

THERE'S AN EPIDEMIC SPREADING PHILOSOPHY

**1 in 5 teenagers will
experiment with philosophy.**

**"Are you googling thought
experiments again?"**

**"Do you want to end up a
professor like your sister?"**

**Thinking is
a gateway
to despair.**

**"At first, it's just
Plato, but then
it's Nietzsche!"**

**Know the
warning signs
of philosophy.**

talk to your kids about philosophy

Photography by Ian Allenden, Svyatoslav Lypynskyy, Evgeny Chabanov & Monkey Business for Depositphotos; GaudiLab & Vladislav Filatov for Shutterstock.

Professor David Emmanuel Gray Presents...

Ethics!

**'Do Good,
Look
Fabulous!'**

DO THE RIGHT THING!

The Practical Questions!

- * What ought I do?
- * Should I give more of my money to charity?
- * Do animals have rights?



**THEY
GHOSTED**
*After One Date,
That's Not Right!*

*I Pulled the
Lever!*



**I REGRET
NOTHING!**



**Only I
Matter!**
EGOISM?

SPRING 2025



PHI 107LEC GRA

Michael Stuhlbarg as Socrates; Sara Kulwich/The New York Times; Compass: Paul Fleet; Socrates Sketch: Spreadshirt

ETHICS

www.moralcompasses.com

SOCRATES' CHOICE.



Miletus • Chujen • Zou • Kushinagar • Athens • Rome • Baghdad • Damascus • Córdoba • Lazio • Florence
Oxford • London • Hanover • Paris • Edinburgh • Königsberg • Berlin • Frankfurt • Copenhagen • Buffalo



ETHICS
since CA. 585 BCE



Socrates believes...
in you!

Ethics!

Spring 2025

Always ask the hard **questions**, discover your **truths**, and strive for the **good life**!



MORGAN SACKETT / NBC

No Need for a Boat!

On land, air, or sea, you can read the course texts anywhere you like!

Overview

6 Course Description

6 Learning Outcomes

6 Learning Resources

7 Announcements & Other Communication

7 **Course Structure:** This is an online asynchronous course with no regular class meetings!

Requirements

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8 Earning Philosophy Experience Points

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9 Module Structure

9 24-Hour Grace Period

10 **Philosopher's Stones!**
Earn these and you may unleash legendary philosophical powers.

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Ethics! (Class #21834) PHI 107 GRA, Spring 2025, is a 3.00-unit remote, not real time course at the State University of New York (SUNY) at Buffalo taught by Professor David Emmanuel Gray, Associate Teaching Professor of Philosophy, 118 Park Hall, UB North Campus, Buffalo, NY 14260-4150, 716-645-0164 (phone), 716-645-6139 (fax), degray@buffalo.edu. Copyright 2025 Professor David Emmanuel Gray. All rights reserved. This syllabus along with all other course documents are solely for the personal use of students enrolled in **Ethics!** Unauthorized distribution and/or uploading of this material without the instructor's written permission is strictly prohibited. **COVER IMAGES:** *The Good Place* photos by Colleen Hayes (overly happy couple, man holding trolley lever, and fancy man with a golden chalice), Vivian Zink (very annoyed-looking woman), and Justin Lubin (very cute dog) for the National Broadcasting Company (NBC). **MADE IN THE U.S.A.**

Welcome! Everything is fine.

JUSTIN LUBIN / NBC



JUSTIN LUBIN / NBC

YOU TOTALLY GOT THIS!



COLLEEN HAYES / NBC

LETTER FROM THE PROFESSOR

Hello, hello, all you lovely people!

I'm Professor David Emmanuel Gray and I'd like to welcome you to Ethics!

As you will soon find out, I'm *extremely* passionate about the study of ethics, and so I look forward to guiding you through this wonderful field. By this May, I hope you have the practice and confidence to deliberate on your own, and with others, about difficult moral issues.

My teaching philosophy is simple: You arrive as a humble lump of coal, but with the careful application of heat and pressure, you will become a diamond. I will do my utmost to fuel your fire and passion for ethics, encouraging you to successfully overcome the stress and pressures of this course. However, if

you ever feel about to crack, let me know—I want you to come out of this shining bright!

Throughout this learning process, I embrace the fact that there is nothing embarrassing about making mistakes when doing something new. Indeed, such mistakes are perfectly normal.

If anything, I encourage you to make at least one truly *spectacular* mistake this semester—because that's precisely when we usually learn the most!

This is why I have structured the course to allow you to mess up while also having opportunities to recover. For example, you will earn “philosopher's stones”

that you may use for extensions, redoing unit exams, and making up for missed social annotations and quizzes. We all have bad days, but those days should not be the ones that ultimately define us.



Finally, I know that you may only be taking this course as part of a Pathway. There is nothing wrong with that! Even so, I encourage you to keep an open mind, take risks, express your views, challenge me when you think I err, and reflect on how the course material applies to the issues you find important. Do all that, and I promise that you will leave the course with a greater appreciation of ethics and its role in your life. Who knows, you might even decide to take more advanced courses in ethics!

Otherwise, please don't be shy and never be a stranger. Always feel free to reach out via Email, Zoom, or my Student Meeting Hours (Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:00PM to 2:00PM). I am always glad to respond to your questions or to simply chat.

Take care and stay safe!

David Gray
David Emmanuel Gray
Associate Teaching Professor

Ethics! OVERVIEW

What have we gotten ourselves into?

ETHICS is the branch of philosophy examining the nature of morality, good and evil, and right and wrong action. At bottom, ethics addresses the most practical question: “What ought I do?” As such, this is not some hypothetical concern, but something with which we all continually wrestle, as we go about our day-to-day lives. As such, ethics is an inherent and inescapable part of human existence.

