

## Phil 13 Introduction to Philosophy: Ethics

Syllabus  
Fall 2024  
MWF 10:0-10:50 am  
Pepper Canyon Hall  
Room 109

Andy Lamey  
alamey@ucsd.edu  
(858) 534-9111(no voicemail)  
Office: RWAC 0491  
Student drop-in hours: MW 11:00-11:50 am

*The best way to contact me is in person or by email (I don't check Canvas messenger).*

<i>Teaching Assistant</i>	<i>Email</i>	<i>Sections</i>
Daniel Cohen	djcohen@ucsd.edu	W 2:00 pm (A04) W 3:00 pm (A05)
Dafna Mark-ben Shabat	dmarkben@ucsd.edu	M 11:00 am (A01) M 12:00 pm (A02)
Subin Park	sup017@ucsd.edu	W 1:00 pm (A03) F 11:00 pm (A06)

### 1. Overview

This class is an introduction to moral philosophy. It is divided into three sections. In the first we will examine an area of moral theory known as metaethics. Metaethical theories attempt to answer general questions about the nature of morality. They include whether morality depends on God's will, whether moral truths are culturally relative and whether morality is reducible to self-interest. Section two addresses normative ethics, or the branch of moral theory that seeks to outline what is right and wrong, and thereby provide standards to guide moral judgements and general conduct. A representative question in this area of moral theory would be whether it is ever permissible to kill one person to save five others. Our final section focuses on applied ethics, or the application of normative theory to a particular issue with the goal of providing here-and-now guidance on what to do. We will examine three contemporary debates in applied ethics as they concern the moral status of animals, our moral obligations to the global poor and the use of moral language as a form of status seeking.

This class assumes no background in philosophy, and all students who put in the necessary work can do well.

### 2. Assessment

A 1,500-word essay due 5:00 pm Tuesday October 22 (20%)

A 1,500-word essay due 5:00 pm Tuesday November 19 (20%)

A 2,000-word essay due 8:00 am Friday December 13 (35%)

In-lecture iclicker participation (10%)

Discussion section (5% attendance + 10% informed participation = 15%)\*

\*More than two unexcused absences will result in a section attendance grade of zero. Informed participation means you come to section having done the readings prepared to discuss them (even if you don't understand everything).

*There is a strong penalty for using ChatGPT to create or partially create written work for this class. Students who are found to have done so will receive a class grade of F (fail).*

### **3. Readings and Schedule**

All readings are available on Canvas.

0. Friday September 27. Intro to Phil 13

No Reading

1. Week of September 30: Cultural Relativism

Nussbaum, Martha. "Judging Other Cultures: The Case of Genital Mutilation." *Sex and Social Justice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999): 118-29.

Rachels, James and Stuart Rachels. "The Challenge of Cultural Relativism." *The Elements of Moral Philosophy, Eighth Edition* (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2010): 15-32.

Prinz, Jesse. "Morality is a Culturally Conditioned Response." *Philosophy Now* 82 (2011): 6-9.

2. Week of October 7: Divine Command Theory

Plato. "Euthyphro." *The Ethical Life: Fundamental Readings in Ethics and Moral Problems, Second Edition*, Russ Shafer-Landau ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012): 63-71.

Adams, Robert Merrihew. "A Modified Divine Command Theory of Ethical Wrongness." *Philosophy of Religion: An Anthology*, Charles Taliaferro and Paul J. Griffiths Eds. (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003): 462-76.

3. Week of October 14: Film: *Crimes and Misdemeanors*

*Crimes and Misdemeanors* (Woody Allen, 1989).

Conard, Mark. "The Indifferent Universe: Woody Allen's *Crimes and Misdemeanors*." *Movies and the Meaning of Life: Philosophers Take on Hollywood*. Kimberly Ann Blessing and Paul Tudico, eds. (Chicago: Open Court: 2005): 113-124.

#### 4. Week of October 21: Egoism

Rand, Ayn. "The Ethics of Emergencies." *The Ethical Life: Fundamental Readings in Ethics and Moral Problems, Second Edition*, Russ Shafer-Landau ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012): 84-91.

#### **First Essay Due: Tuesday October 22 5:00 pm**

Fineberg, Joel. "Psychological Egoism." *Ethics: History, Theory and Contemporary Issues*, Steven Cahn and Peter Markie eds. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997): 557-65.

Optional: Nozick, Robert. "On the Randian Argument." *Socratic Puzzles* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997): 249-64.

#### 5: Week of October 28: Utilitarianism

Mill, John Stuart. "What Utilitarianism Is." *On Liberty and Utilitarianism* (London: David Campbell, 1992): 117-136.

Williams, Bernard. "Persons, Character and Morality." *Moral Luck: Philosophical Papers 1973-1980* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981): 1-19.

#### 6. Week of November 4: Deontology

Kant, Immanuel. "The Good Will and the Categorical Imperative." *The Ethical Life: Fundamental Readings in Ethics and Moral Problems*. Russ Shafer-Landau ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 102-113.

Schwitzgebel, Eric. "Will your driverless car kill you so others may live?" *The Los Angeles Times*, December 4, 2015.

#### 7. Week of November 11: Contractarianism

No Class Monday (Veteran's Day)

Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviathan* (Hammondsworth: Penguin, 1968), selections.

de Waal, Frans. "Primate Social Instincts, Human Morality, and the Rise and Fall of 'Veneer Theory.'" *Primates and Philosophers: How Morality*

*Evolved*, Stephen Macedo and Josiah Ober eds. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006): 1-58.

