

Introduction to Ethics

A person with short brown hair, wearing a blue and white plaid shirt, is seen from behind, sitting on a light-colored couch. They are facing a large white screen in a lecture hall. The screen displays the text "Welcome! Everything is fine." in a bright green, sans-serif font. The room has a dark blue carpet and wooden side tables with floral arrangements on either side of the screen.

Welcome!
Everything is fine.

PHI 107 GRA
PROFESSOR DAVID EMMANUEL GRAY

INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS

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Office Hours Tuesday, Thursday: 2:00PM–5:00PM, Buffalo Time (EST)
 (and also by appointment)

Credits 3.0
Instruction Mode OR (Online: Recorded not real time)
Zoom Office Meeting ID: 716 645 3983 Password: 14260
<https://tinyurl.com/y3kq97js>

Course Overview

Description

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. This suggests that 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 debates surrounding the opioid crisis, drone attacks, quotas in admissions and hiring, political corruption, world poverty, animal rights, torture, national security, and human rights.

As you will soon see, the most important issues in ethics do not 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, though they often directly conflict with each other. You rarely can have it all. Therefore, it is ultimately up to you, *and you alone*, to reach your own conclusions on these matters. After all, I would never presume to tell you what is right and what is wrong 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 better equip you to 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.

Purpose & Student Learning Outcomes

Introduction to Ethics 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.

By this December, you will be able to...

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

I have designed each course requirement (on page 3) with these outcomes in mind.

Requirements & Grading

Ethics is a full-contact sport, but conducted as a cooperative process. Together we wrestle with arguments while not attacking the person expressing them. On the other hand, to get the most out of this course, *please do not confuse this cooperative style of learning with mere conversation or informal, organized chatting.*

I strongly encourage you to discuss the course’s material with your fellow classmates, friends, and family, as well as with me. Even so, all your work must be done independently, unless otherwise noted. You are expected to be familiar with the university policies on cheating and plagiarism. If you have any questions, please ask; do not assume.

Assignments are spread out across course modules, which include required readings, video lectures, weekly quizzes, and online discussions. Furthermore, each course unit will have a take-home exam. See page 3 for more about the course requirements.

The total possible score may vary from assignment to assignment. However, each assignment’s raw score is normalized a scale from 0 to 100. Unless you are notified of otherwise, the grading scale is as follows:

93.0–100.0	A	87.0–89.9	B ⁺	77.0–79.9	C ⁺	67.0–69.9	D ⁺
90.0–92.9	A [–]	83.0–86.9	B	73.0–76.9	C	60.0–66.9	D
		80.0–82.9	B [–]	70.0–72.9	C [–]	0.0–59.9	F

Your final course grade will be on the same 100-point scale, with each assignment weighted as indicated on page 3.

Announcements & Other Communication

Please routinely check UB Learns for updates and other important information during the semester. Otherwise, I am glad to answer your questions, discuss your work, or respond to your concerns. Please feel free to visit me at my office on campus (in Park Hall 118), reach me on Zoom, or get in touch via email (degray@buffalo.edu).

Readings

There are no textbooks to buy for this course. I will post all readings in PDF on UB Learns.

Late Assignments

Online classes can get quite overwhelming when you have late assignments. In such situations, it is easy for work—and anxiety!—to pile up. This is why I expect that you get your assignments done 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 12-hour grace period (page 3) gives you some extra time and free passes (page 10) can earn you more; lowest grades are automatically dropped and free passes can drop even more. If the situation is truly extraordinary, then contact me about a reasonable accommodation (page 10) for getting caught up.

Requirements

Course Modules & Units

This course consists of 30 modules across 6 units. Each module will cover a specific topic within ethics and consists of a mixture of the following:

- Panopto lectures by me, with embedded quiz questions;
- A reading assignment, with reading questions;
- Videos and other media to help with your learning; and
- A module quiz.

You are required to complete between 2 or 3 modules a week, according to the class schedule on page 7. Completion of a week's modules is due on Saturday (i.e., the last day of that week) at 12:00PM (noon), Buffalo (Eastern Standard) Time.

