

ETHICAL THEORY


Twitter & This Course

In order to encourage you to engage more fully with the course material outside of class time, we will all be using the social media site Twitter. In particular, I want you to use Twitter to post your thoughts about the course readings, ask questions when confused about those readings or other course elements, respond to your classmates' posts and questions, and connect course topics to current events. I assure you that making those connections will make this class far more interesting for all of us. I will be regularly checking on and responding to your tweets while using them to help me structure what I cover during class. Do feel free to follow me on Twitter (@ProfessorDEG). I also suggest that you use Twitter to follow not only people who share your interests but also leaders within your future fields. You may be surprised to see them post about ethical issues related to their areas of expertise! Very soon, I hope that you are even able to use knowledge gained from this class to post a response to them.


For assessment purposes, you are required to tweet *a minimum of 5 times* between each class meeting. Tweets should be (1) relevant, (2) substantive, and (3) respectful.

By *relevant*, I mean that it your tweet is clearly connected to some aspect of ethics, ethical theory, or the course.

Not Relevant


 **Student A** @sayWhat
I sure hope the professor brings candy to class today! #ET16

Relevant


 **Student B** @superStar
This NYT article has a good example of allowing vs causing harm to happen www.nytimes.com/2014/... #ET16

By *substantive*, I mean more than giving generic commentary, retweeting someone else's post, or simply presenting a quote from the text. For instance, do not simply say that you agree or disagree with something: go further by giving some sense of your reasoning/justification behind your position. Similarly, a relevant retweet or quote from the text is great, but follow it up some interesting commentary of your own about it (the #pt hashtag is useful here). While I will only count your substantive comment as one of your tweets, the retweet or the quote will provide that comment with valuable context.


Not Substantive

 **Student A** @sayWhat
You are wrong. #ET16


Substantive


 **Student B** @superStar
I disagree. Whether you allow or cause harm, you still could have prevented that harm from happening. They're morally the same #ET16

Not Substantive


 **Student A** @sayWhat
RT @WSJ: Why some MBAs are reading Plato and Kant <http://on.wsj.com/1fuA0rL> #ET16

Substantive


 **Student B** @superStar
RT @WSJ: Why some MBAs are reading Plato and Kant <http://on.wsj.com/1fuA0rL> #ET16


 **Student B** @superStar
More abstract thinking about ethical issues seems like something we need in CMU-Q's BA program? #pt #ET16

Not Substantive

 **Student A** @sayWhat
"It is for the political expert too, then, to reflect about the soul" #ET16


Substantive

 **Student B** @superStar
"It is for the political expert too, then, to reflect about the soul" #ET16


 **Student B** @superStar
Aristotle is onto something here! How can a politician get people to do things when she doesn't know how individuals work? #pt #ET16

By *respectful*, I mean that you critically assess the arguments others are making and not attack the person making that argument. It is fine to disagree with others—I want you to disagree, even with me!—but it is disrespectful to besmirch another person's integrity or character. Indeed, resorting to such personal attacks only suggests that your position is the one which is weak and without substance.

Not Respectful

 **Student A** @sayWhat
@aClassmate can slack and still be certain his government will spoon feed him with a diamond encrusted, golden spoon #ET16

Respectful

 **Student B** @superStar
I am worried that Qatarization will decrease the motivation of nationals to work hard and improve themselves #ET16

This means that you need access to a Twitter account. If you do not have a Twitter account—or if you prefer not to use your personal account for this class—*please do not hesitate to create a new, disposable account. I strongly encourage you to create a disposable account if for any reason you prefer not to share your personal account for classroom activities.* Indeed, you are not required to have this account connected to your real name or any other personal details. In making these decisions, do keep in mind that *people outside of this class—and even outside of the Carnegie Mellon community—can see what you are saying.* For my part, I will never reveal to anyone (either inside or outside of this class) which student is connected to which Twitter account. I want you to be comfortable in having open and honest engagement with the course material.

Alternatively, it is fine if you use *multiple* Twitter accounts for this course. That is, you might use your regular account to tweet about things that your Twitter followers and friends may find interesting, while also using a disposable account to tweet about things you would rather not connect to your name. While juggling two different accounts can be tricky, this offers you the potential of having the best of both options.

For assessment purposes, I do require that you send me the name(s) of the account(s) you want me to track for this class and that you make sure those accounts' contents are publicly viewable. So even if accounts are not connected to your real names, I still know to whom that account belongs for determining out-of-class participation grades. Just to be clear: *I will not share your account information with anyone.* Please email me this information by 5:00PM on Tuesday, August 23rd.

When tweeting for this course, please always use the hashtag #ET16. This hashtag is essential since I will not be checking your accounts' non-course-related tweets. Instead, I will be using an automated program to collect all tweets for me to read. So using that hashtag allows me to collect your course-related tweets. To summarize: if your tweet does not contain #ET16, then I will never see that tweet.

Finally, if you have any trouble using Twitter do not hesitate to seek help from me or one of your classmates. That said, your classmates probably know more about Twitter than I do, but I will do my best to resolve any technical issues!