

The University of Western Ontario  
Department of Philosophy  
Introduction to Ethics and Value Theory: Phil 2700F, section 001, Fall 2011  
*Previously Philosophy 201*

Instructor: Dr. Ryan Robb  
Office: Stevenson Hall, room 3124  
Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday, 1:30  
– 2:30 p.m.

Class Hours: Tuesdays 12:30 – 1:30 and  
Thursdays, 11:30 – 1:30 p.m.  
Talbot College, room 343  
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Course Objectives:

This course seeks to achieve two goals. The first, and most important, is to help students identify, and distinguish between, good and bad arguments. Students will be required to determine what it is that makes the set of reasons that support the conclusions of one argument more compelling than those presented in competing arguments.

The second goal of this course is to explore the ways in which the aforementioned philosophical skills have been applied by scholars to human actions and the accounts of responsibility humans bear for their actions. Do humans have ethical duties and responsibilities toward one another or themselves? If so, on what grounds do they have those ethical duties? The primary focus of our survey of the scholarly responses to these questions will consist in a review of the dominant concerns in meta-ethics, and the five most prominent ethical theories.

Required Texts:

Wilfrid J. Waluchow, *The Dimensions of Ethics; An Introduction to Ethical Theory*. (Broadview Press, 2003).

H. Geirsson and M.R. Holmgren, *Ethical Theory: A Concise Anthology*. (Broadview Press, 2001).

Course Requirements:

70% - two 5 – 6 page essays, worth 35% each\*

30% - Final Exam

\* Late papers will be assessed a 5% penalty on the first day, and will incur an additional 1% penalty for each subsequent day until the penalty reaches 50%. After that time, a grade of 0 will automatically be recorded. No papers will be accepted after the last day of classes, i.e., Wednesday, December 7<sup>th</sup> 2011.

**AUDIT**

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

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