Each unit will end with a take-home unit exam, which is due on the Sunday after that unit is done, at 12:00PM (noon), Buffalo (Eastern Standard) Time. Each exam will be made available 72-hours before it is due, so at 12:00PM (noon), Buffalo (Eastern Standard) Time on the Thursday before it is due. You will have the full 72-hours to work on the exam.

Reading

Most course modules have an assigned reading that you are expected to read and think about. Keep in mind that this material is not like a novel or a textbook. We are primarily interested in the arguments that the text is trying to make. Because of that, there will be times when you must read slowly and carefully. Sometimes you may have to stop and think about things; and you should be prepared to go back and reread sections if necessary. In some cases, multiple readings of the entire text may be necessary. I expect that you take notes while you read, so that you can remember the text's main points. Finally, feel free to contact me with any questions you may have about the reading.

Reading questions: To help guide you in this process, I will provide reading questions that will highlight important concepts, arguments, and applications. These questions primarily have you demonstrate your comprehension of the readings' main claims and arguments.

While you are *not* required to submit responses to these questions, I highly recommend writing out your responses so that you may consult them when doing the quizzes and unit exams.

Participation (10% of Final Grade)

This course challenges each of us to share in the difficult process of understanding and evaluating complex and important works of philosophy. While this course is entirely online, ongoing discussion and deliberation with your classmates is very important in understanding and retaining course material.

To facilitate this, class participation will be done through the social media site Twitter. This platform provides a simple way to engage with your classmates about the course material. For more information on this Twitter assignment, see page 4.

Beyond that, I encourage you to form a study group with some of your classmates using your UB Zoom account. A study group may prove extremely helpful for having study sessions, holding each other accountable for keeping up with the course material (and not putting off completing modules until the last minute), coordinating your discussions on Twitter, supporting each other when struggling with difficult course material, and checking in on the health and wellbeing of each other.

Weekly Quizzes (30% of Final Grade)

The course modules will have two types of quizzes:

1. Quizzes embedded into my Panopto lectures, and
2. Module quizzes posted on UB Learns.

The Panopto quizzes will ensure that you are paying attention and understanding the material as I am presenting it, while the module quizzes will primarily assess your basic understanding of material in each module.

Generally speaking, Panopto quizzes will be worth significantly fewer points than the more comprehensive module quizzes.

Each week, I will (1) take your number of points on all these quizzes for that week, (2) divide that number by the total number of possible points, and (3) normalize this ratio to the 100-point grading scale from page 2. That will determine your quiz grade for that week. There are 14 weeks of modules, so you will have a total of 14 quiz grades in this course.

At the end of the semester, your overall quiz grade will be determined by taking the average of your top 13 weekly quiz grades. This means that **I will drop your lowest weekly quiz grade in this calculation.**

In addition, 2 free passes may be used to drop 1 more weekly quiz grade; or 4 free passes for dropping 2 more weekly quiz grades; or 6 free passes for dropping 3 more weekly quiz grades. See page 10 for more about how to earn free passes and how they work in this course.

Unit Exams (60% of Final Grade)

At the end of each unit, there will be a take-home unit exam consisting of 4 short-essay problems. These short essays will have you demonstrate your knowledge of key terminology, summarize arguments from the reading, apply course material to new cases, compare competing claims about ethics, and justify positions of your own on issues raised during the course. The exams will progressively assess the higher and more important student learning outcomes (from page 2) over the semester.

Unit exams are non-comprehensive, focusing primarily on new material covered since the previous unit exam. However, keep in mind that some important concepts will remain relevant throughout the whole course.

Each short essay on the unit exam will be worth 20 points, for a total of 80 points. The number of points you earn will be normalized to the 100-point grading scale from page 2. There are 6 units in this course, so you will have a total of 6 unit exam grades for this course.

