

	<p>School of Arts & Science HUMANITIES DEPARTMENT</p> <p>PHIL 202-001 Contemporary Moral Issues 2006F</p>
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COURSE OUTLINE

The Approved Course Description is available on the web @ _____

Ω Please note: this outline will be electronically stored for five (5) years only.
It is strongly recommended students keep this outline for your records.

1. Instructor Information

(a)	Instructor:	Karen Shirley		
(b)	Office Hours:	Mon.: 1:30 - 2:20; Tues. and Thurs.: 11:30 – 12:20; Wed. and Fri: 12:30 – 1:20		
(c)	Location:	Young 320		
(d)	Phone:	370 3518	Alternative Phone:	383 8164
(e)	Email:			
(f)	Website:			

2. Intended Learning Outcomes

(No changes are to be made to this section, unless the Approved Course Description has been forwarded through EDCO for approval.)

Upon completion of this course the student will be able to:

1. Describe and evaluate classic and modern moral theories.
2. Describe the resolutions to moral dilemmas that are implied by classic and modern moral theories.
3. Assess various arguments for differing positions on contemporary moral issues.
4. Articulate arguments.

3. Required Materials

(a)	Texts	Handout called <i>Philosophy 202</i>
(b)	Other	If your grammar needs work, you may wish to purchase a small style guide with a section on common errors in grammar and usage.

4. Course Content and Schedule

(Can include: class hours, lab hours, out of class requirements and/or dates for quizzes, exams, lectures, labs, seminars, practicums, etc.)

Formatting Assignments and Exams

1. Put the following information on each assignment:
 - a) your student number and your seminar letter (“A” or “B”);
2. Write on both sides of the page, where more than one page is required, and double-space.

Exams

You should always bring your course outline, a dictionary and, if you need one, a style guide.. You should also familiarize yourself with the last page of this course outline for guidance on some errors in English usage that may cost you marks.

Mid-term and Final Exams: The exams are one hour long, closed-book and each is worth 25% of your course mark. You will be asked to answer one of the study questions from one of the two lists below. You will also be asked to make an argument on one of the debate/paper topics. The final is not cumulative. You may rewrite the midterm to improve your mark.

Paper: Topic: Canada's military involvement in Afghanistan is morally defensible. (A good paper on this topic requires substantial factual and historical background knowledge.)The paper is worth 20% of your final grade. Argue for or against the topic statement. Papers must be typed. You may print out your paper on the blank side of used paper. No title pages. The paper should be between 1000 and 1500 words long and, since conciseness is a virtue, do not feel obliged to aim at 1500 words. Grammar and spelling count and 5% per day will be deducted from late papers which don't have a doctor's note attached.

You may rewrite your paper if you do not like the grade you get on it. In order to get a rewrite marked, you must submit both the original paper and the rewrite within a week of getting the mark for the original. If you radically change your paper in the process of rewriting it, some of my comments on the original paper may become redundant. Nevertheless, you must hand in the original paper with the rewrite.

Participation after Debates: Each instance of participation is worth up to 2.5%. Only four instances count and you should indicate to me that you want a comment to count when you are about to make it. You may provide constructive criticism or praise, suggest alternative arguments, comment on the quality of the contributions and so on. Questions will not usually be sufficient for a participation mark, as they do not usually require much thought.

Debates: You are required to participate in a debate which is worth 20% of your final grade.

During the first class, students will be divided into groups of two to four people. One or two people in each group will take either the pro or con position on a chosen topic. Each group will be given a topic and a date on which to debate.

You will be graded on the strength of your arguments, the knowledge you show on the topic and your ability to present your arguments in a way that helps other students understand the relevant issues.

Do not read out your presentation or any other part of the debate. If you do read, you will automatically lose 5 of the 20 marks. You may *occasionally* refer to notes.

Handouts are forbidden.

If you are at a loss as to what arguments have been made on the topic, see the *Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* (a reference book in the library) for a start. See me, if you need to do so, well in advance, for additional advice. Some of the topics require knowledge of factual information. Ensure that you know this information. Once you have an idea of what issues are at stake and of some of the arguments that have been presented on the topic, you should spend time *thinking for yourself* on the topic. What do *you* think the truth of the matter is? Why?

Structure of Debates

Be concise: You don't have time to verbally meander around.

First,

- a) Pro side: *one strong* argument in favour of the claim. (Speak for up to two minutes.)
- b) Con side: objection to the above argument. (Speak for up to thirty seconds.)
- c) Pro side: response to the above objection. (Speak for up to thirty seconds.)
- d) Con side: objection to above response or a second objection to the pro side's original argument. (Speak for up to thirty seconds.)
- e) Pro side: response to the second objection. (Speak for up to thirty seconds.)

Second,

Repeat steps one through five above, beginning with the con side this time.

