ARTS 2383
Reason and Passion in Ethics: an Introduction to Modern Moral Theory

Lectures (weeks 1-12): Thursdays 10-12, Civil Engineering Bldg. G1
Tutorials run weeks 2-13: check for your tutorial time and location

Semester 2, 2015

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1. Course Staff and Contact Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Dr Melissa Merritt</th>
<th>Room</th>
<th>MB 341</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>9385-2764*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td><a href="mailto:m.merritt@unsw.edu.au">m.merritt@unsw.edu.au</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation Time</td>
<td>Thursdays 12-1 (immediately after lecture for this course, catch me after lecture); and Thursdays 3-4 (in my office)</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Email is best way to get in touch with me.

2. Course Details

| Units of Credit (UoC) | 6 |

Course Description

This course is an introduction to moral theory in the Western tradition. We will be examining canonical works in the history of modern moral philosophy: David Hume’s *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals* (1751), Immanuel Kant’s *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785), and John Stuart Mill’s *Utilitarianism* (1861/1863). We will also look at some contemporary debates on utilitarianism and Kantian deontology — arguably the two central moral theories at work in philosophical ethics today.

Course Aims

1. The course aims to introduce students to canonical texts in the history of moral philosophy, focusing on moral theory.

2. Students should come to understand, and be able to clearly explain, the crucial ideas in the selected texts, and gain some appreciation of their bearing on other areas of philosophy (e.g., metaphysics, epistemology, and political philosophy).

3. Students should also find that examination of the historical roots of contemporary philosophical debates deepens their understanding of these debates, and sharpens their appreciation for the ongoing reflection characteristic of philosophical inquiry.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. The course aims to allow students to develop a range of skills: the capacity to read, interpret, and critically evaluate difficult philosophical texts;

2. to communicate clearly one’s ideas both in class discussion and in written work;

3. and to begin to pursue independent research in philosophy.

4. Last but not least, students should gain an understanding of the main positions in modern and contemporary moral theory.

Graduate Attributes

1. Ability to evaluate and critically analyse beliefs, ideas and information using a range of techniques of philosophical reasoning

2. Ability to present coherent and persuasive arguments

3. Ability to read and interpret texts sensitively and carefully, especially appreciating the importance of intellectual tradition

4. Appreciation of the importance of reasoned enquiry and an ability to apply tools of philosophical analysis to a range of issues including those in contemporary debates

5. Respect for ethical practice and social responsibility
3. Learning and Teaching Rationale

The first meeting will be introductory: it will address the general plan for the course, and introduce the topic.

Throughout the semester, emphasis will be placed on close and careful interpretation of philosophical texts. My aim is to teach special skills of philosophical reading — much of this involves slowing down in one’s reading, and learning how to probe and query a piece of philosophical writing. It is therefore mandatory that you bring your copy of the assigned text with you to each class meeting (both lecture and tutorial).

4. Teaching Strategies

The course is structured around weekly meetings: we will meet once a week, for a two-hour lecture period, and then a tutorial following later the same day. You are also encouraged to interject (politely, of course) with questions and comments in the course of lecture. Indeed, my aim is not to have a firm division between “lecture” and “discussion” but to proceed as Socratically as possible; however, for some of the time straight lecture will be necessary in order to cover crucial material.

Participation in class discussion, both during lecture and in tutorial, is an important component of philosophical learning.

5. Course Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Task</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Learning Outcomes Assessed</th>
<th>Graduate Attributes Assessed</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Threaded discussions on Moodle</td>
<td>150-250 words, longer is permissible</td>
<td>3% each; entire battery worth 24%</td>
<td>1-2, 4</td>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>8 weeks throughout the semester; see course schedule and assignment information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Essay I</td>
<td>1000-1200 words</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>28 August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Essay II</td>
<td>1000-1200 words</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>9 October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Essay III</td>
<td>1200-1500 words</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>30 October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online test</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24 September</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please Note: The Arts and Social Sciences Protocols and Guidelines state:

A student who attends less than 80% of the classes/activities and has not submitted appropriate supporting documentation to the Course Authority to explain their absence may be awarded a grade of UF (Unsatisfactory Fail).