In this course, we will look at several influential attempts to answer that practical question of ethics. Throughout, we will discover how these divergent, and often conflicting, approaches frame present-day discourse surrounding a variety of issues—such as ghosting, religion, drone attacks, gaslighting, implicit bias, gender quotas for university admissions and job hiring, world poverty, eating factory-farmed meat, human rights, alcohol and sexual consent, course grades, and ethical leadership.

As you will soon see, the most important issues in ethics rarely have obvious right and wrong answers. Nor is there a simple “ethics checklist” to consult when you are confronted with a hard choice or difficult moral dilemma. There are instead many different reasonable approaches, and those approaches may often conflict with one another.

Therefore, it is ultimately up to you, *and you alone*, to reflect on and reach your own conclusions on these matters. This means that **I am not here to tell you what is right and what is wrong**. After all, who am I to tell you what it is you should value for your life?

As a result, my primary goal is to cultivate *your* cognitive and affective capacities for practical deliberation on your own, and with others, about moral issues. This will equip you to better understand these issues for yourself and, in turn, meaningfully engage with others. After all, only the hermit lives in isolation. For the rest of us, **we must be prepared to secure the legitimate cooperation of those with whom we may disagree**.

This is a basic principle of ethics, and I will do my best to immerse you in the deliberative process it entails. I cannot think of a better way to assist you in becoming a future leader in your communities and chosen fields of study.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course introduces you to the philosophical study of ethics and some of its practical applications. In addition, you will learn (I hope!) more about yourself and your place in the world.

To help guide us, this course has five learning outcomes. By this May, you will be able to...

1. Identify and employ common terminology for philosophical approaches to ethics,
2. Explain and summarize arguments within philosophical texts,
3. Apply important ethical concepts and theories to various hypothetical and real-world situations,
4. Assess competing claims concerning the demands that morality places on your actions and decisions, and
5. Reflect on your own assumptions and form more considered judgments on moral issues.

I have designed all course activities with these outcomes in mind.



VIVIAN ZINK / NBC



COLLEEN HAYES / NBC

LEARNING RESOURCES: FIND THEM ALL ONLINE!

There are no textbooks to buy for this course. The course website will have all the readings along with some reading questions for you to consult. I expect you to read that material according to the class schedule.

The course website will also have activities and all other materials, along with any updates to our schedule.

It's 🔥🔥



ANDREW ECCLES / NBCU PHOTO BANK

ANNOUNCEMENTS & OTHER COMMUNICATION

About twice a week, I will email important course information to you. So be sure to routinely check your UB email for updates. Otherwise, I will gladly answer your questions, discuss your work, or respond to your concerns. Please email, book an appointment with me on Zoom, or drop by my office in 118 Park Hall.

COURSE STRUCTURE



COLLEEN HAYES / NBC

THIS is a **fully online** course. It does *not* meet regularly on Zoom. Instead, your learning will be conducted asynchronously on the course website. Even so, I have structured this course so that you have opportunities to learn in a community with your peers.

One thing to note is that **this is not a self-paced course**. Each week you will complete two assigned modules and discuss the material with your classmates on Perusall. Every few weeks there will be a unit exam to check on your progress.

All that said, **don't panic!** This may seem like a lot of work, but throughout the course you will earn philosopher's stones that can be used to turn in work late, redo

unit exams, and make up for missed social annotations and quizzes. In addition, the grading scheme is extremely flexible in how you earn points towards your final grade.


Throughout this course, I want you to not only learn from me but also from your interactions with your classmates. Indeed, like any activity, you get better at reasoning about ethics the more you actually do it with others. As a result, the quality of the course depends critically on your individual attention and participation. The purpose of us studying together as a class is to learn and engage with each other.

To encourage you in all this, I will do my best to make your time devoted to this course worthwhile and well spent.

I will also take special care to create an environment where you feel comfortable asking questions and expressing your own views with me and your classmates.

However, a few words of warning about this format:

- Philosophy is a full-contact sport, but conducted as cooperative processes. You and your classmates must wrestle together with difficult moral issues, while not attacking each other. **Disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated.**
- To get the most out of this class, **please do not confuse this cooperative style of learning with mere conversation or informal, organized chatting.**



Wait, REQUIREMENTS?

Philosophy Experience Points	Level	Title
Less than 3,399	1	New Philosophy Student

will measure your progress and success in this course by having you engage in these three types of activities:

- Participation in **social annotating the readings** on Perusall, which has you work with your classmates in order to better understand what that material is trying to convey while applying it to your own lived experiences;
- **Quizzes** embedded in my videos and posted at the end of each module, that check your basic understanding of the course material; and
- **Unit exams** that have you demonstrate your knowledge of key terminology and the arguments from the reading, apply course material to new cases, compare competing claims about ethics, and justify positions of your own on moral issues.

As you complete these activities, you will earn **philosophy experience points**. You have entered this class as a New Philosophy Student, but as you do activities and earn philosophy experience points **you will advance to higher levels**. The level at which you end the semester will determine your final letter grade in the course.

This philosophy experience point structure means that **you are free to choose some activities and skip others**. You are also free to decide how much you want to engage in the course.

Some students will reach the level of Unemployed Philosopher and then vanish. Fair enough! Others will not relent until they are Philosopher Supreme. Great—go for it! In the end, I will support whatever choice you make.