At the end of the semester, your overall unit exam grade will be determined by taking the average of your top 5 unit exam grades. This means that **I will drop your lowest unit exam grade in this calculation.**

In addition, 5 free passes may be used to drop one more unit exam grade. See page 10 for more about how to earn free passes and how they work in this course.

12-Hour Grace Period for All Assignments

All assignments have an automatic 12-hour grace period. This means that you are free to finish and submit any assignment up to 12 hours *after* its posted due date/time without penalty. In short, all assignments have an automatic 12-hour extension. Further extensions will require the use of a free pass and/or reasonable accommodation.

Twitter Assignment

We will be using social media, on Twitter, to engage with each other throughout the course.

Here's What I Want You to Do

You are required to tweet a minimum of 5 times each week.

For these purposes, each week begins on Monday at 12:01AM and ends on Saturday at 12:00PM (noon), all times in Buffalo (Eastern Standard) Time. (I do this so I can use Sunday to get caught up with all your tweets.) Keep in mind that you also have a 12-hour grace period for getting your weekly tweets in.

However, you do not have to tweet during the week of Fall Recess. As a result, there are 14 weeks you must tweet, meaning that at least 70 tweets are expected from you.

When tweeting for this course, please always use the course hashtag **#I2E21** (which stands for Introduction to Ethics 2021). This hashtag is essential since I will not be snooping on your non-course-related tweets. Instead, I will be using an automated program to collect all #I2E21 tweets for me to read. So using that hashtag ensures that I will have and count all your course-related tweets.

Just to repeat: *if your tweet does not contain #I2E21, then it is extremely unlikely that I will see that tweet!*

Here's Why I Want You to Do It

Part of my primary mission in this course is to equip you to meaningfully engage with others about moral issues. Human life involves the inescapable need to secure the legitimate cooperation of others, including those with whom we may disagree. Mastering this skill of reasoned deliberation is essential to attaining positions of leadership within your communities and chosen fields of study.

Yes, Twitter is an imperfect instrument for achieving those goals. Even so, I continue to find it remarkably effective in immersing you in the deliberative process entailed by the study of ethics. It does so by giving us all the opportunity to have informal conversations with each other about course material.

In particular, Twitter is particularly useful for having discussions that help you with the last three learning outcomes (from page 2) for this course:

- Apply important ethical concepts and theories to various hypothetical and real-world situations,
- Assess competing claims concerning the demands that morality places on your actions and decisions, and
- Reflect on your own assumptions and form more considered judgments on moral issues.

To these ends, use Twitter to connect course topics to current events, assess the claims made in the course readings or by your classmates, and reflect on what it is you believe about moral issues. Above all, use Twitter to find your own voice to discuss these vital topics.

Here's How to Do It

Generally speaking, I expect that you will regularly check and join in the conversation on the course hashtag #I2E21. Given that Twitter is meant to be a social experience for us, **I would strongly prefer that the majority of your tweets are in response to a classmate or to me.** However, I understand this may be difficult at times, so I will not penalize you for tweeting your thoughts in monologue form.

In any case, **try not to overthink things, or feel like you have to tweet brilliant and original ideas.** Just find something that interests you in the readings or the videos, and tweet about it. Or, better yet, scroll through the course hashtag #I2E21. It really shouldn't take long to find something that sparks a response from you. If all else fails, feel free to also ask questions when confused about any aspect of the course.

Furthermore, **you do not need to only tweet about the current modules.** If you have something to say about material covered the previous week—go for it! If something on #I2E21 from a few weeks ago catches your eye, and you want to respond—not a problem! Of course, I would prefer that you try to stick with more recent material. But hey, at the end of the day, **I just want you all to be talking about this stuff.** Ethics is lonely, and definitely not fun, when done all by yourself.

So my bottom line here is simple: **I want this Twitter assignment to be flexible and not too stressful.** There are a lot of different ways in which you can meaningfully, and hopefully without much difficulty, complete your 5 tweets each week.

Finally, I will be regularly checking on and responding to your tweets. Feel free to follow me on Twitter (@ProfessorDEG). I also suggest that you follow leaders within your future fields. You may be surprised to see them discuss issues related to ethics and morality!

