PHIL 010-01 Introduction to Ethics

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Virtual Office Hours: By appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Philosophy 010 is a general introduction to philosophical ethics. Questions that will operate in the background of our discussions include: "What is the nature of morality? How do we know what is right and what is wrong? What sorts of moral obligations do we stand under? What are our duties to others and to ourselves? What is the nature of virtue and vice? How do we assess moral character?…" In this course, we will discuss contemporary issues that highlight persisting debates in ethics, utilizing case studies to engage with relevant controversies in greater depth. Topics addressed include ethical issues that arise in public discourse and democracy, science and health, and advancements in technology and artificial intelligence.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Read and interpret moral arguments
2. Write clear, effective, and convincing arguments
3. Engage in meaningful and productive discussion of complicated moral issues

COURSE READINGS

All course materials are available on canvas or through Georgetown library (online)

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING CRITERIA

Graded Assignments

Participation (weekly synchronous and/or asynchronous participation (contingent on whether the university offers in person courses)) - 25%

Case Study Reflections (~2 page essay - 15% each) - 45%

Final Paper (~5 page argumentative essay) - 30%

Grading Scheme

94 - 100 % = A	80 - 82 % = B-	67 - 69 % = D+
90 - 93 % = A-	77 - 79 % = C+	60 - 66 % = D
87 - 89 % = B+	73 - 76 % = C	Below 60 % = F

83 - 86 % = B   70 - 72 % = C -

COURSE SCHEDULE

Course material subject to change (including supplementary material)

Module 1:   Foundations in Ethics

5/24   Introductions/Course Overview

5/25   Consequentialism & Deontology

"The Trolley Problem"

"Consequentialism," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*

5/26   Virtue Ethics & Care Ethics

Julia Annas," Being Virtuous and Doing the Right Thing", *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Association*, Presidential Address, 2004, 78 (2): 61–75.

Selection from Kittay, Eva. 1999. *Love's Labor: Essays in Women, Equality and Dependency*. New York, NY: Routledge.

5/27   Responsibility, Blame, & Forgiveness

Material TBD

5/28   Synthesis Day

*Case reflection due 5/30 by 11:59 pm

Module 2:   Ethics in Public Discourse & Democracy

5/31   Free Speech/Problematic Speech

MaryKate McGowan, "The Ethics of Free Speech" in *The Routledge Companion to Ethics,* Routledge: 2010.

6/1   Epistemic Injustice

Listen: Kristie Dotson, "Epistemic Oppression"

*Recommended: Dotson, "A Cautionary Tale"

6/2   Polarization

Cass Sunstein, "Polarization," in *Going to Extremes*, Oxford University Press: 2009.

6/3   Racial Reckoning

Listen: Ta-Nehisi Coates, "People Were Not Slaves; They Were Enslaved" 2019

Ta-Nehisi Coates, "The Case for Reparations," 2014

6/4   Synthesis Day

*Case reflection due 6/6 by 11:59 pm

Module 3:   Ethics in Science & Health

6/7   Resource Allocation & Public Health

"Allocating Medical Resources in the Time of Covid-19," *NEJM*

"Who Decides Which COVID-19 Patients Get Ventilators?" The Atlantic

Social Determinants of Health *TBD*

6/8   Health & Disability

Crow, Liz. 1996. "Including All of Our Lives: Renewing the Social Model of Disability." In Encounters with Strangers: Feminism and Disability. London: Women's Press.

Ho, Anita. 2008. "The Individualist Model of Autonomy and the Challenge of Disability." Journal of Bioethical Inquiry 5: 193-207.

6/9   Genetic Editing

Davis, Dena. 1997. "Genetic Dilemmas and the Child's Right to an Open Future." The Hastings Center Report 27 (2): 7-15.

Green, Robert. 2017 "Do We Have a Moral Obligation to Genetically Enhance Our Children?" *The Hastings Center*

6/10   Aging & Death

Modern Medicine Changed the Way We Die, and Not Always for the Better (thecut.com)

Documentary *TBD*

6/11   Synthesis Day

*Case reflection due 6/13 by 11:59 pm

Module 4: Ethics in Technology & Artificial Intelligence

6/14   Bias in Decision Systems

Reuben Binns, "Fairness in Machine Learning: Lessons from Political Philosophy," Proceedings of the 1st Conference on Fairness, Accountability and Transparency, in Proceedings of Machine Learning Research, 2018(81): 149–159.

