

**Philosophy 221: Ethics 1**  
**Fall 2008, Tues., Thurs. 11:30-12:50, MC 1085**

**Professor:** Shannon Dea  
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**Course Description:**

This course introduces students to moral philosophy through a survey of classic ethical texts from around 400 BCE to 1900. The particular focus of the course is close reading of the central text of each of the three main branches of normative ethics – virtue ethics (Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*), deontology (Kant’s *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*) and utilitarianism (Mill’s *Utilitarianism*). This will be supplemented by lectures on Plato, Epicurus, the Stoics and Nietzsche. In order to deepen their engagement of the assigned texts, students will be divided into small groups. These groups will each be assigned a special project to be completed collaboratively. Groups are expected to meet at least biweekly (meeting frequency will vary by group type) in the Philosophy Learning Commons (HH 335) to work on their projects. See “Small Group Work” tab on UW ACE site for the course for more details on small-group collaboration in this course.

**Learning Initiative Study:**

Professors Shannon Dea and Tim Kenyon are currently conducting a study, supported by the UW Learning Initiatives Fund, on the effects of small-group work in a philosophy learning commons in lower division Philosophy courses. Students in Philosophy 221 are all invited to participate in this study. For further information on this study and students’ roles in it, see “Learning Initiatives Study” tab on UW ACE site for the course.

Note: For those students who agree to participate in the study, the questionnaires they will be asked to complete are located on the “1089 PHIL 221: Survey for PHIL 221 Fall 2008” group on UW ACE. To access this group, just log on as usual, and consult the “Community Groups” box on the left-hand side of the home page.

**Expected Course Outcomes:**

By the end of this course, students should be able to do the following things:

<b>Course content:</b>	→ accurately summarize some of the core arguments of the classic moral philosophers; → explain key terms, such as “ <i>eudaimonia</i> ”, “deontology”, “categorical imperative” and “principle of utility”;
<b>Applying your knowledge:</b>	→ critically evaluate ethical arguments and texts ; → apply classic ethical approaches to contemporary issues;
<b>Reading and writing in the discipline:</b>	→ read and accurately exposit primary source texts from distinct historical periods; → write clearly and thoughtfully about moral philosophy – both individually and within small-group collaboration.

**Texts:**

Aristotle, *The Nichomachean Ethics*. David Ross, Trans. Revised Ackrill and Urmson. Oxford: Oxford World Classics, 1998.

Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*. Trans. Mary Gregor. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2001.

**Note on the Texts:** You don't strictly need to use these particular versions. They are reliable and quite cheap. However, there are other versions out there readily available. You might especially consider checking out a used book store (or a relative's bookshelf) for these books. The only caveat is that anyone who uses a different version will need to figure out the differences in page numbers on their own since the professor's references will always be to the above editions.

**Warning:**

This course involves a considerable amount of sometimes difficult reading from historical texts. Do not take this course if you are not prepared to keep up with the readings. Seriously.

**Work Required:**

Mid-term test	20%
Final exam	40%
Small-group projects*	40%

\*See individual small-group hand-outs for details.

The fine print:

**Late work:** Work turned in late is subject to a penalty of 5% per business day.

**Final Exam:** The final examination will occur during the scheduled December examination period at a date/time/location to be announced. Note: Student travel plans are not acceptable grounds for granting an alternative final examination time (see <http://www.registrar.uwaterloo.ca/exams/finalexams.html>).

**Collaborative work:** This course involves a considerable amount of collaborative work in small groups. This creates some advantages for students, among which is the absence of any individually-authored papers from the course requirements. The disadvantage is that it can sometimes be difficult to decide whether a certain practice constitutes academic dishonesty in the context of small-group work. The hand-outs for the groups will detail some ways to make sure that students aren't engaging in academic dishonesty. However, if you're still not sure, check with the professor as soon as possible. It is your responsibility – even when you're engaged in collaborative work – to ensure that your academic conduct is always honest

**UW ACE Site and Email:**

The professor will post details concerning tests, review sessions and assignments on the course UW ACE site. It is the individual student's responsibility to check this on a regular basis. From time to time, the professor will send students important emails regarding (for instance) readings, assignments, review sessions and tests (or -- if they should arise -- last minute emergencies that

affect a scheduled lecture). If you would rather receive these emails at your home account (e.g., hotmail, gmail, rogers...), then you must enter that email address on your UWDir entry. To log on to UWDir and update your entry, follow this link: <https://ego.uwaterloo.ca/~uwdir/Update>. It is your responsibility to stay current with course news by regularly checking both the course UW-ACE site and whichever email account is listed on your UWDir entry. In case there is some pressing need to revise this outline, the official version will always be the one posted on UW-ACE.

### Schedule

This schedule is subject to fine tuning, with notice. Students are responsible for doing the assigned readings before the corresponding lectures. Lectures are intended to supplement, problematize and clarify the readings, not to replace them. Any material from course readings could be covered on the examinations, whether it has been specifically discussed in the lectures or not.

University dates	Week	Date	Lecture topics/Readings/ Tests
Sept. 8 – lectures begin	1	Sept. 9, 11	Introduction, Plato, Epicurus, Stoicism. <b>No readings.</b>
Sept. 19 – on-campus open class registration ends	2	Sept. 16, 18	Read Aristotle, Book 1  Session on how to work well in a small-group. Facilitator TBA.
Sept. 26 – last day to drop a course with 100% refund and no penalty	3	Sept. 23, 25	Read Aristotle, Book 2
	4	Sept. 30, Oct. 2	Read Aristotle, Book 3
	5	Oct. 7, 9	Read Aristotle, Book 5  Optional review session for mid-term, date/time/location TBA.
	6	Oct. 14, 16	Read Aristotle, Book 10  Mid-term test October 16.
Oct. 24 – last day for 50% tuition refund	7	Oct. 21, 23	Read Kant, Preface and Section 1
Oct.31 – drop period 1 ends. Last day to drop with a grade of WD	8	Oct. 28, 30	Read Kant, Section 2
	9	Nov. 4, 6	Read Kant, Section 3
	10	Nov. 11, 13	Read Mill, Chs. 1-3
	11	Nov. 18, 20	Read Mill, Chs. 4, 5
[Note: Lectures end	12	Nov. 25, 27	Nietzsche's dissenting voice.

Dec. 1. Drop period 2 ends Dec. 4. Last day to drop without a petition. Exams begin Dec. 5.]			Conclusion, catch-up and review. <b>No readings.</b>  Optional review session for final exam, date/time/location TBA.
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**More fine print:**

Academic Integrity: in order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4,  
<http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm>

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offense, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offenses (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline,  
<http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm>

Appeals: A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals,  
<http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm>

Students with disabilities:

The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.