Here's How It Will Be Graded

Unless you are told otherwise, each tweet is graded pass/fail.

At the end of the semester, I will...

1. Take your total number of tweets that pass (capped at 5 tweets each week),
2. Divide that number by the total number of tweets expected (that is, 70 tweets), and
3. Normalize this ratio to the 100-point grading scale (from page 2).

That will determine your overall/final participation grade in this course.

In order to pass, a tweet must do three things: it must be...

1. Relevant,
2. Substantive, and
3. Respectful.

By *relevant*, I mean that your tweet is clearly connected to ethics or some other aspect of this course. Of course, I highly encourage you to chat with each other over Twitter, but non-relevant tweets will be ignored.

By *substantive*, I mean more than generic commentary, a retweet, or simply quoting from course material.

For instance, do not simply say that you agree with something; provide your reasoning behind that judgment. Similarly, a relevant retweet is great, but be sure to include some of your own thoughts about the original tweet. The same holds with quoting course readings. Such a quote should be followed up with your own commentary. While I will only count your substantive comment, the retweet or quote will provide valuable context.

By *respectful*, I mean that you critically assess the claims others are making but not attack the people making those claims. It is fine to disagree with others—even with me!—but it is disrespectful to besmirch another person's integrity or character. Indeed, personal attacks suggest it is your position that is weak and unsound. So please no flame wars, no bullying, and *no being a jerk!*

Twitter Assignment (Continued)

Using Free Passes

If you forget to tweet, you may use two free passes to make up any missed tweets (up to 5) for one week.

Considerations for Your Account

This means that you need a Twitter account. If you do not have one—or if you prefer not to use your personal account—feel free to create a disposable one. You are also not required to use an account connected to your real name or any other personal information. *I strongly encourage you to create a disposable account if you prefer not to use a personal account for this course.*

In making these decisions, *keep in mind that people outside of class—and even outside of the UB community—can see what you are saying.*

For my part, I will never reveal which student is connected to which Twitter account. I want you to be comfortable having open and honest engagement with each other and with the material.

Alternatively, it is also 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 have connected to your name. While juggling two different accounts can be tricky, this offers you the potential of having the best of both options.

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 the contents of your account is publicly viewable. So even if your account is not connected to your real name, I will still know which account belongs to you and can determine your participation grade.

Once more: *I will never share your account information with anyone.*

Finally, if you have any trouble using Twitter do not hesitate to seek help from me or one of your classmates.

Course Schedule

Week	Due Date*	Units/Modules/Exams/Readings
1	September 4 (Sat) at 12:00PM (noon)	Unit 1: What is Ethics? Module 0: Course Introduction 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. Module 2: Law & Ethics Weinstein, B. (2007, October 15). If it's legal, it's ethical... right? <i>Bloomberg Businessweek</i> . http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2007-10-15/if-its-legal-its-ethical-right-businessweek-business-news-stock-market-and-financial-advice Cannon, C. (1996). Tylenol's rebound. In T. Donaldson & A. Gini (Eds.), <i>Case studies in business ethics</i> (4th ed., pp. 29–32). Prentice Hall. (Original work from September 25, 1983)
2	September 11 (Sat) at 12:00PM (noon)	Module 3: Understanding Arguments Vaughn, L. (2009). <i>The power of critical thinking: Effective reasoning about ordinary and extraordinary claims</i> (3rd ed.). Oxford University Press. Module 4: The Opioid Crisis Lopez, G. (2019, October 10). <i>The case for prosecuting the Sacklers and other opioid executives</i> . Vox. https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2019/10/10/20881636/sacklers-purdue-opioid-epidemic-prison-prosecution-criminal-investigation
3	September 12 (Sun) at 12:00PM (noon)	Unit 1 Exam
	September 18 (Sat) at 12:00PM (noon)	Unit 2: On What is Morality Grounded? Module 5: Cultural Relativism Benedict, R. (1934). Anthropology and the abnormal. <i>Journal of General Psychology</i> , 10(1), 59–82. Rachels, J., & Rachels, S. (2018). The challenge of cultural relativism. In <i>The elements of moral philosophy</i> (9th ed., pp. 14–32). McGraw-Hill Module 6: Ethical Subjectivism 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) 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) Rachels, J., & Rachels, S. (2012). Subjectivism in ethics. In <i>The elements of moral philosophy</i> (7th ed., pp. 32–48). McGraw-Hill. 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. 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)
4	September 25 (Sat) at 12:00PM (noon)	Module 8: 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. Module 9: Divine Command Theory 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.) 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.

