

**PHIL 1020 – ETHICS**  
**Fall 2022**  
**online**

**Instructor:** Karen deVries, Ph.D.

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I typically respond to emails on weekdays and within 24 hours of receipt.

**Office Hours:**

Columbine 4056; Tuesdays 1:30-3:00 and by appointment (email me)

### **COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

In this course, students will:

- Develop an understanding of several major ethical theories developed over the last 2000 years
- Apply ethical theories to contemporary societal problems
- Develop an understanding of differing ethical commitments that frequently undergird disagreements and ideologies
- Improve their ability to support their ethical positions with good reasoning
- Improve their ability to synthesize and critically evaluate complex theoretical arguments
- Develop critical reading, writing, and thinking skills

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The course provides an introduction to philosophical questions about the nature of ethics, including: Is there objective morality? Is morality relative to a particular cultural or religious tradition? What makes actions right or wrong? What is it to be a good person? What ethical obligations do we have towards others? Should we be ethical even when it doesn't always appear to be in our best interest to do so? What is a good life and is it necessarily free of pain and suffering? We will examine how philosophers from diverse traditions have attempted to answer these questions. We will also consider how various ethical frameworks might address contemporary moral issues as capital punishment and poverty. The purpose of this course is not to provide a definitive answer to these questions, but rather to help you understand the reasoning that underlies your own beliefs, as well as those who hold different views.

### **REQUIRED TEXTS**

- (1) *The Moral Life: An Introductory Reader in Ethics and Literature*, edited by Louis Pojman and Lewis Vaughn, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition, Oxford University Press 2018 ("TML" on reading list).
- (2) Simon Wiesenthal. *The Sunflower: On the Possibilities and Limits of Forgiveness*. Schocken Press, 1998.
- (3) Additional articles will be available on Canvas

For the primary textbook, *The Moral Life*, this course uses the UCCS Bookstore's **Day One e-Textbook Access program** which offers students instant access to online textbooks and to save students as much money as possible. Access your e-textbooks in Canvas.

- On the left side of the course home page, locate and click on the **Vital Source** link.
- You will need to access the content via Canvas using the **Chrome browser**. Safari does not yet work with this program's content
- If you prefer to buy your own copy of the books, you will have until the *opt out* date (listed in the Vital Source content) to discontinue use and not incur the cost.
- For issues and inquiries regarding VitalSource eBooks & Day One Access you can reach a technical specialist 24/6/365 via chat, text, email, and phone <https://support.vitalsource.com/hc/en-us/requests/new> 1-855-200-4146.
- If you have any questions that the technical specialist is unable to answer, contact the bookstore at 719-255-3846.

The Simon Wiesenthal book, *The Sunflower*, (which we will be reading in the latter half of the semester) is not available to use with the Day One program, so **you will need to purchase it separately**.

## **COURSE STRUCTURE**

This course will be delivered online in an asynchronous format through Canvas. Each week, you will have assigned readings. By end of day on Wednesday of each week, I will post a video mini-lecture discussing the readings. By that time, I will also post a discussion question (DQ) prompt that you will need to respond to by 11:59pm on Friday. You will then need to reply to at least two of your classmates responses by 11:59pm the following Monday.

There are 4 open-book quizzes that are marked on the course calendar below. If you keep up with the readings and read carefully, the quizzes are straight-forward. Additionally, you must submit a midterm paper and a final paper to complete this course.

## **EVALUATION CRITERIA and GRADES**

### **Course Assignments**

- 25% Weekly Discussion Questions & Participation Exercises
- 25% Quizzes on Canvas (4 total)
- 25% Take-Home Midterm
- 25% Take-Home Final

## Grading Scale

A	100-95	C	76-74
A-	94-90	C-	73-70
B+	89-87	D+	69-67
B	86-84	D	66-64
B-	83-80	D-	63-61
C+	79-77	F	60-0

*\* For your final grade, I round up to the nearest tenth of a percent. If you finish with an 89.5, that is rounded up to an A-, but if you finish with an 89.499999999999, that is still a B+*

