

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
ARTS AND HUMANITIES
Undergraduate Course Outline 2015-2016

Philosophy 3993F/Arts and Humanities 3392F: The Ethics of Science/The Science of Ethics I

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| Autumn 2015 M 2:30-5:30 Location: Visual Arts Centre 100 Instructors: Professors Anthony Skelton & Gillian Barker | Office Location: Skelton: Stevenson Hall 2131 Barker: Stevenson Hall 2136 Office Hours: Skelton: M., 9:30-10:30; Th., 3:30-4:30 Barker: W., 3:00-4:00; Th., 1:00-2:00 E-mail: Skelton: askelto4@uwo.ca Barker: gbarker5@uwo.ca Phone: Skelton: 519-661-2111, ext. 87953 Barker: 519-661-2111, ext. 87747 |
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

It has often been thought that ethics and science inhabit separate realms and have little to say to one another. This course challenges that assumption by exploring the many ways in which ethical thought both informs and is informed by science. We begin by investigating the nature of both ethical and scientific reasoning. We then apply this understanding in examining a range of questions about ethics that arise in the pursuit and application of scientific knowledge. Particular issues to be addressed include the ethics of using animals and embryos in medical research; the implications of human evolutionary science and brain science for our understanding of ethics; what ecological science can teach us about our ethical relationship to natural ecosystems and other species; ethical issues that emerge as we apply new technologies in procreation and in food production; and the place of science in a democratic society.

OBJECTIVES

This course has four main objectives. The first is to acquaint students with the various ways in which ethics and science interact. The second is to provide students with a deeper appreciation of both scientific and ethical reasoning. The third is to help students understand the importance of philosophical analysis and dispassionate and secular argument to the resolution of practical problems. The fourth is to help students develop the ability to read thoughtfully and write clearly and effectively about complex philosophical issues.

TEXTS

All readings are available online through OWL.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week One (Sept 14): **Organization and Introduction**

Reading: None

Week Two (Sept 21): **The Ethics of Research on Non-human Animals**

Readings: I. Kant, “Duties towards Animals and Spirits”
 C. Cohen, “The Case for the Use of Animals in Biomedical Research”
 P. Singer, “All Animals are Equal”
 T. Regan, “The Rights of Humans and Other Animals”

Week Three (Sept 28): **The Ethics of Research on Human Embryos**

Readings: D. Marquis, “Why Abortion Is Immoral”
 D. Marquis, “The Moral-Principle Objection to Human Embryonic Stem Cell
 Research”
 S. Holm, “The Ethical Case against Stem Cell Research”
 K. Devolder, “Creating and Sacrificing Embryos for Stem Cells”

Week Four (Oct 5): **Ethics and Ecology**

Readings: A. Leopold, “The Land Ethic”
 A. Leopold, “Thinking Like a Mountain”
 A. Naess, “The Shallow and the Deep, Long-range Ecology Movements”
 A. Naess and G. Sessions, “The Deep Ecology Platform”

Week Five (Oct 12): **Thanksgiving: No Class**

Week Six (Oct 19): **Ethics and Conservation**

Readings: M. Soule, “What is Conservation Biology?”
 P. Kareiva, M. Marvier, and R. Lalasz, “Conservation in the Anthropocene”
 B. Miller, M. Soule, B. Terborgh, “‘New Conservation’ or Surrender to
 Development?”
 M. Marvier and P Kareiva, “The Evidence and Values Underlying ‘New
 Conservation’”
 B. Minteer and T. Miller, “The New Conservation Debate: Ethical Foundations,
 Strategic Trade-offs and Policy Opportunities”

NOTE: First Essay Assignment is due on Thursday, October 15, 2015.

Week Seven (Oct 26): **Ethics of Procreation**

Readings: J. Savulescu and G. Kahane, “The Moral Obligation to Create the Child with the

Best Chance of the Best Life”
M. Parker, “An Ordinary Chance of a Desirable Existence”

Week Eight (Nov. 2): **Ethics and Agriculture: Guest Lecture by Tony Weis**

Readings: T. Weis, “The Accelerating Biophysical Contradictions of Industrial Capitalist Agriculture”
V. Shiva, “Monocultures of the Mind”

Week Nine (Nov 9): **Ethics and Evolution**

Readings: M. Ruse and E. O. Wilson, “Ethics as Applied Science”
P. Kitcher, “Four Ways of ‘Biologizing’ Ethics”
P. Kitcher, “Precise of The Ethical Project”

Week Ten (Nov 16): **Ethics and Evolution**

Readings: S. Street, “A Darwinian Dilemma for Realist Theories of Value”
T. Nagel, Mind and Cosmos, ch. 5.