8. Week of November 18: The Moral Status of Animals

Singer, Peter. *Animal Liberation: Second Edition*. (New York: New York Review of Books, 1990): 1-24.

**Second Essay Due: Tuesday November 19 5:00 pm**

Sher, George. "Why we are Moral Equals." *Equality for Inegalitarians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 74-91.

9. Week of November 25: The Distant Needy

Singer, Peter, "Famine, Affluence and Morality," in *World Hunger and Moral Obligation*, First Edition. W. Aiken and H. LaFollette eds. (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1977), pp. 22-37.

Murphy, Liam, "The Demands of Beneficence," *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 22 (1993): 267-92.

Optional: Singer, Peter. "Heartwarming causes are nice, but let's give to charity with our heads," *The Washington Post*, December 19, 2013.

No Class Friday (Thanksgiving)

10: Week of December 2: Moral Grandstanding

Tosi, Justin, and Brandon Warmke. "Moral Grandstanding." *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 44/3 (2016): 197-217.

Westra, Evan. "Virtue Signalling and Moral Progress." *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 49/2 (2021): 1-23.

**Exam-Week Essay Due: Friday December 13 9:00 am**

#### **4. General Information**

##### *Student Drop-in Hours*

I am happy to meet with students during my drop-in hours, which don't require an appointment. I'm also available by appointment outside of these hours. I'm always happy to discuss any aspect of this course with you.

### *Email Policy*

I am happy to reply to emails sent from UCSD email addresses. I do not reply to emails from non-UCSD addresses. Please note that there are two subjects I do not discuss by email, even if they are sent from a UCSD account. These are:

- a) Requests for information about an exam or other assignment due during exam week that arrive in the 24-hour period immediately preceding the assignment deadline.
- b) Requests to discuss or adjust grades. If you have an issue with your grade please make an appointment to discuss it during my office hour next quarter. If you are graduating let me know and we will make alternative arrangements.

### *Late Work*

For all essays handed in after the due date and without an extension, a five percent penalty applies for the first day of the missed deadline. After that, a subsequent penalty of two percent per day will be applied for the next thirteen calendar days after the due date (including Saturdays and Sundays). No assignment can be accepted after more than 14 calendar days except in exceptional circumstances and in consultation with your professor, and the last possible day to hand in anything is the day the exam essay is due. Assignments that are handed in late without an extension will be graded and returned after those that were completed on time and will not receive comments.

Note that non-essay assignments (e.g. Perusall assignments or online quizzes, if this class has either) are likely to have different lateness penalties. If so these will normally be outlined in the first class.

### *One-time Discretionary Extension*

We are happy to grant each student one essay extension of up to 48 hours without requiring a medical certificate or other documentation. In order to grant such an extension your TA needs to receive your request before noon (San Diego time) on the day the essay in question is due. Email is fine, but please note that UCSD's email servers sometimes go down, and students are advised not to leave their requests to the last minute. Requests received after noon on the due date will require documentation, as will requests for extensions longer than 48 hours. Please note that if you receive an extension your paper may be returned after those that were completed on time.

Note that each student is entitled to only one discretionary essay extension. So if you receive one for your first essay, any extension for the second essay will require documentation.

### *Regrading*

Students unhappy with an essay grade can have it regraded. Students first need to arrange a face-to-face meeting with their grader to discuss the basis for the original grade. Please note that email or other electronic forms of communication are not an acceptable substitute, and no regrading will occur without an initial face-to-face meeting. If the student and grader come to an agreement on the merit of the initial grade, or on an adjusted grade resulting from their meeting, no further student action is required. If the student still prefers a regrade he or she should email me a clean copy of the original essay, without the original grade or comments. The essay will then go to a second grader unfamiliar with the original grade for regrading.

For a regrade to occur I need to receive the clean copy within two weeks of the original grade being released or before the exam-essay deadline, whichever is sooner. **The second grade will be final, even if it is lower than the original.**

There is no option to regrade exam-essays or do assignments for bonus grades.

### *Academic Integrity*

Integrity of scholarship is essential for an academic community. The University expects that both faculty and students will honor this principle and in so doing protect the validity of intellectual work. For students, this means that all academic work will be done by the individual to whom it is assigned, without unauthorized aid of any kind. More information about UCSD's policy on academic integrity is available at <https://academicintegrity.ucsd.edu/process/policy.html>

### *Health and Well-being*

During your time at UCSD, you may experience a range of issues that can negatively impact your learning. These may include physical illness, housing or food insecurity, strained relationships, loss of motivation, depression, anxiety, high levels of stress, alcohol and drug problems, feeling down, interpersonal or sexual violence, or grief.

These concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance and affect your ability to participate in day-to-day activities. If there are issues related to coursework that are a source of particular stress or challenge, please speak with me, Professor Lamey, so that I am able to support you. UC San Diego provides a number of resources to all enrolled students, including:

Counselling and Psychological Services (858-534-3755 | [caps.ucsd.edu](https://caps.ucsd.edu))  
Student Health Services (858-534-3300 | [studenthealth.ucsd.edu](https://studenthealth.ucsd.edu))  
CARE at the Sexual Assault Resource Center (858-534-5793 | [care.ucsd.edu](https://care.ucsd.edu))  
The Hub Basic Needs Center (858-246-2632 | [basicneeds.ucsd.edu](https://basicneeds.ucsd.edu))

We care about you at UC San Diego, and there is always help available.