**YOU TOO
CAN BECOME
PHILOSOPHER
SUPREME!**

EARNING PHILOSOPHY EXPERIENCE POINTS

Activity	Philosophy Experience Points	Total Points Available
Social Annotations	100 per module	2,500
Quizzes	100 per module	2,500
Unit Exams	1,000 per exam	6,000
	Total	11,000



PHILOSOPHER ADVANCEMENT

Philosophy Experience Points	Level	Title	Letter Grade
Less than 3,399	1	New Philosophy Student	F
3,400 to 3,899	2	Philosophy Student	D-
3,900 to 4,399	3	Philosophy Initiate	D
4,400 to 4,899	4	Novice Philosopher	D+
4,900 to 5,499	5	Apprentice Philosopher	C-
5,500 to 6,099	6	Unemployed Philosopher	C
6,100 to 6,699	7	Armchair Philosopher	C+
6,700 to 7,399	8	Stand-Up Philosopher	B-
7,400 to 8,099	9	Assistant Philosophy Professor	B
8,100 to 8,799	10	Associate Philosophy Professor	B+
8,800 to 9,599	11	Philosophy Professor	A-
9,600 to 10,399	12	Philosopher Royale	A
10,400 or higher	13	Philosopher Supreme	A+

UB does not allow final course grades to be an A+ or a D-. Therefore, a final course grade of an A+ will be assigned an A and a final grade of a D- will be assigned a D.

THIS course consists of 25 modules across 6 units. Each module will cover a specific topic within ethics and consist of the following activities:

- A **social annotations reading activity** (in Perusall) with reading questions,
- Several **video lectures** (in Panopto) with embedded quiz questions, and
- An **end-of-module quiz** (in UB Learns).

You are expected to complete 2 modules a week, according to the class schedule.

Completion of a week's modules is due on Saturday at 11:59PM (midnight), Buffalo (Eastern Standard) Time.

Each unit ends with a **unit exam**, due on the Monday after that unit is finished, at 11:59PM (midnight), Buffalo (Eastern Standard) Time. Each unit exam will be made available 12 hours before it is due. You will then have the full 12 hours in which find a time to take the exam.

If you run late, remember that **all activities (including exams) have an automatic, additional 24-hour grace period.**



24-Hour Grace Period

All activities (including unit exams) have an automatic 24-hour grace period. This means that you are free to finish *any* activity up to 24 hours after its official due date/time without penalty. In short, *all activities have an automatic 24-hour extension.*



Ethics! GAME CHANGERS

When things get tough, you have the power!

YOU initially have 3 philosopher's stones for this course. Based on your performance on the modules and unit exams, you may earn even more philosopher's stones. You may then exchange your philosopher's stones to unleash special philosophical powers!

EARNING PHILOSOPHER'S STONES

You will earn additional philosopher's stones based on the philosophy experience points you earn for each module (that is, the sum total of points you earn from its social annotations and quizzes) and on each unit exam. Please note that any philosophy experience points from Decipher Script, Borrowed Knowledge, and Reverse Time do *not* count towards earning new philosopher's stones.

USING PHILOSOPHER'S STONES

As you earn philosopher's stones, you may exchange them to unleash special philosophical powers. For each stone that you do not use by the end of the course, you will gain 20 philosophy experience points.



EARNING PHILOSOPHER'S STONES FROM... MODULES UNIT EXAMS

Points Earned for a Single Module	Stones Earned	Points Earned on a Single Unit Exam	Stones Earned
0 to 119	0	0 to 399	0
120 to 139	0.01	400 to 549	0.1
140 to 159	0.03	550 to 699	0.3
160 to 179	0.06	700 to 849	0.6
180 or higher	0.1	850 or higher	1

PHENOMENAL PHILOSOPHIC POWERS!

TIME STOP (M)	TIME STOP (E)	BORROWED KNOWLEDGE
Cost: 1 philosopher's stone. Area of Effect: 1 module. Duration: Up to 48 hours.	Cost: 1 philosopher's stone. Area of Effect: 1 unit exam. Duration: Up to 6 hours.	Cost: 2 philosopher's stones. Area of Effect: All the quizzes for 1 module. Duration: Instantaneous.
You select 1 module and give up 1 philosopher's stone. You then gain an extra 48-hour extension for completing that module. Please note that this extension begins <i>immediately after</i> the 24-hour grace period has ended. If you have enough stones, you may use this power multiple times for additional 48-hour extensions on the same module.	You select 1 unit exam and give up 1 philosopher's stone. You then gain an extra 6-hour extension for completing that exam. Please note that this extension begins <i>immediately after</i> the 24-hour grace period has ended. If you have enough stones, you may use this power multiple times for additional 6-hour extensions on the same unit exam.	You select 1 module and give up 2 philosopher's stones. You then gain the full 100 philosophy experience points for all that module's quizzes.
REVERSE TIME		
DECIPHER SCRIPT		Cost: 6 philosopher's stones. Area of Effect: 1 unit exam. Duration: Up to 1 week.
Cost: 2 philosopher's stones. Area of Effect: All the social annotations for 1 module. Duration: Instantaneous.		You select 1 unit exam and give up 6 philosopher's stones. You then have up to 1 week—from when it was returned—to redo that entire exam. The points you earn on this second attempt— <i>regardless of whether that new number of points is higher or lower than your original number</i> —will completely replace the points you earned on your first attempt. Reverse Time may only be done <i>once</i> for any given unit exam.
You select 1 module and give up 2 philosopher's stones. You then gain the full 100 philosophy experience points for that module's social annotations.		



Philosopher's Stones

WORK HARD, EARN STONES, AND YOU MAY UNLEASH PHILOSOPHICAL SUPERPOWERS!

Ethics! CALENDAR

Spring 2025, here we go!