Week Eleven (Nov 23): **Ethics and Psychology**

Readings: J. Doris, “Persons, Situations and Virtue Ethics”
A. Appiah, Experiments in Ethics, ch. 2.
J. Greene, “The Secret Joke of Kant’s Soul”

NOTE: Second Essay Assignment is due on Thursday, November 26, 2015.

Week Twelve (Nov 30): **Moral Psychology**

Readings: J. Graham, J Haidt, et al., “Moral Foundations Theory: The Pragmatic Validity of Moral Pluralism”
D. Ketner, A. Kogan, et al. “The Sociocultural Appraisals, Values ad Emotions, (SAVE) Framework of Prosociality: Core Processes from Gene to Meme”

Week Thirteen (Dec 7): **Science and Democracy**

Reading: P. Feyerabend, “How to Defend Society Against Science”
P. Kitcher, Science in a Democratic Society, ch. 1
M. Roirdan, “No Time for Cowards: The Fight for Science and Democracy”

REQUIREMENTS

Your grade for this course will be based on two essays, class participation and a final exam. The first paper is worth 25% of your final grade, the second paper is worth 35% of your final grade, participation is worth 10% of your final grade and the exam is worth 30% of your final grade.

1. Essay

Due date: Thursday, October 15, 2015
 Length: No more than 1500 words
 Value: 25% of final grade

2. Essay

Due date: Thursday, November 26, 2015
 Length: No more than 2500 words
 Value: 35% of final grade

3. Participation

Value: 10% of final grade

4. Final Exam

When: To be determined by the Office of the Registrar
 Length: Three hours
 Value: 30% of final grade
 Format: TBD

REGULATIONS

1. Submission of essays

Please submit your assignments electronically. Do not submit a paper copy.

In order to submit your assignment, visit the OWL site for this course. On the left-hand navigation menu you will find the assignment tool. Click on this tool and you will find the assignment guidelines and basic instructions for submitting your assignment. To submit your assignment upload it and click on the submit button at the bottom of the page.

A corrected version of your paper will be returned to you through the OWL site.

2. Turnitin.com

All required papers will be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as course documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

3. Extensions

Exceptions to the above work submission dates may be granted only as a result of petition to the Academic Counselor of the student's faculty. **Instructors have no authority to waive this requirement, and any unofficial arrangements they make with students will not be respected by the administration.**

All course work (with the exception of final examinations) must be submitted by the last day of classes.

Academic policies on examinations, appeals, absences due to illness, etc. may be found in the 2015-16 Academic Calendar. For further information, contact the Philosophy Undergraduate Counselor, Professor Andrew Botterell, Stevenson Hall 3140, 519-661-2111, ext. 85758, your Faculty's Academic Counselor or the Ombudsperson.

4. Late essays and penalties

An essay will be considered late if it is handed in after the due date without a prearranged extension (or after the extended date, in the case of an extension). Late essays will be penalized at the rate of **three** percentage points per day late. Essays more than ten days late will not be accepted.

5. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a form of cheating. Plagiarism is unacknowledged copying or paraphrasing of the words or ideas of another person. In general, anyone who learns something from a source (other than course lectures or general background knowledge any student of the course could reasonably be expected to have) and then presents that knowledge as their own discovery is considered to have plagiarized, even if the words used to express the ideas are not exactly the same.

Examples of plagiarism include: misrepresenting co-authored or group work as individually done, cutting and pasting copied or paraphrased work by others in with your own work, paraphrasing or otherwise altering the order of words or phrases and/or substituting words or phrases of similar meaning without acknowledgement that you are doing so, aiding and abetting such offences, among others.

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a MAJOR academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

6. E-mail policy

We are **not** able to respond to philosophical concerns or questions over e-mail. We will deal

with such concerns or questions during our office hours **only**. If you have a problem turning in an assignment on time or you need to make an appointment with one of us or you have some private issue you would like to communicate to us, feel free to use e-mail. Otherwise, please attend our office hours or make an appointment to see one of us.

7. Prerequisites

You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course prerequisites and that you have not taken an antirequisite course. Lack of prerequisites may not be used as a basis of appeal. If you are not eligible for a course, you may be removed from it at any time, and you will receive no fee adjustment. These decisions cannot be appealed.

8. The **Department of Philosophy Policies** which govern the conduct, standards, and expectations for student participation in Philosophy courses is available in the Undergraduate section of the Department of Philosophy website at <http://www.uwo.ca/philosophy/undergraduate/policies.html>. It is your responsibility to understand the policies set out by the Senate and the Department of Philosophy, and thus ignorance of these policies cannot be used as grounds of appeal.
9. Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.