

THE CONTENT OF THIS DESCRIPTION IS NOT A LEARNING CONTRACT AND THE INSTRUCTOR IS NOT BOUND TO IT. IT IS OFFERED IN GOOD FAITH AND INTENDED AS A HELPFUL GUIDE TO THE STUDENT. THE OFFICIAL COURSE SYLLABUS WILL BE PROVIDED AT THE FIRST CLASS.

TITLE: Introduction to Moral Philosophy

TERM: September – December 2018 [20189]

PROFESSOR: Dr. Sean Mulrooney

REGISTRATION: LIMITED TO _____

UNLIMITED X

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is a historical examination of different philosophical approaches to morality. First, we will look at the foundations of Western morality in Plato and Thomas Aquinas; next at the Enlightenment approaches of Immanuel Kant and John Stuart Mill; and then at Friedrich Nietzsche's attack on all of Western morality. Finally, we will consider the ideas of Emmanuel Levinas and of some Indigenous thinkers to see whether their approaches can survive Nietzsche's scathing critique.

Students will be constantly encouraged to apply the moral theories to their personal experience to evaluate their own moral behaviour and to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the theories.

CLASS OBJECTIVES: By the end of the course, students should be able to

1. State, explain and give examples of four Socratic paradoxes.
2. Define, describe and interrelate the four cardinal virtues and explain their relationship to human happiness.
3. Explain the first principle of Kantian deontology and of Mill's utilitarianism and raise objections to each.
4. Contrast Nietzsche's master morality with slave morality and begin to formulate a personal response to Nietzsche's attack on traditional Western morality.
5. Explain how one's view of metaphysics influences one's view of morality.

PREREQUISITES: None.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Beyond Good and Evil*. Translated by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Vintage Books, 1989.

Pieper, Josef. *The Four Cardinal Virtues*. Translated by Daniel Coogan, Lawrence Lynch and Richard and Clara Winston. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1966.

Plato. *Gorgias*. Translated by Donald Zeyl. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1987.

Other readings will be put up on the course website.

POSSIBLE ASSIGNMENTS/PRESENTATIONS/TESTS:

Class participation		25%
2 3-page papers (due Sept. 27 and Oct. 18)	2 x 12.5% =	25%
1 6-8-page paper (due Nov. 29)		25%
Final oral exam		25%

ABRIDGED BIBLIOGRAPHY:

- DeYoung, Rebecca Konyndyk, Colleen McCluskey and Christina Van Dyke. *Aquinas's Ethics: Metaphysical Foundations, Moral Theory and Theological Context*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2009.
- Johnston, Basil. *Ojibway Tales*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978.
- Kant, Immanuel. *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, revised edition. Translated by Mary Gregor and Jens Timmermann. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.
- Levinas, Emmanuel. *Ethics and Infinity*. Translated by Richard Cohen. Pittsburgh: University of Duquesne Press, 1985.
- Levinas, Emmanuel. *Totality and Infinity*. Translated by Alphonso Lingis. Pittsburgh: University of Duquesne Press, 1969.
- MacIntyre, Alasdair. *A Short History of Ethics*. 2nd ed. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998.
- MacIntyre, Alisdair. *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*. 2nd ed. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984.
- McInerny, Ralph. *Ethica Thomistica: The Moral Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, revised ed. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1997.
- Mill, John Stuart. *Utilitarianism*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2017.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Beyond Good and Evil*. Translated by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Vintage Books, 1989.
- Pieper, Josef. *The Four Cardinal Virtues*. Translated by Daniel Coogan, Lawrence Lynch and Richard and Clara Winston. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1966.
- Plato. *Gorgias*. Translated by Donald Zeyl. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1987.
- Pojman, Louis. *How Should We Live? An Introduction to Ethics*. Belmont: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, 2005.
- Pojman, Louis and James Fieser. *Ethics: Discovering Right and Wrong*, 6th ed. Belmont: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2009.
- Wadell, Paul. *The Primacy of Love: An Introduction to the Ethics of Thomas Aquinas*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1992.