The Attendance Guidelines can be found in full at: https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/Protocols-Guidelines/
Formal Examination

This course has no formal final examination.

Grades

All results are reviewed at the end of each semester and may be adjusted to ensure equitable marking across the School.

The proportion of marks lying in each grading range is determined not by any formula or quota system, but by the way that students respond to assessment tasks and how well they meet the objectives of the course. Nevertheless, since higher grades imply performance that is well above average, the number of distinctions and high distinctions awarded in a typical course is relatively small. At the other extreme, on average 6.1% of students do not meet minimum standards and a little more (8.6%) in first year courses. For more information on the grading categories see: https://student.unsw.edu.au/grades

Submission of Assessment Tasks

All written assignments for this course will be submitted via Moodle. The online discussion forum (threaded discussions) naturally takes place directly on Moodle. And the three Critical Essays are to be submitted via the correct Turnitin link for the assignment on the Moodle page for this course.

The Critical Essays will all be due at 4:00pm on the due date. Assignments received after this time will be marked as having been received late.

The online test can only be taken online via Moodle during the assigned window for access, which will be during the lecture period on 24 September (in Week 9).

Late Submission of Assignments

The Arts and Social Sciences late submissions guidelines state the following:

- An assessed task is deemed late if it is submitted after the specified time and date as set out in the course Learning Management System (LMS).
- The late penalty is the **loss of 3%** of the total possible marks for the task for each day or part thereof the work is late.
- Work submitted **14 days after** the due date will be marked and feedback provided but no mark will be recorded. If the work would have received a pass mark but the lateness and the work is a compulsory course component a student will be deemed to have met that requirement. This does not apply to a task that is assessed but no mark is awarded.
- Work submitted **21 days after** the due date will not be accepted for marking or feedback and will receive no mark or grade. If the assessment task is a compulsory component of the course a student will automatically fail the course.

The Late Submissions Guidelines can be found in full at: https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/Protocols-Guidelines/

The penalty may not apply where students are able to provide documentary evidence of illness or serious misadventure. Time pressure resulting from undertaking assignments for other courses does not constitute an acceptable excuse for lateness.
6. Extension of Time for Submission of Assessment Tasks

The Arts and Social Sciences Extension Guidelines apply to all assessed tasks regardless of whether or not a grade is awarded, except the following:

1. any form of test/examination/assessed activity undertaken during regular class contact hours
2. any task specifically identified by the Course Authority (the academic in charge of the course) in the Course Outline or Learning Management System (LMS), for example, Moodle, as not available for extension requests.

The complete Arts and Social Sciences Extension Guidelines can be read here.

If you wish to request an extension for submission of an assessment task you need to do so via myUNSW using the Special Consideration section. You will need to submit documentary evidence in support of your request.

A student who missed an assessment activity held within class contact hours should apply for Special Consideration via myUNSW.

7. Attendance

The Arts and Social Sciences Attendance Guidelines state the following:

- A student is expected to attend all class contact hours for a face-to-face or blended course and complete all activities for a blended or fully online course.
- If a student is unable to attend all classes for a course due to timetable clashes, the student must complete the Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences Permitted Timetable Clash form (see information at Item 8 below). A student unable to attend lectures in a course conducted by the School of Education can apply for “Permission to Participate in Lectures Online”.
- Where practical, a student’s attendance will be recorded. Individual course outlines/LMS will set out the conditions under which attendance will be measured.
- A student who arrives more than 15 minutes late may be penalised for non-attendance. If such a penalty is imposed, the student must be informed verbally at the end of class and advised in writing within 24 hours.
- If a student experiences illness, misadventure or other occurrence that makes absence from a class/activity unavoidable, or expects to be absent from a forthcoming class/activity, they should seek permission from the Course Authority, and where applicable, should be accompanied by an original or certified copy of a medical certificate or other form of appropriate evidence.
- Reserve members of the Australian Defence Force who require absences of more than two weeks due to full-time service may be provided an exemption. The student may also be permitted to discontinue enrolment without academic or financial penalty.
- If a Course Authority rejects a student’s request for absence from a class or activity the student must be advised in writing of the grounds for the rejection.
- A Course Authority may excuse a student from classes or activities for up to one month. However, they may assign additional and/or alternative tasks to ensure compliance.
- A Course Authority considering the granting of absence must be satisfied a student will still be able to meet the course’s learning outcomes and/or volume of learning.
• A student seeking approval to be absent for more than one month must apply in writing to the Dean and provide all original or certified supporting documentation.