6/15   Autonomous Systems & Responsibility

Bertram F. Malle, "Integrating Robot Ethics and Machine Morality: The Study and Design of Moral Competence in Robots," Ethics and Information Technology 2016 (18): 243–56(2016)

Aimee van Wynsberghe & Scott Robbins, "Critiquing the Reasons for Making Artificial Moral Agents"

6/16   Synthesis Day

6/17   Goodbyes

*Final due 6/17 by 11:59 pm

COURSE POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS

Student Expectations

Participation is essential to your success in this class. You are expected to actively participate in discussions with your peers, either in synchronous sessions or via the course discussion board.

Discussion questions will be posted to the asynchronous discussion board following each synchronous session. For those opting to use the discussion board, please post by start of class the following day.

For students participating synchronously, you may miss two live sessions without penalty. For students participating asynchronously, you may be excused from two discussion posts without penalty. After these "freebies," participation will be bumped down half a letter grade for each two sessions missed. Please reach out to me if extenuating circumstances arise.

You are expected to complete all readings, assignments, and activities on time. That said, it is understood that we all face different challenges during this time, so I am happy to grant extensions. Please email me 24 hours in advance to request an extension on any assignment.

Netiquette Guidelines

To promote the highest degree of education possible, we ask each student to respect the opinions and thoughts of other students and be courteous in the way that you choose to express yourself. Students should be respectful and considerate of all opinions.

In order for us to have meaningful discussions, we must learn to genuinely try to understand what others are saying and be open-minded about others' opinions. If you want to persuade someone to see things differently, it is much more effective to do so in a polite, non-threatening

way rather than to do so antagonistically. Everyone has insights to offer based on his/her experiences, and we can all learn from each other. Civility is essential.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Students with Disabilities

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, individuals with disabilities have the right to specific accommodations that do not fundamentally alter the nature of the course. Some accommodations might include note takers, books on tape, extended time on assignments, and interpreter services among others. Students are responsible for communicating their needs to the Academic Resource Center, the office that oversees disability support services,(202-687-8354; arc@georgetown.edu; https://academicsupport.georgetown.edu/disability/) before the start of classes to allow time to review the documentation and make recommendations for appropriate accommodations. The University is not responsible for making special accommodations for students who have not declared their disabilities and have not requested an accommodation in a timely manner. Also, the University need not modify course or degree requirements considered to be an essential requirement of the program of instruction. For the most current and up-to-date policy information, please refer to the Georgetown University Academic Resource Center website. Students are highly encouraged to discuss the documentation and accommodation process with an Academic Resource Center administrator.

Accessibility and Inclusion

One of the central tenets of Georgetown's educational mission is cura personalis, a Latin phrase meaning "care of the whole person." Georgetown is committed to showing care and concern for each student by creating an inclusive and accessible learning environment that follows universal design principles to meet the needs of its diverse student body.

I am committed to creating a learning environment for my students that supports a diversity of thoughts, perspectives and experiences, and honors your identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, etc.). I respect your right to be called whatever you want to be called, because I understand that for all of us, social recognition of our sense of self is key to our own integrity and flourishing. I expect everyone in the class to do the same. In particular, if you would like to be called by a specific set of pronouns or name that might not be obvious from your official school records, please let me know in any way that makes you comfortable.

Georgetown's Trans, Non-Binary, and Gender Non-Conforming Resource Guide: https://lgbtq.georgetown.edu/resources/transatgu/

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students at Georgetown University are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic and personal integrity. Although most Georgetown students conduct themselves in accordance with these standards, occasionally, there are students who violate the code of conduct. Cheating harms the University community in many ways. For example, honest students are frustrated by the unfairness of cheating that goes undetected and students who cheat can skew the grading curve in a class, resulting in lower grades for students who worked hard and did their own work.

Academic dishonesty in any form is a serious offense, and students found in violation are subject to academic penalties that include, but are not limited to failure of the course, termination from the program, and revocation of degrees already conferred. All students are expected to fully adhere to the policies and procedures of Georgetown's Honor System and to take the Honor Code Pledge.

Honor Code Pledge

In pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life I commit myself to respect and to uphold the Georgetown University honor system:

- *To be honest in every academic endeavor, and*
- *To conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community as we live and work together.*

Plagiarism

Stealing someone else's work is a terminal offense in the workplace, and it will wreck your career in academia, too. Students are expected to work with integrity and honesty in all their assignments. The Georgetown University Honor System defines plagiarism as "the act of passing off as one's own the ideas or writings of another." More guidance is available through the Gervase Programs. If you have any doubts about plagiarism, paraphrasing, and the need to credit, check out Plagiarism.org.

