

**PHIL3000**  
**Ethics 倫理學**

**Course Outline**

<b>Time :</b>	<b>W 13:30-15:15</b>	<b>Location :</b>	<b>LSK 302</b>
<b>Tutorial time to be arranged</b>			

**Course overview**

This course aims to introduce basic concepts, problems and theories in ethics. The topics to be discussed are drawn from two main branches of ethics: (1) *metaethics*, which is a systematic inquiry of the foundations of morality, including moral semantics, moral ontology, moral epistemology, and moral psychology; and (2) *normative ethics*, which explores first-order ethical questions like “what has value?”, “what traits of character are virtuous?”, and “what makes an action right or wrong?”.

Advisory to Majors: to be taken in year 2 or above.

**Learning outcomes**

1. To gain a basic understanding of metaethics and normative ethics.
2. To be able to articulate and evaluate major ethical theories.
3. To be able to think critically about moral issues.
4. To be able to construct clear and reasoned arguments.

**Topics**

1. Moral non-cognitivism
2. The error theory
3. Moral relativism
4. Moral naturalism vs. non-naturalism
5. Internalism vs. externalism
6. Egoism
7. Consequentialism
8. Deontology
9. The social contract theory
10. Virtue ethics

**Learning activities**

Learning activities of this course include lectures, tutorials, reading essays, presentations, and writing two papers:

1. Lecture: one 2-hour session every week (mandatory).
2. Tutorial: one 2-hour session every two weeks (mandatory).
3. Reading: around 30 pages of required reading every week.
4. Presentation: one presentation on an assigned topic.
5. Writing: one short essay (3,000 words) and one term paper (5,000 words).

### Assessment scheme

<i>Task nature</i>	<i>Weight</i>
Participation	10%
Presentation	20%
Short Essay	30%
Term Paper	40%

### Recommended learning resources

Fisher, A. <i>Metaethics</i> . Acumen Press, 2011.
Rachels, J. <i>The Elements of Moral Philosophy</i> . 4 <sup>th</sup> edition. McGraw-Hill Press, 2003.
Darwall, S. <i>Philosophical Ethics</i> . Westview Press, 1998.
Kagan, S. <i>Normative Ethics</i> . Westview Press, 1998.
Miller, A. <i>An Introduction to Contemporary Metaethics</i> . 2 <sup>nd</sup> edition. Polity Press, 2013.
Shafer-Landau, R. (ed.) <i>Ethical Theory: An Anthology</i> . 2 <sup>nd</sup> edition. Wiley-Blackwell Press, 2013.
Shafer-Landau, R. and T. Cuneo (eds.) <i>Foundations of Ethics</i> . Wiley-Blackwell Press, 2007.
Darwall, S., A. Gibbard & P. Railton (eds.) <i>Moral Discourse and Practice</i> . Oxford University Press, 1996.
Copp, D. (ed.) <i>The Oxford Handbook of Ethical Theory</i> . Oxford University Press, 2006.
Dreier, J. (ed.) <i>Contemporary Debates in Moral Theory</i> . Blackwell Press, 2006.

### Course schedule

<i>Week</i>	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Required reading</i>	<i>Tutorials</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
1	Preliminaries			
2	Introduction to metaethics; moral non-cognitivism	Introduction & Chapter 2, <i>Metaethics</i> Ayer, "A Critique of Ethics"		
3	The error theory	Chapter 3, <i>Metaethics</i> Mackie, "The Subjectivity of Values"		
4	Moral relativism	Chapter 7, <i>Metaethics</i> Lyons, "Ethical Relativism and the Problem of Incoherence"		
5	Naturalistic moral realism	Chapter 4, <i>Metaethics</i> Sturgeon, "Ethical Naturalism"		
6	Non-naturalistic moral realism	Chapter 5, <i>Metaethics</i> Shafer-Landau, "Ethics as Philosophy: A Defense of Ethical Nonnaturalism"		
7	Internalism vs. externalism	Chapter 8, <i>Metaethics</i> Smith, "The Externalist Challenge"		
8	Egoism	Chapter 5 & 6, <i>The Elements of Moral Philosophy</i> Feinberg, "Psychological Egoism"		
9	Consequentialism	Chapter 7 & 8, <i>The Elements of Moral Philosophy</i> Hooker, "Rule-Consequentialism"		

10	Deontology	Chapter 9 & 10, <i>The Elements of Moral Philosophy</i> O'Neill, "Kantian Approaches to Some Famine Problems"		
11	Further issues on consequentialism/deontology	Kagan, "Doing Harm", in <i>Normative Ethics</i> Thomson, "Killing, Letting Die, and the Trolley Problem"		
12	The social contract theory	Chapter 11, <i>The Elements of Moral Philosophy</i> Gauthier, "Why Contractarianism?"		
13	Virtue ethics	Chapter 13, <i>The Elements of Moral Philosophy</i> Hursthouse, "Normative Virtue Ethics"		

**Contact details for teacher(s) or TA(s)**

<b>Teacher</b>	
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