**Late Work** Late assignments will be accepted without deduction only on *sufficient prior* arrangement with me. Please get in touch with me as soon as practicably possible if you know that you might be late with an assignment

## Weekly Discussion Questions

Each week (by end of day Wednesday) I will post a discussion question (DQ) prompt that you will need to respond to. The DQ has two purposes: first, to give you a formal opportunity to reflect on the readings in a connective or synthetic way and second, to serve as a starting place for class discussions. The discussion questions – and the class as a whole – will require you to read carefully, looking up terms you do not understand, and keeping notes as you read. you will need to respond to by 11:59pm on Friday. You will then need to reply to at least two of your classmates responses by 11:59pm the following Monday.

### **A note about discussions:**

This course has a significant online discussion component. Topics covered are controversial, and thoughtful intelligent people have held opposing views. We will have the opportunity to review several contrasting positions, but, ultimately, you are expected to engage the issues and form your own views. Your learning in this course will depend on your willingness to think critically and formulate your own views so that you can improve your ability to express them clearly and convincingly. ***You should expect that your views will be challenged and be willing to challenge the views of others.*** At the same time, it will be extremely important to ***respect each other*** in discussions. It is important to distinguish between the person offering a particular view and the view itself. The latter may be criticized, but not the former.

## **TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

Students are expected to have access to a working computer and the internet during the course.

Minimal technical skills required include:

- use Canvas, UCCS's learning management system,
- use emails (and sometimes with attachments) to communicate with instructor,
- create and submit files in .doc, .docx, and .pdf formats
- copy and paste assignment questions, and
- download and install software.

## **ACADEMIC and TECHNOLOGY HELP**

### **Excel Centers**

The Excel Centers (Communication, Languages, Mathematics, Science, and Writing) continue to provide students with outstanding academic support both in-person and remotely. All Excel Centers offer online service appointments. For details, students should visit the Excel Support webpage: <https://excel.uccs.edu/excel-support>

### **Academic Advising**

UCCS Academic advising offers advising for degree programs and an opportunity to ask questions about all things regarding your academic career. For more information, see <https://advising.uccs.edu/>

### **Technology Help**

UCCS Help Desk – 719-255-3536. See also <https://oit.uccs.edu/get-help>

For Canvas issues, you can access technical help through the Help link at the bottom of the global navigation in the Canvas course (black nav bar at the far left of the window). You can also call the Canvas Support Hotline at 844-802-9230. Alternatively, you can access Canvas's Support via Live Chat at <https://uccs.edu/lms/>

### **Disabilities Services.**

If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class, please register with Disability Services and provide them with documentation of your disability. They will work with you to determine what accommodations are appropriate for your situation. To avoid any delay, you should contact Disability Services as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and disability accommodations cannot be provided until a Faculty Accommodation Letter has been given to me. Please contact Disability Services for more information at Main Hall room 105, 719-255-3354 or [dservice@uccs.edu](mailto:dservice@uccs.edu).

## **ADDITIONAL UCCS POLICIES and RESOURCES**

### **Campus COVID-19 Information**

UCCS website for COVID 19: <https://covid19.uccs.edu/>

Return to Campus: <https://returnto.uccs.edu>

UCCS Health Center: <https://uccs.edu/recwellness/health-services>

Please do not walk into the Wellness Center if you are experiencing any COVID like symptoms. Appointments for telehealth visits and follow up testing can be scheduled by calling 719-255-4444. The Wellness Center is able to provide testing to actively enrolled students displaying COVID-like symptoms that are seen by a Wellness Center provider, those with a known exposure to a positive case, and those needing testing prior to travel.

If you become ill with COVID-19 (or any other serious illness) during the semester, please let me know as soon as possible. I will work with you to determine the best way to help you complete your assignments and the course. Please let me know as soon as possible.