Third,

Pro and con sides now address points put to them by the class.

SCHEDULE

You are expected to have done the readings *before* the class in which they are covered.

Sept. 6: administration

Sept. 11: Theory: metaethical theories; **Reading:** Judging Other Cultures

1 **St. Q:** characterize whichever of the following positions I pick and present a strong objection to it: objectivism, relativism, subjectivism, emotivism, teleological, deontological, ethical egoism, psychological egoism, utilitarianism, virtue ethics, contractarianism.

Sept. 13: Theory: Virtue ethics; **Reading:** The Ethics of Virtue

St. Q: Same as Jan. 12

Sept. 18: Theory: Kantianism; **Reading:** Good Will, Duty and the Categorical Imperative

2. **St. Q:** Describe Kantianism.

Sept. 20: Theory: Pluralistic Deontology; **Reading:** Prima Facie Duty

3. **St. Q.:** Is Ross right about the duty of one of two men dying together alone?

Sept. 25: Theory: Utilitarianism; **Reading:** Utilitarianism

St. Q: Same as Jan. 12

Jan. 27: Theory: Utilitarianism; **Reading:** 'Issues for Utilitarians' and 'Desert Island Promises'

4. **St. Q:** Explain Sidgwick's view on what the utilitarian should say about an act which is morally right but which may set a bad example to others.

Oct. 2: Theory: Contractarianism; **Reading:** Why Contractarianism?

5. **St. Q:** Explain the last paragraph on page 6 of Gauthier's paper, in words a non-philosophy student could understand.

Oct. 4: Cont'd

Oct. 11: Issue: Euthanasia and suicide; **Reading:** Active and Passive Euthanasia

6. St. Q: Is active euthanasia morally worse than passive euthanasia?

Oct. 16: Issue: Abortion; **Reading:** In Defense of Abortion and Infanticide

7. St. Q: In plain English, describe Tooley's second argument against the modified potentiality principle.

Oct. 18: Cont'd

Oct. 23: Issue: The right to have children; **Reading:** The Right to Have Children

8. St. Q.: Characterize the right to have children.

Oct. 25: Issue: Feeding the Hungry; **Reading:** Famine, Affluence and Morality

9. St. Q.: Describe the *reductio ad absurdum* that can be made against the strong version of Singer's principle.

Oct. 30: Review

Nov.1: MID-TERM EXAM

Nov.6: Issue: Environmentalism; **Reading:** Philosophical Problems for Environmentalism

1. St. Q.: Assess the analogy Sober makes between aesthetic and environmental evaluations.

Nov.8: Cont'd

Nov. 15: Issue: Terrorism; **Reading:** Understanding Terrorism. NOTE: **PAPERS DUE**

2. St. Q.: On what grounds does Fullinwider say that someone might attempt to justify the attack on Neve Shalom Synagogue?

Nov.20: Issue: Legal Punishment; **Reading:** Punishment

3. St. Q.: Characterize the four attempts to justify our legal system of punishment described by Simpson and present an objection to each.

Nov.22: Issue: Capital punishment; **Reading:** Do Murderers Deserve to Die?

4. St. Q.: Nathanson says that "if [the causes] make alternative actions extremely difficult or impossible, a person is not fully blameworthy for his deeds...." Does this view entail determinism?

Nov.27: Issue: Sex; **Reading:** Plain Sex

5. St. Q.: Assess Goldman's account of a person's desire to cuddle a baby.

Nov.29: Issue: Freedom of expression; **Reading:** Of the Liberty of Thought and Discussion

6. St. Q.: Are there any immoral thoughts?

Dec. 4: Issue: Pornographic fantasies; **Reading:** Pornography and Fantasy

St. Q.: Same as above.

Dec. 6: Issue: Affirmative Action; **Reading:** A Defense of Programs of Preferential Treatment.

7. St. Q.: Assess Wasserstrom's tennis court analogy.

Seminar Schedule

Sept. 11/13- exercise to find out what sorts of things your *moral intuition* tells you are moral patients

Sept. 18/20 - overview of the classic ethical theories

Sept. 25/27 - Discussion: People have free will.

Oct.2/4 - Debate: Entities such as corporations and states are moral agents.

Oct.11 - Debate: Terrorism is always immoral.

Oct.16/18 – Debate: One’s skin colour or cultural background should not be taken into consideration when one is being assessed as a possible adopting parent of an infant.

Oct.23/25 Debate: Environmental values, apart from concern for sentient individuals, are really aesthetic values.

Oct.30 Debate: Terrorism is always immoral.

Nov.1 – Question period. No points off for not attending

Nov.6/8 - Debate: Child pornography which uses only computer generated images of children is not immoral to make.

Nov.15 – Debate: It would have been morally acceptable to have given the death penalty to Paul Bernardo, assuming that doing so was legal.