This is a *fully online* course. It does *not* meet regularly on Zoom. Instead, your learning will be conducted asynchronously online. All course readings, reading questions, activities, and the most up-to-date course schedule can be found on the course website.

CALENDAR KEY

- No Classes
- Final Exam Period
- Modules Due at 11:59PM*
- Unit Exam Due at 11:59PM*

* Do not forget that there is an automatic, additional 24-hour grace period after these due dates/times.

January 2025						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

February						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Modules 2, 3 & S1
						8 Modules 4 & 5
2	3 UNIT 1 EXAM	4	5	6	7	15 Modules 6, 7 & S2
9	10	11	12	13	14	22 Modules 8 & 9
16	17	18	19	20	21	
23	24 UNIT 2 EXAM	25	26	27	28	

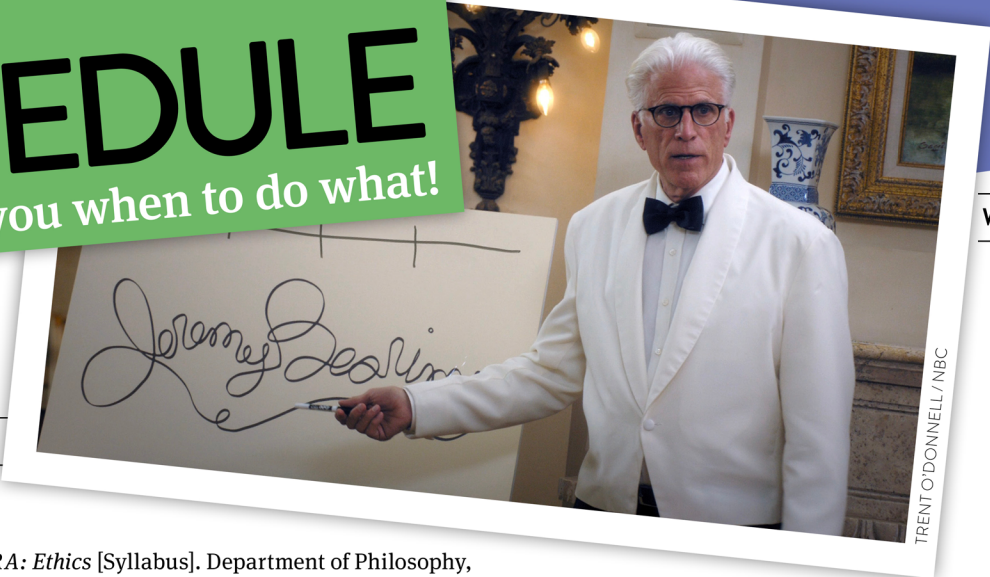
March						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Modules 10 & 11
2	3	4	5	6	7	8 Modules 12 & 13
9	10 UNIT 3 EXAM	11	12	13	14	15 Modules 14 & 15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29 Modules 16, 17 & S3
30	31 UNIT 4 EXAM					

April						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5 Modules 18, 19 & S4
						12 Modules 20 & 21
6	7	8	9	10	11	19
13	14 UNIT 5 EXAM	15	16	17	18	26 Modules 22, 23 & S5
20	21	22	23	24	25	
27	28	29	30			

May						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3 Modules 24 & 25
4	5 UNIT 6 EXAM	6 Last Day of Classes	7 Reading Day	8	9	10 Final Exams
11	12	13	14	15	16	17 Commencement Weekend
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Ethics! SCHEDULE

This tells you when to do what!



Weeks	Due Dates	Units, Modules, Readings & Exams
1	Jan 25 (Sat) at 11:59PM	Unit 1: What is Ethics?
		Module 0: Course Introduction Gray, D. E. (2025, Spring). <i>PHI 107LEC GRA: Ethics</i> [Syllabus]. Department of Philosophy, University at Buffalo. https://www.buffalo.edu/~degray/E25S/E25S-Syllabus.pdf <i>Optional:</i> The Good Place. (2016, September 20). <i>The good place - How your life is scored (episode highlight)</i> [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=utoai4s4mjU Module 1: The Domain of Ethics Rachels, J., & Rachels, S. (2018). What is morality? In <i>The elements of moral philosophy</i> (9th ed., pp. 1–13). McGraw-Hill. <i>Optional:</i> TED-Ed. (2015, December 8). <i>The ethical dilemma of self-driving cars - Patrick Lin</i> [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ixIoDYVfKAo
2	Feb 1 (Sat) at 11:59PM	Module 2: Law & Ethics Weinstein, B. (2007, October 15). If it’s legal, it’s ethical... right? <i>Bloomberg Businessweek</i> . https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2007-10-15/if-its-legal-its-ethical-right-businessweek-business-news-stock-market-and-financial-advice <i>Optional:</i> Cannon, C. (1983, September 25). Tylenol’s rebound. <i>The Los Angeles Times</i> [Part V: Business], 1, 16. Module 3: Understanding Arguments Harrell, M. (2016). <i>What is the argument? An introduction to philosophical argument and analysis</i> . MIT Press. Supplemental Module S1: Ghosting Dular, N. (2021). Boy bye: A feminist defense of Ghosting. In B. Fischer (Ed.), <i>College ethics: A reader on moral issues that affect you</i> (2nd ed., pp. 67–81). Oxford University Press. <i>Optional:</i> Earl, D. (2015, March). The four-sentence paper: A template for considering objections and replies. <i>Teaching Philosophy</i> , 38(1), 49–76. <i>Optional:</i> Alison. (2019, July 10). <i>Horrorifying ‘nice guy’ text exchange shows why you should never give out a woman’s number without permission</i> . Ruin My Week. https://ruinmyweek.com/trending/reddit-nice-guy-bad-friend-texts/
3	Feb 3 (Mon) at 11:59PM	Unit 1 Exam Posted at 12:00PM (noon) on Monday, February 3.
		Unit 2: On What is Morality Grounded?
	Feb 8 (Sat) at 11:59PM	Module 4: Cultural Relativism Midgley, M. (2003). Trying out one’s new sword. In <i>Heart and mind: The varieties of moral experience</i> (revised ed., pp. 80–87). Routledge. (Original work from 1981) <i>Optional:</i> Benedict, R. (1934). Anthropology and the abnormal. <i>Journal of General Psychology</i> , 10(1), 59–82. Module 5: Ethical Subjectivism Rachels, J., & Rachels, S. (2012). Subjectivism in ethics. In <i>The elements of moral philosophy</i> (7th ed., pp. 32–48). McGraw-Hill. <i>Optional:</i> Hume, D. (1978). <i>A treatise of human nature</i> (L. A. Shelby-Bigge & P. H. Nidditch, Eds.; 2nd ed.). Oxford University Press. (Original work from 1739–1740) <i>Optional:</i> Hume, D. (1975). <i>An enquiry concerning the principles of morals</i> . In L. A. Shelby-Bigge & P. H. Nidditch (Eds.), <i>Enquiries concerning human understanding and concerning the principles of morals</i> (3rd ed.). Oxford University Press. (Original work from 1777)