## **Plagiarism**

Read the UCCS LAS Plagiarism Policy which you can find here: <https://las.uccs.edu/plagiarism-policy>

Paraphrasing or quoting another's work without citing the source is a form of academic misconduct. Even inadvertent or unintentional misuse or appropriation of another's work (such as relying heavily on source material that is not expressly acknowledged) is considered plagiarism. All work for this course must be completed by the person submitting it for evaluation.

Anyone found guilty of plagiarism, cheating, forgery, falsification, or other forms of academic dishonesty will FAIL the course.

If you have any questions about using and citing sources, you are expected to ask for clarification. You plagiarize, you fail. Seriously. When in doubt, just ask me. I am here to help! For useful information about plagiarism, see: <http://www.indiana.edu/~istd/definition.html>

## **Recording Classes**

Students are prohibited from making audio or video recording of any class activity conducted in person or online unless (1) I have given you explicit permission or (2) the student has provided the instructor with a Faculty Accommodation Letter from Disability Services. These letters must be presented to the instructor prior to any recording done and recording should be reserved for that individual's educational use only. Students who are permitted to record are prohibited from distributing recordings without consent. Distribution without consent will be forwarded to the Dean of Students for consideration under the student code of conduct. Recording class activity without consent is a violation of instructor and student right to privacy, copyright, and intellectual property.

**Student Educational Records.** All records related to this course are confidential and will not be shared with anyone, including parents, without a signed, written release. If you wish to have information from your records shared with others, you must provide written request/authorization to the office/department. Before giving such authorization, you should understand the purpose of the release and to whom and for how long the information is authorized for release.

## **Military Deployment and Military Service**

In order to assist students who are called to active duty, the Campus has compiled a set of guidelines that include information on withdrawing from courses. General information can be accessed at: <https://www.uccs.edu/military/current-students/active-duty-and-reservists/deployment>

## **Syllabus Changes**

I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus as appropriate. Should this happen, I will inform you as soon as possible.

# COURSE CALENDAR

## WEEK 1 INTRODUCTION to ETHICS

**August 22-26** Watch introductory video from Dr. deVries (posted by end of day Weds)  
Review syllabus and expectations.  
Respond to DQ #1 by 11:59pm on Friday, August 26<sup>th</sup>  
Reply to at least two other students DQ by 11:59pm on Monday, August 29<sup>th</sup>

## WEEK 2 SELF-INTEREST and RELATIVISM

**August 29 - September 2** READING FOR THIS WEEK:  
Plato, "The Ring of Gyges" (TML, p. 491-498)  
James Rachels, "A Critique of Ethical Egoism" (TML, p. 515-526)  
Ruth Benedict, "The Case for Moral Relativism" (TML p. 124-131)  
James Rachels, "Why Morality Is Not Relative" (TML, p. 143-155)

ASSIGNMENTS FOR THIS WEEK:  
Discussion question and video(s) will be posted by end of day on Wednesday  
Respond to DQ #2 by 11:59pm on Friday, September 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Reply to at least two other students DQ by 11:59pm on Tuesday, Sept. 6<sup>th</sup>  
*because of the Labor Day holiday, you get an extra day here to respond*

## WEEK 3 SOCIAL CONTRACT THEORY and UTILITARIANISM

**September 5-9** READING FOR THIS WEEK:  
Thomas Hobbes, "On the State of Nature" (TML, p. 39-49)  
"Seaman Holmes and the Longboat of William Brown" (TML, p. 198-199)  
Jeremy Bentham, "Classical Utilitarianism" (TML, p. 199-204)  
John Stuart Mill, "Utilitarianism Refined" (TML, p. 205-209)

ASSIGNMENTS FOR THIS WEEK:  
Discussion question and video(s) will be posted by end of day on Wednesday  
Respond to DQ #3 by 11:59pm on Friday, September 9<sup>th</sup>  
Reply to at least two other students DQ by 11:59pm on Monday, Sept. 12<sup>th</sup>

**WEEK 4 UTILITARIANISM cont.**

**September  
12-16**

READING FOR THIS WEEK:

Bernard Williams, "Against Utilitarianism" (TML, p. 222-233)