All submissions must be your original work. Any submission suspected of plagiarism will be immediately referred to the Honor Council for investigation and possible adjudication. All students are expected to follow Georgetown's honor code unconditionally. If you have not done so, please read the honor code material located online at the Honor Council website.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Georgetown recognizes that COVID-19 has a significant impact on everyone in the Georgetown community. Georgetown offers a variety of support services for students that can be accessed online and has put together this newsletter which aims to provide you with information about well-being resources and virtual meetings that can connect you with mental health professionals on and off campus during this time. Below are some resources available to you:

- Academic Resource Center
  202-687-8354 | arc@georgetown.edu
- Counseling and Psychiatric Services
  202-687-6985
- Institutional Diversity, Equity & Affirmative Action (IDEAA)
  (202) 687-4798

Title IX/Sexual Misconduct

Georgetown University and its faculty are committed to supporting survivors and those impacted by sexual misconduct, which includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, and stalking. Georgetown requires faculty members, unless otherwise designated as confidential, to report all disclosures of sexual misconduct to the University Title IX Coordinator

or a Deputy Title IX Coordinator. If you disclose an incident of sexual misconduct to a professor in or outside of the classroom (with the exception of disclosures in papers), that faculty member must report the incident to the Title IX Coordinator, or Deputy Title IX Coordinator. The coordinator will, in turn, reach out to the student to provide support, resources, and the option to meet. [Please note that the student is not required to meet with the Title IX coordinator.].

Please note that University policy requires faculty to report any disclosures about sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator, whose role is to coordinate the University's response to sexual misconduct. Georgetown has a number of fully confidential professional resources who can provide support and assistance to survivors of sexual assault and other forms of sexual misconduct. These resources include:

- Jen Schweer, MA, LPC, Associate Director of Health Education Services for Sexual Assault Response and Prevention (202) 687-0323 | jls242@georgetown.edu

- Brittany Egan, MSW, LICSW, CCTP, Staff Clinician and Sexual Assault Services Specialist, Health Education Services (202) 687-0323 | be200@georgetown.edu
- Counseling and Psychiatric Services (CAPS), (202) 687-6985 | After Hours: (833) 960-3006
- Sexual Assault Response and Prevention (SARP) confidential email: sarp@georgetown.edu
- Get Help Resources

More information about reporting options and resources can be found on the Sexual Misconduct Website. If you would like to find out how recent changes to Title IX regulations are impacting Georgetown's policies and procedures, see this video briefing.

Title IX/Pregnancy and Parenting Accommodations

Georgetown University is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive environment for pregnant and parenting students. Students may request adjustments based on general pregnancy needs or accommodations based on a pregnancy-related complication. Specific adjustments will be handled on a case by case basis and will depend on medical needs and academic requirements. Students seeking a pregnancy adjustment or accommodation should follow the process laid out on the Title IX website.

Discrimination based on sex, including sexual misconduct and discrimination based on pregnancy or parenting status, subverts the University's mission and threatens permanent damage to the educational experience, careers, and well-being of students, faculty, and staff.

Georgetown Library

If you have a question for a librarian you can go to their "Ask Us" page where you will have the option to chat online, send an email, or schedule a Zoom appointment to discuss a research topic, develop a search strategy, or examine resources for projects and papers. Librarians offer an overview of and in-depth assistance with important resources for senior or master's theses, dissertations, papers and other types of research. This service is available to currently enrolled students who need assistance with Georgetown-assigned projects and papers. Please review the Services & Resources Guide for Online Students for additional information.

eResources

Students enrolled in courses have access to the University Library System's eResources, including 500+ research databases, 1.5+ million ebooks, and thousands of periodicals and other multimedia files (films, webinars, music, and images). You can access these resources through the Library's Homepage by using your NetID and password.

Learning Resources

Georgetown offers a host of learning resources to its students. Two that you might find particularly helpful in this course are the Writing Center and Refworks.

- The Writing Center offers peer tutoring by trained graduate and undergraduate students who can assist you at any point in the writing process. They help at any stage of your writing process, from brainstorming to revision. Tutors can offer advice on thesis development, use of evidence, organization, flow, sentence structure, grammar, and more. The Writing Center will not proofread or edit papers; rather, they will help to improve your proofreading and editing skills to become a better writer. Appointments can be booked online through their website.

- Refworks is an online research management tool that aids in organizing, storing, and presenting citation sources for papers and projects.

Technical Support

All students have 24/7 access to Canvas technical support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, including live chat and a support hotline at 855-338-2770. Use the 'Help' icon in the lower left of your Canvas window to view all available support and feedback options. If you're looking for help on a specific feature, check out the Canvas Student Guide.