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Course Schedule (Continued)

Week	Due Date*	Units/Modules/Exams/Readings
5	October 2 (Sat) at 12:00PM (noon)	<p>Module 10: God & The Basis of Morality</p> <p><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)</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Module 11: The Natural Law Tradition</p> <p>Aristotle. (1984). <i>Physics</i> (R. P. Hardie & R. K. Gaye, Trans.). In J. Barnes (Ed.), <i>The complete works of Aristotle: The revised Oxford translation</i> (pp. 315–446). Princeton University Press. (Original work from ca. 350 B.C.E.)</p> <p>Aquinas, T. (1945). Law [Selections from the <i>Summa theologiae</i>]. In A. C. Pegis (Ed. & Trans.) <i>Introduction to Saint Thomas Aquinas</i> (pp. 609–650). Random House. (Original work from 1265–1274.)</p> <p>Rachels, J., & Rachels, S. (2018). The theory of natural law. In <i>The elements of moral philosophy</i> (9th ed., pp. 56–59). McGraw-Hill.</p>
6	October 3 (Sun) at 12:00PM (noon)	Unit 2 Exam
	October 9 (Sat) at 12:00PM (noon)	<p>Unit 3: Do the Interests of Others Matter?</p> <p>Module 12: Psychological Egoism</p> <p>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.)</p> <p>Rachels, J. (2003). Psychological egoism. In <i>The elements of moral philosophy</i> (4th ed., pp. 63–75). McGraw-Hill.</p> <p>Module 13: Ethical Egoism</p> <p>Rand, A. (1957). <i>Atlas shrugged</i>. Random House.</p> <p>Rachels, J., & Rachels, S. (2018). Ethical egoism. In <i>The elements of moral philosophy</i> (9th ed., pp. 66–83). McGraw-Hill.</p> <p>Module 14: World Poverty</p> <p>Singer, P. (1972, Spring). Famine, affluence, and morality. <i>Philosophy and Public Affairs</i>, 1(3), 229–243.</p>
7	October 16 (Sat) at 12:00PM (noon)	<p>Module 15: Classical Utilitarianism</p> <p>Bentham, J. (2003). <i>An introduction concerning the principles of morals and legislation</i>. In M. Warnock (Ed.), <i>Utilitarianism and on liberty: Including Mill's 'essay on Bentham' and selections from the writings of Jeremy Bentham and John Austin</i> (2nd ed., pp. 17–51). Blackwell. (Original work from 1789)</p> <p>Rachels, J., & Rachels, S. (2018). The revolution in ethics. In <i>The elements of moral philosophy</i> (9th ed., pp. 101–102). McGraw-Hill.</p> <p>Rachels, J., & Rachels, S. (2018). The classical version of the theory. In <i>The elements of moral philosophy</i> (9th ed., pp. 118–119). McGraw-Hill.</p> <p>Module 16: Morality & Animals</p> <p>Wayman, S. (1966, February 4). Concentration Camps for Dogs. <i>Life</i>, 60(5), 22–29.</p> <p>Singer, P. (2002). <i>Animal liberation</i> (2002 ed.). HarperCollins.</p>
8	October 17 (Sun) at 12:00PM (noon)	Unit 3 Exam

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Course Schedule (Continued)

