

**PHIL 3000**  
**Ethics 倫理學**

**Course Outline**

**Time: M 2:30pm-4:15pm**

**Location: ELB 403**

**Tut: TBA**

**Location: TBA**

**Course overview (as shown on CUSIS)**

This course is designed for students to learn how to think about fundamental ethical problems, and how to articulate their thoughts. It also introduces them to some key texts in moral philosophy and helps them to analyze and evaluate the arguments presented therein. Topics to be discussed may include the good life, conceptions of happiness, rationality and morality, duties to others, duties to self.

**Learning outcomes (as shown on CUSIS)**

1. Be familiar with some of the central issues in ethics, which might be issues in history of ethics or in contemporary ethics.
2. Be able to read analytically, such that they can identify distinct parts of an argument and grasp each part's role in the overall structure.
3. Be able to read critically, such that they can raise your own questions and form their own objections to the material.
4. Be able to discuss arguments critically and constructively.
5. Be able to defend their own position by giving reasons and explaining the force of those reasons.

**Additional learning outcomes**

6. Be familiar with major ethical theories (and some of the major historical texts developing these theories) and be able to evaluate them critically.
7. Be able to think through contemporary ethical issues and to draw on the resources of ethical theories in doing so.

**Topics**

This course will consist mostly of the following two subjects:

**I. Ethical theories.** We shall explore and evaluate three major ethical theories – consequentialism, deontology, and virtue theory – through the lens of three of their most historically important proponents – Mill, Kant, and Aristotle, respectively.

**II. Ethical problems.** We shall explore some specific ethical questions. What obligations do we have towards individuals suffering from hunger across the world? Is deceiving someone into sex always, in every circumstance, *nonconsensual sex* and, as such, *seriously* morally wrong? Is abortion morally wrong and, if so, why (and how, if at all, does this relate to why, in general, it's wrong to kill people)? In exploring these questions, we'll turn to the resources provided by the above-discussed ethical theories. At the same time, we'll reevaluate these theories in light of how they address these questions.

In addition, we will consider a couple *metaethical* issues. We will consider whether moral imperatives are *categorical* or *hypothetical*. We'll also discuss whether, all things considered, it would be good to be a *moral saint*.

### Learning activities

1. Lecture: one 2-hour session every week
2. Tutorials: one 2-hour session six times over the term (active participation will be expected)
3. Reading: about 30 pages per week on average
4. Assignments: one term paper, one take-home exam, and active participation (including work in tutorials)

### Assessment scheme

<i>Task nature</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Weight</i>
Participation	Participation in tutorial (and lecture) activities and discussion	20%
Test	Take home, open notes	40%
Term paper	2000-2500 words (in English)	40%

### Remarks on Assessment Scheme (if any)

This assessment scheme is tentative. Details will be discussed in our first lecture.

### Grade Descriptor

Please refer to: [http://phil.arts.cuhk.edu.hk/~phidept/UG/Grade\\_descriptors.pdf](http://phil.arts.cuhk.edu.hk/~phidept/UG/Grade_descriptors.pdf)

### Required Reading

All required reading (as indicated in the course schedule below) will be posted to Blackboard.

### Recommended learning resources

Shafer-Landau, Russ (2003). *Whatever Happened to Good and Evil?* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Shafer-Landau, Russ (2017). *The Fundamentals of Ethics*, 4th Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy (<https://iep.utm.edu/>)

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (<https://plato.stanford.edu/>)

*Additional recommended readings will be made available on Blackboard.*

### Course schedule\*

<i>Week</i>	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Required reading</i>	<i>Tutorials</i>
<b>1:</b> 11 Jan	General Introduction And Introduction to Consequentialism	Mill, <i>Utilitarianism</i> , ch. 1 <b>Recommended:</b> Shafer-Landau, <i>Fundamentals</i> , ch. 9	
<b>2:</b> 18 Jan	Consequentialism: Elaboration and Challenges	Mill, <i>Utilitarianism</i> , ch. 2	
<b>3:</b> 25 Jan	Consequentialism: More Challenges	Selection from Williams, "A Critique of Utilitarianism" Le Guin, "The Ones Who Walk away from Omelas" Nozick, "The Experience Machine" <b>Recommended:</b> Shafer-Landau, <i>Fundamentals</i> , ch. 10	

<b>4:</b> 1 Feb	Deontology: Introduction	Kant, <i>Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals</i> , §1  <b>Recommended:</b> Shafer-Landau, <i>Fundamentals</i> , chapters. 11-12	Tutorial 1
<b>5:</b> 8 Feb	Deontology: Elaboration and Challenges	Kant, <i>Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals</i> , §2 (4: 406-4:430 only)	Tutorial 2: Singer, "Equality for Animals?" (from <i>Practical Ethics</i> )
<b>6:</b> <b>No class</b>	<i>Lunar New Year Vacation</i>		
<b>7:</b> 22 Feb	Virtue Ethics: Introduction	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , Book I, chapters 1, 4, 5, & 7  <b>Recommended:</b> Shafer-Landau, <i>Fundamentals</i> , ch. 17 (pp. 256-265 only)	
<b>8:</b> 29 Feb	Virtue Ethics: Elaboration and Challenges	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , Book II, chapters 1 & 4-9  <b>Recommended:</b> Shafer-Landau, <i>Fundamentals</i> , ch. 17 (pp. 266-275 only)	Tutorial 3: Wolf, "Moral Saints"
<b>9:</b> <b>No Class</b>	<i>Reading Week</i>		
<b>10:</b> 14 March	Why Be Moral?	Foot, "Morality as a System of Hypothetical Imperatives"  <b>Recommended:</b> Shafer-Landau, <i>Fundamentals</i> , ch. 19, and Williams, "Internal and External Reasons"	Tutorial 4: Nagel, "Pleasure and Pain"
<b>11:</b> 21 March	World Hunger	Singer, "Famine, Affluence, and Morality"  <b>Recommended:</b> O'Neill, "Ending World Hunger"	
<b>12:</b> 28 March	Deception and Consent	Dougherty, "Sex, Lies, and Consent"  <b>Recommended:</b> McGregor, "Force, Consent, and the Reasonable Woman"	Tutorial 5: Term paper workshop
<b>13:</b> <b>No class</b>	<i>Ching Ming Festival</i>		
<b>14:</b> 11 April	Abortion Ethics	Mary Anne Warren, "On the Moral and Legal Status of Abortion"	Tutorial 6: Thomson, "A Defense of Abortion"
<b>15:</b> 18 April	Abortion Ethics (cont.)	Marquis, "Why Abortion Is Immoral"	

\*This schedule is tentative. The schedule will be discussed in the first lecture. As part of this, we'll discuss plans for a make-up day for our thirteenth lecture, which will be devoted to review.

#### Details of course website

Reading materials, assignments, and lecture notes will be posted to Blackboard.

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

<b>Teacher</b>	
Name:	Rimell, Nicholas
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<b>TA</b>	<b>TBA</b>
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**Academic honesty and plagiarism**

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>

With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures. For group projects, all students of the same group should be asked to sign the declaration.

For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment. Assignments without the receipt will not be graded by teachers. Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.