackboard)
- Week 15**          **May 4: Applied Ethics - Debates**
- Week 16**          **May 11: Applied Ethics - Debates (Continued)**

**FINAL EXAM May 18<sup>th</sup> from 10:30-12:30 (Tentative: This is subject to revision – stay tuned)**  
**FINAL PAPER DUE DATE MAY 20<sup>th</sup> (15%)**