Nov.20/22 –Debate: Long-term sexual fidelity benefits people in a way, or ways, which serial monogamy does not.

Nov.27/29 - Debate: Post-secondary students have a moral right to express their racist, sexist or homophobic views in classrooms.

Dec.4 - Debate: It would have been morally acceptable to have given the death penalty to Paul Bernardo, assuming that doing so was legal.

Note that failing to follow the following rules may cost you marks.

1. Do not use the first or second person on your exams. Here are two examples of the first person: “**We** cannot pass students who cannot use the English language adequately,” and “**I** cannot pass students who cannot use the English language adequately.” Here is an example of the second person: “**You** don’t realise that it is not our fault that we were not taught how to write in high school.” The following are examples of sentences written in the third person. “**People** cannot pass the buck forever.” “**One** will find that a style guide is essential in university.”
2. Do not ask rhetorical questions.
3. Do not use a pronoun which disagrees with the noun it refers to. You should try to use gender neutral language in this course, although failure to do so will not result in a lower grade. At first, this effort may result in a number of cases of pronoun disagreement. In many cases, pronoun disagreement can be avoided through the use of plural nouns. Here is an example of a sentence in which the pronoun disagrees with the noun: “**A philosopher** should not be so picky about English; **they** are not English teachers.” Here is the corrected version: “**Philosophers** should not be so picky about English; **they** are not English teachers.”
4. Do not confuse “its” with “it’s.” Since you are not allowed to use contractions, you should never use “it’s.”
5. Do not confuse “their” with “there.”
6. Do not add “ly” to “first,” second” and so on.
7. Do not forget possessive apostrophes and do not put them in the wrong place.
8. Do not use abbreviations or a contractions.
9. Do not use “e. g.”; use “for example.”
10. Do not use “etc.”; use “and so on.”
11. Do not use “i.e.”; use “that is.” Better yet, say it clearly the first time.
12. Do not use the upper-case where the lower case is standard. 5% will be deducted from a student’s exam if he or she makes this mistake.
13. Do not misspell the following words:
 - despite
 - argument (*one* “e”)
 - philosophy
 - Socrates
 - Descartes

5. Basis of Student Assessment (Weighting)

(Should be linked directly to learning outcomes.)

Mid-term Exam (Closed-book).....	25%
Final (Final exam period - closed-book).....	25%
Paper (Due Nov.15).....	20%
Debate.....	20%
Four verbal comments made on debates (Worth 2.5% each).....	10%

Note: Double-space. Illegible or *hard-to read* exams/papers will have marks deducted. Capitalise traditionally or lose marks. Keep *all* marked assignments in case there is a discrepancy between your record of your marks and my record of your marks.

6. Grading System

(No changes are to be made to this section, unless the Approved Course Description has been forwarded through EDCO for approval.)

Standard Grading System (GPA)

Percentage	Grade	Description	Grade Point Equivalency
95-100	A+		9
90-94	A		8
85-89	A-		7
80-84	B+		6
75-79	B		5
70-74	B-		4
65-69	C+		3
60-64	C		2
50-59	D		1
0-49	F	Minimum level has not been achieved.	0

Temporary Grades

Temporary grades are assigned for specific circumstances and will convert to a final grade according to the grading scheme being used in the course. See Grading Policy at camosun.ca or information on conversion to final grades, and for additional information on student record and transcript notations.

Temporary Grade	Description
I	<i>Incomplete:</i> A temporary grade assigned when the requirements of a course have not yet been completed due to hardship or extenuating circumstances, such as illness or death in the family.
IP	<i>In progress:</i> A temporary grade assigned for courses that are designed to have an anticipated enrollment that extends beyond one term. No more than two IP grades will be assigned for the same course.
CW	<i>Compulsory Withdrawal:</i> A temporary grade assigned by a Dean when an instructor, after documenting the prescriptive strategies applied and consulting with peers, deems that a student is unsafe to self or others and must be removed from the lab, practicum, worksite, or field placement.

Temporary grades are assigned for specific circumstances and will convert to a final grade according to the grading scheme being used in the course. See Grading Policy E-1.5 at camosun.ca for information on conversion to final grades, and for additional information on student record and transcript notations.

7. Recommended Materials or Services to Assist Students to Succeed Throughout the Course

LEARNING SUPPORT AND SERVICES FOR STUDENTS

There are a variety of services available for students to assist them throughout their learning. This information is available in the College calendar, at Student Services or the College web site at camosun.ca.

STUDENT CONDUCT POLICY

There is a Student Conduct Policy **which includes plagiarism**.
It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with the content of this policy. The policy is available in each School Administration Office, at Student Services and on the College web site in the Policy Section.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AS APPROPRIATE OR AS REQUIRED