

Introduction to Ethics

Instructor: Jeff Carroll

Email: jcarro@bgsu.edu

Office Hours: Shatzel Hall 308 or Zoom, by appointment

Course Description

This course covers central issues in moral philosophy. Week 1 introduces some ethical puzzles. Weeks 2-4 are on the three major moral theories. Week 2 is on Utilitarianism, Week 3 is on Deontology, and Week 4 is on Virtue Ethics. Week 5 considers issues in applied ethics. Week 6 looks at issues at the intersection of ethics and politics.

Mode of Instruction

This is (obviously) an *asynchronous* course which means that we will not meet either in-person or on Zoom (though you are welcome to schedule an appointment with me to do either, if you'd like). Hence, the material for a given day of class will come in one of three ways: (1) readings, (2) videos, or (3) readings and videos. See the schedule below for details. On the Canvas page, the course is broken down into 6 "Modules" which correspond to the 6 weeks on the syllabus.

Grading

On the last day of each week there will be an assignment. Three of the assignments will be quizzes. Once you start a quiz, you will have an hour to complete it (though I don't think it will take anywhere close to that long). The other three will be writing assignments. There is no time limit for the writing assignments. Together, these six assignments comprise 100% of the grade. While I *strongly encourage* everyone to complete each assignment on the day it is listed on the syllabus, it is not required that you do so. What is required is that all assignments be turned in by **June 24th**.

Schedule:

Week 1: Introduction

- 1) M/May 16 Read the Syllabus (feel free to email me with any questions)
- 2) Tu/May 17 Plato - *Euthyphro*
 Watch: Euthyphro Dilemma
- 3) W/May 18 Rachels – "The Challenge of Cultural Relativism"
- 4) Th/May 19 Ring of Gyges
 Watch: The Ring of Gyges Video
- 5) Fri/May 20 *Quiz 1*

Week 2: Utilitarianism

- 6) M/May 23 Mill – Selections from *Utilitarianism*

- 7) Tu/May 24 Watch: Utilitarianism & its Critiques
- 8) W/May 25 Thomson – “The Trolley Problem”
Watch: Trolley Problem Video
- 9) Th/May 26 Nozick – “The Experience Machine”
Watch: Utility Monster
- 10) Fri/May 27 *Quiz 2*
- Week 3: Deontology
- 11) M/May 30 **NO CLASS – MEMORIAL DAY**
- 12) Tu/May 31 Kant – Selections from the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*
- 13) Wed/June 1 Watch: Sandel – Episode 06 (Part One and Two)
- 14) Th/June 2 Watch: Sandel – Episode 07 (Part One Only)
- 15) F/June 3 *Writing Assignment 1*
- Week 4: Virtue Ethics
- 16) M/June 6 Aristotle – Selections from *Nicomachean Ethics*
- 17) Tu/June 7 Hursthouse – Selections from *On Virtue Ethics*
- 18) W/June 8 Watch: Aristotle and Virtue Ethics Crash Course
- 19) Th/June 9 Watch: Sandel – Episode 10
- 20) F/June 10 *Writing Assignment 2*
- Week 5: Applied Ethics
- 21) M/June 13 Singer – “Famine, Affluence, and Poverty”
- 22) Tu/June 14 Thomson – “A Defense of Abortion”
Watch: A Defense of Abortion Video
- 23) W/June 15 Singer – “Down on the Factory Farm” from *Animal Liberation*
- 24) Th/June 16 Finish Singer – “Down on the Factory Farm”
- 25) F/June 17 *Writing Assignment 3*
- Week 6: Ethics and Political Philosophy

- 26) M/June 20 **NO CLASS – JUNETEENTH**
- 27) Tu/June 21 Watch: Huemer – “Unjust Laws”
- 28) W/June 22 Rawls – Selections from *A Theory of Justice*
- 29) Th/June 23 Nozick – Selections from *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*
- 30) F/June 24 *Quiz 3*