Week	Due Date*	Units/Modules/Exams/Readings
8	October 23 (Sat) at 12:00PM (noon)	Unit 4: Utilitarianism & Its Limits Module 17: 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. Module 18: Deliberative Utilitarianism Mill, J. S. (2003). What utilitarianism is [Chapter 2 from <i>Utilitarianism</i>]. In M. Warnock (Ed.), <i>Utilitarianism and on liberty: Including Mill's 'essay on Bentham' and selections from the writings of Jeremy Bentham and John Austin</i> (2nd ed., pp. 185–202). Blackwell. (Original work from 1861)
9	October 30 (Sat) at 12:00PM (noon)	Module 19: 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. Module 20: Justice & The Greater Good Mill, J. S. (2003). On the connexion between justice and utility [Chapter 5 from <i>Utilitarianism</i>]. In M. Warnock (Ed.), <i>Utilitarianism and on liberty: Including Mill's 'essay on Bentham' and selections from the writings of Jeremy Bentham and John Austin</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.
10	November 6 (Sat) at 12:00PM (noon)	Module 21: 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 22: 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.
11	November 7 (Sun) at 12:00PM (noon)	Unit 4 Exam
	November 13 (Sat) at 12:00PM (noon)	Unit 5: Deontological Approaches Module 23: Conceptions of the Common Good London, A. J. (2003, September–October). Threats to the common good: Biochemical weapons and human subjects research. <i>Hastings Center Report</i> , 33(5), 17–25. Henley, P. (Host). (2015, November 14). [Paris attacks: Security and individual rights] [Radio broadcast transcript]. In <i>Weekend</i> . BBC World Service. (D. E. Gray, Transcription) Module 24: 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.

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Course Schedule (Continued)

Week	Due Date*	Units/Modules/Exams/Readings
12	November 20 (Sat) at 12:00PM (noon)	<p>Module 25: Duty & The Good Will</p> <p>Kant, I. (2012). First Section: Transition from common to philosophical moral rational cognition. In M. Gregor & J. Timmermann (Trans. & Eds.), <i>Groundwork of the metaphysics of morals</i> (Revised ed., pp. 9–20). Cambridge University Press. (Original work from 1785)</p> <p>Rachels, J., & Rachels, S. (2018). Are there absolute moral rules? In <i>The elements of moral philosophy</i> (9th ed., pp. 133–144). McGraw-Hill.</p> <p>Module 26: Respect for Persons</p> <p>Kant, I. (2012). Second section: Transition from popular moral philosophy to the metaphysics of morals. In M. Gregor & J. Timmermann (Trans. & Eds.), <i>Groundwork of the metaphysics of morals</i> (Revised ed., pp. 21–55). Cambridge University Press. (Original work from 1785)</p> <p>Rachels, J., & Rachels, S. (2018). Kant's core idea. In <i>The elements of moral philosophy</i> (9th ed., pp. 145–148). McGraw-Hill.</p>
13	November 21 (Sun) at 12:00PM (noon)	<p>Unit 5 Exam</p>
 Fall Recess		
14	December 4 (Sat) at 12:00PM (noon)	<p>Unit 6: Morality Beyond Universal Rules & Principles</p> <p>Module 27: The Ethics of Care</p> <p>Grimshaw, J. (1991). The idea of a female ethic. In P. Singer (Ed.), <i>A companion to ethics</i> (pp. 491–499). Blackwell.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Module 28: Excellence of Character</p> <p>Aristotle. (2002). [Excellence of character: Selections from books I and II]. In S. Broadie (Ed.) & C. Rowe (Trans.), <i>Nicomachean ethics</i> (pp. 95–122). Oxford University Press. (D. E. Gray, supplementary footnotes with alternative typesetting) (Original work from ca. 350 B.C.E.)</p> <p>Rachels, J., & Rachels, S. (2018). Virtue ethics. In <i>The elements of moral philosophy</i> (9th ed., pp. 169–185). McGraw-Hill.</p>
15	December 11 (Sat) at 12:00PM (noon)	<p>Module 29: Excellence of Intellect</p> <p>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.)</p> <p>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)</p> <p>Module 30: Philosophy, Ethics & Leadership</p> <p>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.)</p> <p>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.)</p>
	December 12 (Sun) at 12:00PM (noon)	Unit 6 Exam

* All times are for Buffalo (Eastern Standard) Time. Also, do not forget that there is an automatic 12-hour grace period after these due dates/times for finishing a week's modules or a unit exam.