Ursula Le Guin, "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas" (TML, p. 234-239)

ASSIGNMENTS FOR THIS WEEK:

Discussion question and video(s) will be posted by end of day on Wednesday

Respond to DQ #4 by 11:59pm on Friday, September 16<sup>th</sup>

Reply to at least two other students DQ by 11:59pm on Monday, Sept. 19<sup>th</sup>

**Quiz #1 in Canvas opens at noon on Thursday, September 15<sup>th</sup>**

**WEEK 5 KANTIAN or DEONTOLOGICAL ETHICS**

**September  
19-23**

READING FOR THIS WEEK:

Immanuel Kant, "The Moral Law" (TML, p. 243-259)

Onora O'Neill, "A Simplified Account of Kant's Ethics," (Canvas)

Kant, "The Retributive Theory of Punishment" (Canvas)

Nelson Potter, "Kant and Capital Punishment Today" (Canvas)

ASSIGNMENTS FOR THIS WEEK:

**Quiz #1 due in Canvas by 11:59pm on Tuesday, September 20<sup>th</sup>**

Discussion question and video(s) will be posted by end of day on Wednesday

Respond to DQ #5 by 11:59pm on Friday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>

Reply to at least two other students DQ by 11:59pm on Monday, Sept. 26<sup>th</sup>

**WEEK 6 VIRTUE ETHICS**

**September  
26-30**

READING FOR THIS WEEK:

Aristotle, "Virtue Ethics" (TML, p. 313-326)

Velasquez et al., "Ethics and Virtue" (Canvas)

Susan Wolf, "Moral Saints" (TML, p. 343-355)

ASSIGNMENTS FOR THIS WEEK:

Discussion question and video(s) will be posted by end of day on Wednesday

Respond to DQ #6 by 11:59pm on Friday, September 30<sup>th</sup>

Reply to at least two other students DQ by 11:59pm on Monday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>

**Receive and review midterm prompt by 11:59pm on Friday, September 30<sup>th</sup>**

**WEEK 7 FEMINIST ETHICS**

**October 3-7** READING FOR THIS WEEK:  
Alison Jaggar, *Feminist Ethics* (TML, p. 437-449)  
Virginia Held, *The Ethics of Care* (TML, p. 471-485)

ASSIGNMENTS FOR THIS WEEK:  
Discussion question and video(s) will be posted by end of day on Wednesday  
Respond to DQ #7 by 11:59pm on Friday, October 7<sup>th</sup>  
Reply to at least two other students DQ by 11:59pm on Monday, October 10<sup>th</sup>

**WEEK 8 ETHICS in a GLOBALIZED WORLD**

**October 10-14** READING FOR THIS WEEK:  
Peter Singer, "Famine, Affluence, and Morality" (TML, p. 918-929)  
Garrett Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons" (TML, p. 860-874)  
Garrett Hardin, "Living on a Lifeboat" (TML p. 886-902)  
Kwame Anthony Appiah, "Kindness to Strangers" (12pp, Canvas)

ASSIGNMENTS FOR THIS WEEK:  
Discussion question and video(s) will be posted by end of day on Wednesday  
Respond to DQ #8 by 11:59pm on Friday, October 14<sup>th</sup>  
Reply to at least two other students DQ by 11:59pm on Monday, October 17<sup>th</sup>

**Quiz #2 in Canvas opens by noon on Thursday, October 13th**

**WEEK 9 MIDTERM WEEK**

**October 17-21** NO READING THIS WEEK. WORK ON YOUR MIDTERM

**Quiz #2 due in Canvas by 11:59pm on Tuesday, October 18<sup>th</sup>**  
**Midterm due in Canvas by 11:59pm on Friday, October 21<sup>st</sup>**

**WEEK 10 EXISTENTIALISM**

**October 24-28** READING/VIEWING FOR THIS WEEK:  
Watch the film, *Groundhog Day*  
Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil* (TML, p. 99-110)  
excerpt from Nietzsche's *Ecce Homo* (Canvas)  
Albert Camus's "Life is Absurd" (TML, 539-545)

