

History of Ethics

Philosophy 140
Winter 2018
TuTh 1:30 – 3:05pm
Cowell Com, 134

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105 Cowell Annex (the annex is just south of Page Smith Library)
Office Hours: Thursdays 11:30am – 1:00pm & by appointment
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Course Description

This course is an introduction to influential thinkers in the history of ethical thought in the Western tradition. We will explore enduring philosophical topics in ethics through the close reading and interpretation of substantial selections from the works of Aristotle, Hume, Mill, and Nietzsche. Some of the questions we will take up include: What makes a human life go well? What are the standards for judging the goodness and badness of persons and their lives? Is human excellence in tension with morality? What makes an action right or wrong? What role does reason play in influencing what we decide to do? What role does passion play in influencing what we decide to do? What is it to be morally responsible for an action or trait? Under what conditions is it right to hold agents morally responsible for their actions or traits? In the latter part of the course we will examine particular psychiatric conditions (autism, addiction, depression, and psychopathy) and consider what, if anything, psychiatric conditions can teach us about empathy, responsibility, free will, identity, illness, and their relations to morality.

Required texts:

Aristotle *Nicomachean Ethics*

- Publisher: Hackett, 2nd edition (January 1, 1999)

Hume *Moral Philosophy*

- Publisher: Hackett (September 2004)

Mill *Utilitarianism*

- Publisher: Hackett, 2nd edition (June 1, 2002)

These texts are available for purchase at **Literary Guillotine** 204 Locust Street, downtown Santa Cruz (831-457-1195); Webpage: <http://www.literaryguillotine.com/>.

Any additional required or supplementary readings will be posted on **Canvas** at least one week prior to the class meeting in which the reading will be discussed.

Schedule of readings and lecture topics is made available to enrolled students via Canvas

For Canvas technical support, please contact the ITS Help Desk:

Online: <http://itrequest.ucsc.edu/>

Phone: (831) 459-HELP (4357)

Email: help@ucsc.edu

In-Person: Kerr Hall Rm. 54, M-F 8am to 5pm

Here is a link to helpful Canvas info for Students:

<https://its.ucsc.edu/canvas/canvas-student.html>

Course Requirements	Weight	Due Date
Reading quizzes	20%	Jan 25; March 1
In-class peer reviews	10%	Feb 8; March 15
Essay 1	35%	Feb 15
Essay 2	35%	March 21

Lecture Attendance

Regular lecture attendance is expected. Attendance will be taken. *Students who miss more than three class meetings will receive a half letter grade reduction for each additional absence.* I take exemplary participation into account when calculating final grades.

Other Course Information

1. **Lateness policy:** Late assignments and make-up quizzes are not permitted except for emergencies/illness, DRC accommodations, or conflicts with religious observance. If you must have an extension on a paper, you must contact me at least 24 hours before the paper is due, and send me the work in progress. This would include an outline and an opening paragraph.
2. **Students with diverse learning needs are welcome in this course!** UC Santa Cruz is committed to creating an academic environment that supports its diverse student body. If you are a student with a disability who requires accommodations to achieve equal access in this course, please submit your "Accommodation Authorization Letter" from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to me privately during my office hours **as soon as possible** in the academic quarter, preferably within 1 week. I also am open to and want to encourage you to discuss with me ways I/we can ensure your full participation in this course. If you have not already done so, I encourage you to learn more about the many services offered by the DRC. You can visit their website (<http://drc.ucsc.edu/index.html>), make an appointment, and meet in-person with a DRC staff member. The phone number is 831-459-2089 or email drc@ucsc.edu.

3. **All course requirements must be fulfilled.** Any student who fails to do so will not pass the course. If you're struggling to fulfill the requirements for any reason, please talk with me during my office hours about your situation.
4. **Academic integrity.** Academic integrity is the cornerstone of a university education. You are responsible for being familiar with UCSC's statement on academic integrity (<https://registrar.ucsc.edu/navigator/section1/academic-integrity.html>) and policies and procedures regarding academic misconduct (https://www.ue.ucsc.edu/academic_misconduct). Proper sourcing and good scholarship are expected. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense and will not be tolerated. If you have any questions about how to avoid plagiarism and ensure the originality of your work, please ask me.

Some helpful tips can be found here: "How Not to Plagiarize":

<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/images/stories/Documents/how-not-to-plagiarize.pdf>

And here: Bill Taylor, "Academic Integrity: A Letter to My Students":

http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/facultyhandbook/taylor_letter.htm