Optional Readings & Supplemental Modules: In case you are curious to learn more and dig even deeper into some of these topics, I have provided optional readings and supplemental modules. These are *optional*: while I may discuss these materials in my lecture videos, *you are neither required nor expected to have actually done any of them*. However, you may **earn bonus philosophy experience points** by completing activities in the supplemental modules.

Weeks	Due Dates	Units, Modules, Readings & Exams
4	Feb 15 (Sat) at 11:59PM	Module 6: Divine Command Theory Rachels, J., & Rachels, S. (2018). Does morality depend on religion? In <i>The elements of moral philosophy</i> (9th ed., pp. 50–65). McGraw-Hill. <i>Optional:</i> Plato. (1989). <i>Euthyphro</i> . In R. E. Allen (Trans.), <i>Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Meno, Gorgias, Menexenus</i> (pp. 41–58). Yale University Press. (Original work from ca. 380 B.C.E.) <i>Optional:</i> Flores, S. O. (2019, May 16). Blog: Classics and pop music: Classical allusions and literary techniques in the music of Jay-Z. <i>Society for Classical Studies</i> . https://classicalstudies.org/scs-blog/samuel-ortencio-flores/blog-classics-and-pop-music-classical-allusions-and-literary Module 7: Justification in Ethics Rachels, J., & Rachels, S. (2018). Moral reasoning. In <i>The elements of moral philosophy</i> (9th ed., pp. 10–12). McGraw-Hill. Rachels, J., & Rachels, S. (2012). Are there proofs in ethics. In <i>The elements of moral philosophy</i> (7th ed., pp. 41–44). McGraw-Hill. <i>Optional:</i> Worricker, J. (Host). (2015, September 13). [Justifying a drone attack in Syria] [Radio broadcast transcript]. In <i>Weekend</i> . BBC World Service. (D. E. Gray, Transcription) Supplemental Module s2: God & The Basis of Morality <i>English revised version of the King James bible</i> . (2014). <i>Genesis 22</i> [The binding of Isaac]. Bible Hub. https://biblehub.com/erv/genesis/22.htm (Original work from 1885) Kretzmann, N. (1983). Abraham, Isaac, and Euthyphro: God and the basis of morality. In D. V. Stump, J. A. Arieti, L. Gerson, & E. Stump (Eds.), <i>Hamartia: The concept of error in the western tradition</i> (pp. 27–50). Edwin Mellon Press. <i>Optional: English revised version of the King James bible</i> . (2014). <i>Genesis 18</i> [Abraham pleads for justice]. Bible Hub. https://biblehub.com/erv/genesis/18.htm (Original work from 1885)
		Module 8: Gaslighting Abramson, K. (2014, December). Turning up the lights on gaslighting. <i>Philosophical Perspectives</i> , 28(1), 59–82. <i>Optional:</i> Holway, H. (2020, December 2). <i>Beyond the final girl: The invisible man and the horror of gaslighting</i> . Talk Film Society. https://talkfilmsociety.com/columns/beyond-the-final-girl-the-invisible-man-and-the-horror-of-gaslighting Module 9: Prejudice & Quotas Rachels, J. (1997). Coping with prejudice. In <i>Can ethics provide answers? And other essays in moral philosophy</i> (pp. 199–212). Rowman & Littlefield.
6	Feb 24 (Mon) at 11:59PM	Unit 2 Exam Posted at 12:00PM (noon) on Monday, February 24.
		Unit 3: Do the Interests of Others Matter?
	Mar 1 (Sat) at 11:59PM	Module 10: Psychological Egoism Rachels, J. (2003). Psychological egoism. In <i>The elements of moral philosophy</i> (4th ed., pp. 63–75). McGraw-Hill. <i>Optional:</i> Plato. (2004). [The ring of Gyges]. In C. D. Reeve (Trans.), <i>Republic</i> (pp. 37–39). Hackett. (Original work from ca. 380 B.C.E.) <i>Optional:</i> The Good Place. (2018, December 28). <i>Mother forkin’ morals with Dr. Todd May - Part 3: Psychological egoism - The good place (exclusive)</i> [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wtpIsRk8tzg Module 11: Ethical Egoism Rachels, J., & Rachels, S. (2018). Ethical egoism. In <i>The elements of moral philosophy</i> (9th ed., pp. 66–83). McGraw-Hill. <i>Optional:</i> Rand, A. (1957). <i>Atlas shrugged</i> . Random House.
7	Mar 8 (Sat) at 11:59PM	Module 12: World Poverty Singer, P. (1972, Spring). Famine, affluence, and morality. <i>Philosophy and Public Affairs</i> , 1(3), 229–243. <i>Optional:</i> Cottom, T. M. (2013, November 1). <i>Why do poor people ‘waste’ money on luxury goods?</i> Talking Points Memo. https://talkingpointsmemo.com/cafe/why-do-poor-people-waste-money-on-luxury-goods Module 13: Morality & Animals Singer, P. (2002). <i>Animal liberation</i> (2002 ed.). HarperCollins. <i>Optional:</i> Wayman, S. (1966, February 4). Concentration Camps for Dogs. <i>Life</i> , 60(5), 22–29.
		Unit 3 Exam Posted at 12:00PM (noon) on Monday, March 10.
8	Mar 10 (Mon) at 11:59PM	

