

The University of Western Ontario
Department of Philosophy

PHIL 1305F: Questions of the Day
Fall 2011



Times: Mon: 12:30-2:30
Wed: 1:30-2:30

Location: Talbot College, room 343

Instructor: Arthur Yates
Office: Stevenson Hall, room 4136
Office Hours: Wed, 2:45-4:45
E-Mail: avates6@uwo.ca

Course Description: This course develops students' ability to approach contemporary philosophical questions by seeing them from both sides, so that they may challenge and refine their own views after respecting a broad range of arguments. A number of questions will be considered including (but not limited to): Do we have a duty to contribute to famine relief? Is euthanasia morally permissible? Do non-human animals have rights? Is prostitution wrong? Should parenting require a license? Do persons have a special duty to their parents? Should “hate crimes” have a special legal status?

Text: What's Wrong? Applied Ethicists and their Critics, second edition, eds., David Boonin and Graham Oddie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

Objectives: This course has two objectives. The first is to give students an initial grasp of the subject of philosophy through contemporary moral, legal, and political issues. The second is to develop students' critical skills, both in the close reading of argumentative texts, and in the writing of the same.

Requirements:

1) **Ten (10) Critical Discussion Questions**

Date: Due Tuesday Nights
Length: 200 words
Value: 30% (3% each)

Late Policy: No late submissions - past 11:59pm - will be accepted

2) **Two (2) Essays**

Date: Due Oct 24th and Nov 28th
Length: 5-6 pages (1500 words)
Value: 50% (25% each)

Late Policy: 5% off grade per day

3) **Examination**

Date: TBA
Format: 3 Short Essays
Value: 20%

Audit:

Students wishing to audit this course should consult with the instructor prior to or during the first week of classes.

The **Department of Philosophy** policies which govern the conduct, standards, and expectations for students participating in philosophy courses is available in the Undergraduate section of the Department of Philosophy website at <http://uwo.ca/philosophy/undergraduate/policies.html>. It is your responsibility to understand the policies set out by the Senate and Department of Philosophy, and thus ignorance of these policies cannot be used as grounds of appeal.

Essays must be submitted electronically to <http://www.turnitin.com>. The link is available through **WebCT**. Turnitin.com is a service designed to help students protect the copyright in their work and professors to identify plagiarism. Instructors will receive a report from the website determining each paper's "originality content." The Department will assign penalties when plagiarism is discovered, or when there is a significant discrepancy between the electronic version and the hard copy.

Schedule:

Week 1: Sept 12th and 14th

Topic: Introduction

Week 2: Sept 19th and 21st

Topic: Euthanasia

Readings: James Rachels, pp. 46-50; Winston Nesbitt, pp. 50-53.

Week 3: Sept 26th and 28th

Topic: Famine Relief

Readings: Peter Singer, pp. 135-142; John Arthur, pp. 142-145; Michael Slote, pp. 146-154.

Week 4: Oct 3rd and 5th

Topic: Animal Rights

Readings: Tom Regan, pp. 111-118; Jan Narveson, pp. 118-124.

***First Paper Assigned Oct 5th**

Week 5: Oct 10th and 12th

Topic: Adultery

Readings: Richard Wasserstrom, pp. 197-205; Bonnie Steinbock, pp. 205-208; Don Marquis, pp. 209-216.

Week 6: Oct 17th and 19th

Topic: Prostitution

Readings: Lars Ericsson, pp. 235-246; Carole Pateman, pp. 247-249; Laurie Shrage, pp 250-252.

Week 7: Oct 24th and 26th

Topic: Duty to One's Parents

Readings: Jane English, pp. 284-287; Nicholas Dixon, pp. 288-296.

***First Paper Due Oct 24th**

Week 8: Oct 31st and Nov 2nd

Topic: Licensing Parenthood

Readings: Hugh LaFollette, pp. 314-322; Lawrence Frisch, pp. 323-327.

***Second Paper Assigned Nov 2nd**

Week 9: Nov 7th and 9th

Topic: Tobacco Ban

Readings: Robert Goodin, pp. 499-512; Daniel Shapiro, pp. 512-523.

Week 10: Nov 14th and 16th

Topic: Hate Crimes

Readings: Christopher Wellman, pp. 406-416; Heidi Hurd, pp. 417-421.

Week 11: Nov 21st and 23rd

Topic: The Practice of Punishment

Readings: Randy Barnett, pp. 540-555; Franklin Miller, pp. 555-556; Roger Pilon, pp. 557-558; Stanley Klienberg, pp. 558-559.

***Second Paper Due Nov 23rd**

Week 12: Nov 28th and 30th

Topic: Killing Non-Combatants in War

Readings: Robert Fullinwider, pp. 36-39; Lawrence Alexander, pp. 40-43.

Week 13: Dec 5th and 7th

Topic: Review