Course Policies

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 turn in an assignment 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 a free pass, receive a reduced grade on an assignment, or do additional work. This is done to keep things fair between you and your classmates—after all you are asking for extra consideration that they do not get. So when you propose a reasonable accommodation, please reflect on what would preserve that fairness.

Challenging an Assignment Grade

I am human also: mistakes may occasionally occur when grading your assignments. Therefore, you have *one week* after an assignment is graded to challenge that grade. To do so, you must provide a clear written explanation (email is preferred) outlining your reasons for why you believe the grade you earned is mistaken. I take all such requests extremely seriously, with a spirit of humility. I will then meet with you, as necessary, to work on resolving things satisfactorily.

Of course, I always encourage you to talk with me about how you may improve on future assignments!

Sharing Course Materials

All my course materials, available digitally on UB Learns, are protected by copyright laws. You may use these materials and make copies for your own personal use, but unauthorized distribution and/or uploading of course materials without my written permission is strictly prohibited.

Earning Free Passes

You initially have 1 free pass to use during this course. You will earn more free passes based on your performance on each unit exam:

- 1 free pass for a 90.0 (A⁻) or higher on a unit exam,
- 3/4 of a free pass for between 80.0 (B⁻) and 89.9 (B⁺),
- 2/3 of a free pass for between 73.0 (C) and 79.9 (C⁺),
- 1/2 of a free pass for between 70.0 (low C⁻) and 72.9 (high C⁻),
- 1/3 of a free pass for between 67.0 (low D⁺) and 69.9 (high D⁺), and
- No free passes for anything lower than 66.9 (D).

You will also earn more free passes based on each of your weekly quiz grades:

- 1/4 of a free pass for a 90.0 (A⁻) or higher on a weekly quiz grade,
- 1/5 of a free pass for between 80.0 (B⁻) and 89.9 (B⁺),
- 3/20 of a free pass for between 73.0 (C) and 79.9 (C⁺),
- 1/10 of a free pass for between 70.0 (low C⁻) and 72.9 (high C⁻),
- 1/20 of a free pass for between 67.0 (low D⁺) and 69.9 (high D⁺), and
- No free passes for anything lower than 66.9 (D).

This means you have the opportunity to earn up to 9 more free passes.

Using Free Passes

1 free pass may be exchanged for any of the following:

- A 24-hour extension for completing a unit exam (in addition to the automatic 12-hour grace period); or
- A 48-hour extension for completing a week's modules (in addition to the automatic 12-hour grace period).

2 free passes may be exchanged for any of the following:

- Dropping your lowest weekly quiz grade (in addition to the 1 dropped automatically at the end of the semester); or
- Making up for any missed tweets (up to 5) for one week.

4 free passes may be exchanged for the following:

- Dropping your lowest 2 weekly quiz grades (in addition to the 1 dropped automatically at the end of the semester).

5 free passes may be exchanged for the following:

- Dropping your lowest unit exam grade (in addition to the 1 dropped automatically at the end of the semester).

6 free passes may be exchanged for the following:

- Dropping your lowest 3 weekly quiz grades (in addition to the 1 dropped automatically at the end of the semester).

Finally, for each free pass that you do not use by the end of the course, I will boost your overall participation grade by +0.5 point.

So use your free passes wisely!

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 directions on assignments, clearly distinguishing your own original work from the work done by others in your assignments, and seeking help whenever you are struggling. This is laid out in the academic honor code for this course on page 6.

In this class, the typical violation of academic integrity is *plagiarism* on exams. Examples of this include cutting-and-pasting material without proper citation, paraphrasing ideas from external sources without attribution, and borrowing ideas from a classmate without reference and/or acknowledgment.