Ethics! SCHEDULE

Wow. So semester. Much ethical.



Weeks	Due Dates	Units, Modules, Readings & Exams
8	Mar 15 (Sat) at 11:59PM	Unit 4: Utilitarianism & Its Limits
		Module 14: Classical Utilitarianism Bentham, J. (2017). <i>An introduction to the principles of morals and legislation</i> . (J. Bennet, Ed. & Trans.). Early Modern Texts. https://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/bentham1780_1.pdf (Original work from 1780/1789/1823) <i>Optional:</i> The Good Place. (2018, December 21). <i>Mother forkin’ morals with Dr. Todd May - Part 2: Utilitarianism - The good place (exclusive)</i> [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YuVreCbQOwc Module 15: Are Pleasure & Happiness the Greatest Goods? Nozick, R. (1974). The experience machine. In <i>Anarchy, state, and utopia</i> (pp. 42–45). Blackwell. Rachels, J., & Rachels, S. (2018). Is pleasure all that matters? In <i>The elements of moral philosophy</i> (9th ed., pp. 119–120). McGraw-Hill.
9		Spring Break
10	Mar 29 (Sat) at 11:59PM	Module 16: Deliberative Utilitarianism Mill, J. S. (2017). What utilitarianism is. In J. Bennet (Ed. & Trans.), <i>Utilitarianism</i> . Early Modern Texts. https://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/mill1863.pdf (Original work from 1861) <i>Optional:</i> Gray, D. E. (2020, October 19). <i>Introduction to ethics - Module 18, video 4 - The plural-ist total view</i> [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oM5jiOztfLI Module 17: Criticisms of Utilitarianism Rachels, J., & Rachels, S. (2018). The debate over utilitarianism. In <i>The elements of moral philosophy</i> (9th ed., pp. 118–132). McGraw-Hill. Le Guin, U. K. (1973, October). The ones who walk away from Omelas. In R. Silverberg (Ed.), <i>New dimensions</i> 3 (pp. 1–8). Nelson Doubleday. Williams, B. (1973). A critique of utilitarianism. In J. J. C. Smart and B. Williams, <i>Utilitarianism: For and against</i> (pp. 77–150). Cambridge University Press. <i>Optional:</i> Johnson, H. M. (2003, February 16). Unspeakable conversations. <i>The New York Times</i> . https://www.nytimes.com/2003/02/16/magazine/unspeakable-conversations.html Supplemental Module s3: Justice & The Greater Good Mill, J. S. (2003). On the connexion between justice and utility. In M. Warnock (Ed.), <i>Utilitarianism and on liberty</i> (2nd ed., pp. 216–235). Blackwell. (Original work from 1861) Rachels, J., & Rachels, S. (2018). The defense of utilitarianism. In <i>The elements of moral philosophy</i> (9th ed., pp. 125–131). McGraw-Hill.
		Unit 4 Exam Posted at 12:00PM (noon) on Monday, March 31.
	Apr 5 (Sat) at 11:59PM	Unit 5: Deontological Approaches
		Module 18: Constraints on Action Rachels, J., & Rachels, S. (2018). Harry Truman and Elizabeth Anscombe. In <i>The elements of moral philosophy</i> (9th ed., pp. 133–135). McGraw-Hill. Nozick, R. (1974). Moral constraints and the state. In <i>Anarchy, state, and utopia</i> (pp. 26–53). Blackwell. Module 19: The Nature & Ambiguity of Rights United Nations General Assembly. (1948, December 10). <i>The universal declaration of human rights</i> (Resolution 217 A). Kagan, S. (1998). Rights. In <i>Normative ethics</i> (pp. 170–177). Westview Press. <i>Optional:</i> United Nations. (2018, December 7). <i>The universal declaration of human rights - Add your voice</i> [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RBiA_7yUonc Supplemental Module s4: Moral Dilemmas & Dirty Hands Walzer, M. (1973, Winter). Political action: The problem of dirty hands. <i>Philosophy and Public Affairs</i> , 2(2), 160–180. Rachels, J., & Rachels, S. (2018). Conflicts between rules. In <i>The elements of moral philosophy</i> (9th ed., pp. 140–141). McGraw-Hill.