ASSIGNMENTS FOR THIS WEEK:  
Discussion question and video(s) will be posted by end of day on Wednesday  
Respond to DQ #9 by 11:59pm on Friday, October 28<sup>th</sup>  
Reply to at least two other students DQ by 11:59pm on Monday, October 31<sup>st</sup>



**WEEK 11 BUDDHIST ETHICS**

**October 31** READING/VIEWING FOR THIS WEEK:  
- Siddhartha Gautama, "The Four Noble Truths" (TML p. 552-557)  
**November 4** Watch the film, *Fight Club*  
Charley Reed's "*Fight Club: An Exploration of Buddhism*" (Canvas)

ASSIGNMENTS FOR THIS WEEK:  
Discussion question and video(s) will be posted by end of day on Wednesday  
Respond to DQ #10 by 11:59pm on Friday, November 4<sup>th</sup>  
Reply to at least two other students DQ by 11:59pm on Monday, Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>

**WEEK 12 AN ETHICS of the EVENT**

**November 7-11** READING FOR THIS WEEK:  
Levi R. Bryant's "Ethics of the Event" (Canvas)

ASSIGNMENTS FOR THIS WEEK:  
Discussion question and video(s) will be posted by end of day on Wednesday  
Respond to DQ #11 by 11:59pm on Friday, November 11<sup>th</sup>  
Reply to at least two other students DQ by 11:59pm on Monday, Nov. 14<sup>th</sup>

**Quiz #3 opens in Canvas by noon on Thursday, November 10<sup>th</sup>**

**WEEK 13 ETHICS and FORGIVENESS**

**November 14-18** READING FOR THIS WEEK:  
Book 1 of *The Sunflower: On the Possibilities and Limits of Forgiveness* (p. 1-99)  
Excerpts from Book 2 of *The Sunflower*  
Moshe Bejski, pp. 111-117  
Dalai Lama, pp. 129-130  
Primo Levi, pp. 191-192  
Herbert Marcuse, pp. 207-208  
Dorothee Soelle, pp. 243-245  
Desmond Tutu, pp. 266-268

ASSIGNMENTS FOR THIS WEEK:  
**Quiz #3 due in Canvas by 11:59pm on Tuesday, November 15<sup>th</sup>**  
Discussion question and video(s) will be posted by end of day on Wednesday  
Respond to DQ #12 by 11:59pm on Friday, November 18<sup>th</sup>  
Reply to at least two other students DQ by 11:59pm on Monday, Nov. 21<sup>nd</sup>

**Receive Final Take-Home Prompt by 11:59pm Friday, November 18<sup>th</sup>**

**WEEK 14      THANKSGIVING WEEK**

**November 21-25      No additional assignments this week. Enjoy your holiday.**

**WEEK 15      ETHICS and MARKETS**

**November 28      READING FOR THIS WEEK:**  
-      Michael Sandel's "How Markets Crowd Out Morals" (Canvas)  
**December 2<sup>nd</sup>      Michael Sandel's "Markets in Life and Death" (Canvas)**

**ASSIGNMENTS FOR THIS WEEK:**

Discussion question and video(s) will be posted by end of day on Wednesday

Respond to DQ #13 by 11:59pm on Friday, December 2nd

Reply to at least two other students DQ by 11:59pm on Monday, December 5<sup>th</sup>

**Quiz #4 in Canvas opens by noon on Thursday, December 1<sup>st</sup>**

**Attend Mountain Lion Research Day between 12:00-3:15pm on December 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

Your write-up about the event is **due by 11:59pm on Friday, Dec. 9<sup>th</sup>.**

**WEEK 16      DEAD WEEK**

**December 5-9      Quiz #4 due in Canvas by 11:59pm on Tuesday, December 6<sup>th</sup>**  
**Work on your final paper.**

**FINALS WEEK      Final Take-Home Exam due to Canvas by 11:59pm on Wednesday, Dec. 14<sup>th</sup>**