

PHIL 2200: Introduction to Ethics
Peabody Hall rm. 105
Instructor: Brian Howell
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Office Hours: Tues. 3:15-5:00 pm (and by appt.)
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Course Description:

This course will be an examination of human activity. Each of us, as humans, makes choices constantly while engaged in daily life. After all, you did choose to come here today. Was this the right choice? Was it a good choice? Are you a good person for having made the choice? Are you happy as a result of having made the right choice?(Are you beginning to think that you've made a terrible mistake?) Are these even the right questions to ask? As part of a course on ethics, we will be thinking about values and examining the activity of moral problem solving. This undertaking will require that we ask questions similar to the ones above.

Each of the philosophers we will be reading over the next fifteen weeks will be attempting to answer some or all of these questions as well as many others. Their texts approach the subject of ethics in divergent (yet often similar) ways and I hope that this diversity will provide us with adequate material to begin dealing with these issues, not only in the abstract but also in our everyday lives. In addition to struggling with these issues the range of history covered by the readings will hopefully allow us to see how the methods of dealing with these problems have developed over the course of the philosophical enterprise.

This course is designed to provide an introduction to philosophical thinking through a careful reading of some philosophical classics in ethical thought. As an introductory ethics course, there is no expectation that you have any previous acquaintance with either philosophy, generally, or ethics, more specifically. However, you will be expected to do quite a bit of work, both in and out of class. You should come to class prepared, having done all of the assigned reading and given the material some considerable thought. A large part of our classes will be discussion and you will be expected to participate. Though relatively short, these readings will be difficult and will require slow and often multiple readings.

Required Texts: (* Bring the book currently being discussed to class with you.)

Plato, "Apology" in *Five Dialogues* (book)

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (book)

Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals* (book)

Jeremy Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (WebCT)

Karl Marx, *The German Ideology* (WebCT)

Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols* (book)

Grading: Your final grade will be composed in the following way.

Participation	10%
Quizzes and Homework	15%
Exam I	25%
Exam II	25%
Exam III	25%

- The Quizzes may be unannounced. The homework assignments may be assigned reading questions or other various projects that may arise.
- Exams will be in class and will be short essay.

Attendance:

Attendance is mandatory. This means that you must come to every class. If you cannot come for some reason please take note. I will allow two unexcused absences, no questions asked. I intend these primarily for undocumented illness and other such unforeseen circumstances. So please do not use these absences unless absolutely necessary. Beginning with the third unexcused absence points will be deducted from your participation grade. (Two percentage points for each absence) **You will only be permitted to make-up missed work, including exams, if you have a written excuse from the Health Center or Dean’s Office.** You should contact me no later than 24 hours after the exam time to let me know that you need to reschedule. Failure to do so may result in a 0 for the exam.

- The following scale will be used to determine your final grade for the course:

A	94-100	4.0	C+	78-79	2.3
A-	90-93	3.7	C	74-77	2.0
B+	88-89	3.3	C-	70-73	1.7
B	84-87	3.0	D	60-69	1.0
B-	80-83	2.7	F	59 and below	0.0

Some important things to be aware of:

* The expectations for class participation are high. I am looking for both quantity and quality (especially the latter). If you have any concerns about this please let me know. Improvement in this regard over the course of the semester will be considered positively.

** The honor code is in effect in this class and will be enforced. (<http://www.uga.edu/honesty/index.html>) All academic work must meet the standards contained in “A Culture of Honesty.” All students are responsible to inform themselves about those standards before performing any academic work.

*** The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

**** **Laptops and cellphones:** Cellphone use is not permitted during class (this includes texting). Using one will reflect unkindly on your participation grade. If you have a special situation that requires making an exception to this rule please let me know. If you want to use a laptop in class for taking notes you may do so, but you must inform me of your intention to do so at the beginning of the semester (or whenever you begin to use it).

***** If you have any condition, such as a physical, psychiatric/emotional, medical or learning disability, which will make it difficult for you to carry out the work as outlined in this syllabus, or which will require additional absences or extra time for exams please notify me and the Disability Resource Center in the first full week of the course so that we may make appropriate arrangements. All information and documentation of disability is confidential.