Weeks	Due Dates	Units, Modules, Readings & Exams
12	Apr 12 (Sat) at 11:59PM	Module 20: Kantian Ethics Korsgaard, C. M. (1998). Introduction. In I. Kant (Author) & M. Gregor (Trans. & Ed.), <i>Groundwork of the metaphysics of morals</i> (pp. vii–xxx). Cambridge University Press. <i>Optional:</i> Kant, I. (1998). <i>Groundwork of the metaphysics of morals</i> . (M. Gregor, Ed. & Trans.). Cambridge University Press. (Original work from 1785) <i>Optional:</i> The Good Place. (2019, January 3). <i>Mother forkin’ morals with Dr. Todd May - Part 4: Deontology - The good place (exclusive)</i> [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2S_XuJTOEJY <i>Optional:</i> CrashCourse. (2016, November 14). <i>Kant & Categorical Imperatives: Crash Course Philosophy #35</i> [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8bIys6JoEDw Module 21: Sexual Consent Dixon, N. (2001, October). Alcohol and rape. <i>Public Affairs Quarterly</i> , 15(4), 341–354.
		Unit 5 Exam Posted at 12:00PM (noon) on Monday, April 14.
13	Apr 14 (Mon) at 11:59PM	Unit 6: Morality Beyond Universal Rules & Principles
		Module 22: Ethics of Care Rachels, J., & Rachels, S. (2018). Feminism and the ethics of care. In <i>The elements of moral philosophy</i> (9th ed., pp. 156–168). McGraw-Hill. <i>Optional:</i> Grimshaw, J. (1991). The idea of a female ethic. In P. Singer (Ed.), <i>A companion to ethics</i> (pp. 491–499). Blackwell. Module 23: Virtue Ethics Wolff, J. (2018). Virtue ethics: Aristotle. In <i>An introduction to moral philosophy</i> (pp. 200–218). W. W. Norton & Company. Aristotle. (2009). [Particular moral virtues]. In W. D. Ross (Trans.) & L. Brown, (Ed.), <i>Nicomachean ethics</i> (pp. 32–34). Oxford University Press. (Original work from ca. 350 B.C.E.) <i>Optional:</i> Aristotle. (2009). <i>Nicomachean ethics</i> . (W. D. Ross, Trans., L. Brown, Ed.). Oxford University Press. (Original work from ca. 350 B.C.E.) <i>Optional:</i> CrashCourse. (2016, December 5). <i>Aristotle & Virtue Theory: Crash Course Philosophy #38</i> [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PrvtOWEXDIQ Supplemental Module s5: Excellence of Intellect Aristotle. (2002). [Excellence of intellect: Selections from book VI]. In S. Broadie (Ed.) & C. Rowe (Trans.), <i>Nicomachean ethics</i> (pp. 176–189). Oxford University Press. (D. E. Gray, supplementary footnotes with alternative typesetting). (Original work from ca. 350 B.C.E.) Maher, B. (Host). (2001, September 17). [Courage and the 9/11 hijackers] [TV series episode transcript]. <i>Politically incorrect</i> . American Broadcasting Company. (D. E. Gray, Transcription).
14	Apr 26 (Sat) at 11:59PM	
15	May 3 (Sat) at 11:59PM	Module 24: Are Course Grades BS? Stommel, J. (2018, March 11). <i>How to ungrade</i> . Jesse Stommel. https://www.jessestommel.com/how-to-ungrade/ <i>Optional:</i> Frankfurt, H. (1988). On bullshit. In <i>The importance of what we care about: Philosophical essays</i> (pp. 117–133). Cambridge University Press. <i>Optional:</i> Schneider, J., & Hutt, E. (2014). Making the grade: A history of the A–F marking scheme. <i>Journal of Curriculum Studies</i> , 46(2), 201–224. <i>Optional:</i> Stone, D., & Heen, S. (2014). Separate appreciation, coaching, and evaluation. In <i>Thanks for the feedback: The science and art of receiving feedback well</i> (pp. 29–45). Penguin Books.
		Module 25: Philosophy, Ethics & Leadership Plato. (2004). [The allegory of the cave]. In C. D. Reeve (Trans.), <i>Republic</i> (pp. 208–212). Hackett. (Original work from ca. 380 B.C.E.) Plato. (1989). <i>Apology</i> . In R. E. Allen (Trans.), <i>Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Meno, Gorgias, Menexenus</i> (pp. 79–104). Yale University Press. (Original work from ca. 380 B.C.E.)
16	May 5 (Mon) at 11:59PM	Unit 6 Exam Posted at 12:00PM (noon) on Monday, May 5.

Ethics! POLICIES

To keep things in order.

LATE WORK

Online classes become quite overwhelming when deadlines are missed, making it is easy for coursework—and anxiety!—to pile up. This is why **late work is not accepted** and I expect you to complete activities on time.

That said, you have lives outside of this course and there may be times when you cannot get things done as expected. If that happens, *do not panic!* The automatic, additional grace period gives you some extra time and philosopher’s stones can get you even more. If the situation is truly extraordinary, then contact me about a reasonable accommodation for getting caught up.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

You are a human being with all the usual challenges associated with human finitude. Illness, family emergencies, job interviews, other professors, and so on will inevitably lead to legitimate conflicts over your time. If you expect that you will be unable to complete your coursework on time, please notify me as soon as possible and we can agree on a reasonable accommodation.

Please recognize that most reasonable accommodations will require that you use philosopher’s stones, receive reduced points for an activity, or do additional work. This is done to keep things fair between you and your classmates—after all you are asking for extra time that they do not get. So when you propose a reasonable accommodation, please reflect on what would preserve that fairness.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR EQUITABLE ACCESS

The University at Buffalo is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for equal access to this course for all students. To access accommodation services, you must initiate the request with Accessibility Resources at Student Life.