• The Dean will only grant such a request after consultation with the Course Authority to ensure that measures can be organised that will allow the student to meet the course’s learning outcomes and volume of learning.

• A student who attends less than 80% of the classes/activities and has not submitted appropriate supporting documentation to the Course Authority to explain their absence may be awarded a final grade of UF (Unsatisfactory Fail).

• A student who has submitted the appropriate documentation but attends less than 66% of the classes/activities will be asked by the Course Authority to apply to discontinue the course without failure rather than be awarded a final grade of UF. The final decision as to whether a student can be withdrawn without fail is made by Student Administration and Records.

Students who falsify their attendance or falsify attendance on behalf of another student will be dealt with under the Student Misconduct Policy.

8. Class Clash

Students who are enrolled in an Arts and Social Sciences program (single or dual) and have an unavoidable timetable clash can apply for permissible timetable clash by completing an online application form. Students must meet the rules and conditions in order to apply for permissible clash. The rules and conditions can be accessed online in full at: https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/media/FASSFile/Permissible_Clash_Rules.pdf

For students who are enrolled in a non-Arts and Social Sciences program, they must seek advice from their home faculty on permissible clash approval.

9. Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is presenting someone else’s thoughts or work as your own. It can take many forms, from not having appropriate academic referencing to deliberate cheating.

In many cases plagiarism is the result of inexperience about academic conventions. The University has resources and information to assist you to avoid plagiarism.

The Learning Centre assists students with understanding academic integrity and how to not plagiarise. Information is available on their website: https://student.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism/. They also hold workshops and can help students one-on-one.

If plagiarism is found in your work when you are in first year, your lecturer will offer you assistance to improve your academic skills. They may ask you to look at some online resources, attend the Learning Centre, or sometimes resubmit your work with the problem fixed. However, more serious instances in first year, such as stealing another student’s work or paying someone to do your work, may be investigated under the Student Misconduct Procedures.

Repeated plagiarism (even in first year), plagiarism after first year, or serious instances, may also be investigated under the Student Misconduct Procedures. The penalties under the procedures can include a reduction in marks, failing a course or for the most serious matters (like plagiarism in an Honours thesis) or even suspension from the university. The Student
Misconduct Procedures are available here: 

### 10. Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEETING</th>
<th>READINGS</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENTS</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Course Introduction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2 6 August</td>
<td>Unit 1: Moral Non-cognitivism &amp; Sentimentalism</td>
<td>Threaded discussion 1 (3%) on Moodle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Hume, <em>Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals</em> §§I-VI (pp. 13-61)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3 13 August</td>
<td>Unit 1: Moral Non-cognitivism &amp; Sentimentalism</td>
<td>Threaded discussion 2 (3%) on Moodle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Hume, <em>Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals</em> §§V-IX and Appendices (pp. 61-106)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4 20 August</td>
<td>Unit 1: Moral Non-cognitivism &amp; Sentimentalism</td>
<td>Threaded discussion 3 (3%) on Moodle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Mackie, <em>Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong</em>. Chapter 1, “The Subjectivity of Values”.</td>
<td>This reading is available as a PDF on Moodle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 5 27 August</td>
<td>Unit 2: Kantian Deontology</td>
<td>Critical Essay I (21%) is due on Friday 28 August. No threaded discussion this week.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Kant, <em>Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals</em> Preface and Part I (4:387-405)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 6 3 September</td>
<td>Unit 2: Kantian Deontology</td>
<td>Threaded discussion 4 (3%) on Moodle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Kant, <em>Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals</em>, Part II (4:406-445)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 7 10 September</td>
<td>Unit 2: Kantian Deontology</td>
<td>Threaded discussion 5 (3%) on Moodle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Kant, <em>Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals</em>, Part III (4:446-463)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 8 17</td>
<td>Unit 2: Kantian Deontology</td>
<td>Threaded discussion 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CRICOS Provider Code 00098G
### September

- Philippa Foot, “Morality as a System of Hypothetical Imperatives.”
- Christine Korsgaard, “Skepticism about Practical Reason.”