To avoid this, you must strive for clarity in your writing in order to distinguish between when you are presenting your own ideas (typically by using first-person pronouns “I”, “me”, “my”, etc.) and when you are presenting someone else’s ideas (by properly citing the source). Keep in mind, this includes the ideas of your classmates and any assistance you receive from the Center for Excellence in Writing (CEW) and from me. Please see the formatting requirements posted on UB Learns for more information on how to properly cite the claims and ideas of others in your assignments.

In general, proper citation lets me know what it is I am evaluating about your writing. Am I evaluating your own original ideas? or am I evaluating your presentation of someone else’s ideas? or am I evaluating your expansion on their ideas? All of these tasks are important, so do not be ashamed when you are doing them. I honestly do not expect every single thing you write to be uniquely yours, but I do expect you to be clear and honest about what it is you are doing in your assignments.

To help you facilitate this, every unit exam requires you to include a completed Commitment to Academic Integrity Form. **Exams without a completed form will automatically earn a 0.00 (F).** Templates for the exams are posted on UB Learns that include this form.

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. This protects the student’s right to appeal.

Beyond that, I typically impose a penalty that exceeds the penalty of not having done the assignment at all. For instance, the penalty for plagiarism in an exam is usually a negative score. 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, visit

<https://academicintegrity.buffalo.edu>

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

Academic Honor Code for Introduction to Ethics

Students at the University at Buffalo, because they part of a community of scholars, must share its commitment to learning and discovery. The nature of this commitment generates fundamental obligations to the highest standards of academic integrity, honesty, and ethics. Adhering to these principles ensures that the academic endeavors we undertake garner us the greatest personal satisfaction and intellectual gain.

The University at Buffalo academic community is composed of learners—individuals dedicated to an open exchange of ideas and who share their ideas for the purpose of improving knowledge for all people. In order for this academic enterprise to be successful, we must embrace personal, ethical, and moral principles to guide our interactions.

These principles require personal integrity, a commitment to honesty without compromise, as well as truth without equivocation and knowing when to place the good of the community above the good of the self. Obligations once undertaken must be met, commitments kept.

The discovery, advancement, and communication of knowledge are not possible without these commitments. Creativity cannot exist without acknowledgment of the creativity of others. New knowledge cannot be developed without credit for prior knowledge. Without the ability to trust that these principles will be observed, our academic community cannot exist.

The commitment of its faculty, staff, and students to the highest of personal, ethical, and moral standards also contributes to the respect in which the University at Buffalo degree is held. Students must not destroy or otherwise diminish that respect by their failure to meet these standards.

Student Responsibilities

For this course, it is important that no one gains an unfair advantage through academic misconduct. Academic misconduct is any act that does or potentially could improperly distort student grades or other academic records. Such acts include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Possessing, using, or exchanging improperly acquired written or verbal information in the preparation of any assignment included in the course;
- Substitution for, or unauthorized collaboration with, another student or person in the commission of course requirements;
- Submission of material that is wholly or substantially identical to that created or published by another person or persons, without adequate citations; and
- False claims of performance or work that has been submitted by the student.

In addition, each student enrolled in this class must sign an honor agreement affirming their commitment to uphold this code. This agreement may reappear on assignments to remind everyone of their responsibilities.

Faculty Responsibilities

As the instructor, I am also expected to help create an environment where honesty flourishes. To that end, I will do my utmost to make it known as specifically as possible, on multiple occasions, what constitutes appropriate academic conduct as well as what comprises academic misconduct in this course. I will also remain consistent in how I enforce this policy with all my students.

Throughout all this, I will also provide clarification to any student questions concerning any of the above.

University Policies

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

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

<https://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)**. If you disclose an incident of sexual misconduct to me in- or outside of the classroom (with the exception of disclosures in assignments), 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

<http://www.buffalo.edu/equity/obtaining-assistance/sex-discrimination-and-sexual-harassment.html>

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

Support for Students' Health & Wellness

Take care of yourself. 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 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, know that you are not alone. 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**.