If Accessibility Resources determines that your request for accommodation is reasonable, they will provide you with an

Accommodation Memo. Keep in mind that you will need a new Accommodation Memo each semester. (If you are a returning student and your needs have not changed, you can simply contact Accessibility Resources for an updated Accommodation Memo.)

Once you receive your Accommodation Memo, it is *your* responsibility to inform faculty and staff of any accommodations that they may need to know about. The Accessibility Resources staff will explain in more detail how (and when) to share this Accommodation Memo with others.

For more information, please visit the website for Accessibility Resources at Student Life:

www.buffalo.edu/studentlife/who-we-are/departments/accessibility.html

SEX DISCRIMINATION & SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The University at Buffalo is committed to ensuring that all members of our community can work and learn in a safe environment, free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence and stalking.

For my part, I am committed to preserving a classroom and university environment in which each student can contribute and learn free from discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct. I am also committed to supporting survivors and those impacted by intimate partner violence, attempted or completed sexual assault, harassment, coercion, stalking, and so on.

Please note that all University at Buffalo faculty members are required to report disclosures of sexual misconduct to the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). This means that if a student discloses an incident of sexual misconduct to me, I am required to share that with EDI. EDI, will, in turn, reach out to provide support, resources, and the option to meet. EDI will keep all information private, and will only proceed with an investigation with the consent of the student, or if there is a risk to the health or safety to the reporting student or others if the university does not take action.

For more information, please contact the University at Buffalo’s Title IX Coordinator at 716-645-2266, or visit their website:

www.buffalo.edu/equity/support/obtaining-assistance/sex-discrimination-and-sexual-harassment.html

For confidential assistance, contact a Crisis Services Campus Advocate at 716-796-4399.

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS’ HEALTH & WELLNESS

Take care of yourself. Of course, I know this may be easier said than done, but please do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle by eating well, exercising, avoiding drugs and alcohol, getting enough sleep, and taking some time to relax. This will help you achieve your goals and better cope with stress.

If you are struggling with strained relationships, anxiety, high levels of stress, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, health concerns, or unwanted sexual experiences, please know that you are not alone. All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. Indeed, there are many helpful resources available, and an important part of the university experience is learning how to ask for help. Asking sooner rather than later is almost always helpful.

Counseling, Health Services, and Health Promotion are here to help. To schedule an appointment with a counselor, visit their office in 120 Richmond Quad or call 716-645-2720.

If you or someone you know is feeling suicidal or in danger of self-harm, call the University Police to speak to the counselor on call at 716-645-2222 or the Erie County Crisis Services 24-hour hot-line at 716-834-3131. You may also find support via the Crisis Text Line by texting “GOT5” to 741-741.

If the situation is life threatening, call 911.



TRENT O'DONNELL / NBC

THANK YOU
GOOGLE, WIKIPEDIA,
CUT-AND-PASTE,
THE BABY YODA, AND MOM

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is embodied by commitments to honesty, trust, fairness, respect, diligence, and rigor in the pursuit of knowledge. As a student in this class, academic integrity means following all the directions for class activities, completing all quizzes and unit exams on your own without outside assistance, and seeking help from me whenever you are struggling. This is laid out in the academic honor code (posted online) for this course. You are also expected to sign an honor agreement (also posted online) to adhere to that code.

In this class, the typical violation of academic integrity is **cheating** on quizzes and unit exams. Common examples of this include copying the answers of a classmate, finding solutions online, and using unauthorized artificial intelligence (AI) tools for assistance.

Quizzes and unit exams assess *your* progress in developing your proficiency with the course material along with the extent to which you are achieving this course’s learning outcomes. As such, I expect you to do all the quizzes and exams on your own without assistance.

Naturally, I also expect that you are not helping others with their quizzes and exams either. If anyone does ask you for help, just send them to me. I’ll be happy to assist them.

In short, **all quizzes and unit exams are closed to collaboration.** Furthermore, please do not try to find assistance online or by using artificial intelligence (AI) tools.

The good news is that all quizzes and exams are open-book and open-notes, giving you the resources to perform at your very best. You also have the option to use philosopher’s stones for extensions if you need some extra time to prepare. Finally, if you are *ever* struggling with the quizzes, exams, or anything else in this course, please do not hesitate to reach out to me. I’ll gladly help get you back on track!

To assist in reminding you of your obligations, every module quiz and unit exam requires you to complete a Commitment to Academic Integrity Pledge. Please remember that **module quizzes and unit exams without a properly filled out Commitment to Academic Integrity Pledge will automatically earn 0 philosophy experience points.**

While I treat violations of academic integrity on a case-by-case basis, I carefully follow the University at Buffalo’s process of consultative resolution. According to this process, when I suspect an academic integrity violation, I first meet with the student for an explanation. If, after that meeting, I remain convinced that there is a violation, I will report it to the Chair of

the Philosophy Department, the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and the Academic Integrity Office. Doing all this protects the student’s right to appeal.

Beyond that, I typically impose a sanction that exceeds the penalty of not having done the work at all. For instance, the sanction for cheating on a unit exam is usually a *deduction* of philosophy experience points. Again, the student retains the right to appeal any such decision.

In particularly severe cases, or when the student has committed previous academic integrity infractions, there may also be further penalties imposed by the Academic Integrity Office. For more information, please consult their website:

www.buffalo.edu/academic-integrity.html

If you ever find yourself tempted to violate these standards of academic integrity, please seek an alternative course of action. Use a philosopher’s stone for an extension or turn in partially completed work. I assure you that the impact will be far more generous in these ways.

Remember, there are many ways to earn philosophy experience points in this class, so doing poorly on an activity or two need not prevent you from doing well in the course.