*These readings are available as PDFs on Moodle.*

### Week 9

24 September

**Online TEST (10%) on UNITS 1&2.**

*The test will be administered ONLINE via MOODLE during the lecture period.*

**No threaded discussion this week.**

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### Week 10

8 October

**Unit 3: Utilitarianism**

- John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism* (all; pp. 1-64)

**Critical Essay II (22%) is due on Friday 9 October.**

**No threaded discussion this week.**

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### Week 11

15 October

**Unit 3: Utilitarianism**

- J.C.C. Smart in *Utilitarianism: For and Against* (pp. 3-74)

**Threaded discussion 7 (3%) on Moodle.**

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### Week 12

22 October

**Unit 3: Utilitarianism**

- Bernard Williams in *Utilitarianism: For and Against* (pp. 77-150)
- John M. Taurek, “Should the Numbers Count?”

*The Taurek is available as a PDF on Moodle.*

**Threaded discussion 8 (3%) on Moodle.**

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### Week 13

29 October

No lecture. Tutorials only.

**Critical Essay III (23%) is due 30 October.**

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### Course Resources

#### Books (all required)

These texts are all REQUIRED and can be purchased from the UNSW bookstore:


*It is important that you use these editions, particularly with the Kant (where a translation is at stake). Other editions of Hume or Mill may only prove inconvenient.*

### Articles and book chapters (also required)

J.L. Mackie, *Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong*. Chapter 1, “The Subjectivity of Values”.

Philippa Foot, “Morality as a System of Hypothetical Imperatives”

Christine Korsgaard, “Skepticism about Practical Reason”

John M. Taurek, “Should the Numbers Count?”

*These readings are all available on Moodle as PDFs; bibliographic data is provided there.*

### 12. Course Evaluation and Development

Courses are periodically reviewed and students’ feedback is used to improve them. Feedback is gathered using various means including UNSW’s Course and Teaching Evaluation and Improvement (CATEI) process.

### 13. Student Support

The Learning Centre is available for individual consultation and workshops on academic skills. Find out more by visiting the Centre’s website at:

http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au

### 14. Grievances

All students should be treated fairly in the course of their studies at UNSW. Students who feel they have not been dealt with fairly should, in the first instance, attempt to resolve any issues with their tutor or the course convenors.

If such an approach fails to resolve the matter, the School of Humanities and Languages has an academic member of staff who acts as a Grievance Officer for the School. This staff member is identified on the notice board in the School of Humanities and Languages. Further
information about UNSW grievance procedures is available at: https://student.unsw.edu.au/complaints

15. Other Information

myUNSW

myUNSW is the online access point for UNSW services and information, integrating online services for applicants, commencing and current students and UNSW staff. To visit myUNSW please visit either of the below links:
https://my.unsw.edu.au
https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/ABC.html

OHS

UNSW’s Occupational Health and Safety Policy requires each person to work safely and responsibly, in order to avoid personal injury and to protect the safety of others. For all matters relating to Occupational Health, Safety and environment, see https://www.ohs.unsw.edu.au/

Special Consideration

In cases where illness or other circumstances produce repeated or sustained absence, students should apply for Special Consideration as soon as possible.

The application must be made via Online Services in myUNSW. Log into myUNSW and go to My Student Profile tab > My Student Services channel > Online Services > Special Consideration.

Applications on the grounds of illness must be filled in by a medical practitioner. Further information is available at: https://student.unsw.edu.au/special-consideration

Student Equity and Disabilities Unit

Students who have a disability that requires some adjustment in their learning and teaching environment are encouraged to discuss their study needs with the course convener prior to or at the commencement of the course, or with the Student Equity Officers (Disability) in the Student Equity and Disabilities Unit (9385 4734). Information for students with disabilities is available at: http://www.studentequity.unsw.edu.au/

Issues that can be discussed may include access to materials, signers or note-takers, the provision of services and additional examination and assessment arrangements. Early n