

Syllabus

Professor

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Office: Hellems 192
Hours: M 3-5, W 12-1, and by appt.

Course Description

This online course offers an introduction to and examination of some important topics in applied ethics – in particular, abortion, animal rights, world poverty, parent licensing, human cloning, prostitution, and overpopulation. In each case, we will consider important positions on the topic and arguments for and against these positions.

The course aims to help you think more carefully and critically about these issues, and to come to more responsible views about them. The issues are not only interesting in their own right, they are important: they are relevant to how you should act in your daily life, what the law should be, how you should vote, which political campaigns you support, and what sort of general moral and political outlook you adopt.

As an honors course, this course will differ from regular versions of PHIL 1200 in the following ways: student presentations are required; we will cover topics in greater depth; there are fewer exams, so that less of class time will be taken up with exams; exams will be more difficult, and more will be expected from papers.

Course Website

The course website, which you should check regularly, can be found here:

<http://spot.colorado.edu/~heathwoo/phil1200/>

Here you will find:

- a copy of this syllabus
- additional course readings
- accounts of what we did in class each day (check this first if you miss a class)
- study guides for exams
- guidance on papers
- other important course information.

Readings

One book is required:

- David Boonin and Graham Oddie (eds.), *What's Wrong?: Applied Ethicists and Their Critics*, Second Edition (Oxford University Press, 2009). ISBN: 0195337808.

It is available at the CU Bookstore. There will be additional required readings, which will be made available on the course website.

Requirements

1. Participation and Attendance (10%, plus). You must attend class regularly, arrive on time, complete each reading assignment on time, take notes on readings and in class, ask questions when you have them, and contribute to class discussions. I will be keeping track of all of this, and it will affect your grade.

Because this is a small honors course, the hope is that it will be more discussion-oriented and less lecture-oriented than most courses. It is thus imperative that everyone attends regularly. For this reason, *you will be allowed only four absences* – “excused” or not (though I hope many of you will have more like zero or one absence). For each absence after that – “excused” or not – your final grade for the course will be brought down one notch (e.g., A- to B+, B to B-, etc.). Do not squander your free absences for frivolous reasons; save them for when you are really sick.

Further elements of the participation requirement involve *technology*. You must have an email account and regular access to the internet, and you must check your colorado.edu email address and the course website frequently. You also must have regular access to a printer in order to print out readings from the website.

Text messaging during class is strictly prohibited. First-time offenders will be asked to stop; additional offenses will result in dismissal from class and losing credit for attending. When you get to class, *turn your cell phone OFF.* If you use a laptop in class, *you may use it only for taking notes.* No web-surfing, emailing, IM-ing, facebooking, etc. If you use a laptop, *disable the wifi.*

2. Two Papers (30%). You are required to write two 4-6 page (1,200-1,800 word) papers (see below for due dates). The purpose of each paper is to defend, by means of rational argument, a clearly-stated philosophical thesis, relating to a topic from the course, that you think is true. Unless you get special permission, papers above 2,000 words will not be accepted. Late papers will be penalized unless you have a legitimate, documented excuse.

Most of you will turn in two totally separate papers, on distinct topics. However, in some cases, I might tell a student that his/her first paper is suitable for expansion. In such a case, the student is permitted (though not required) to submit, as their second paper, a substantially revised and expanded version of their first paper. In such a case, the second paper should be 7-10 pages (2,100-3,000 words).

3. Two Exams (50%). There will be two exams. These will be in-class, short-answer, bluebook exams (see below for dates). To help you prepare, and to give you an idea about the sorts of questions you can expect, a study guide will be made available before each exam. Furthermore, the class meeting before the exam will be devoted to reviewing the study guide. But you must come prepared for this review session by having written answers to questions on the study guide. To encourage you to come

prepared, I will employ the “Socratic method” of calling on students randomly, and asking them questions.

During our assigned final exam slot (see below for date and time), instead of having a final exam, you will have the opportunity to take one of the earlier exams over again. The take-over exam won't necessarily have the same questions as the original exam, but it will cover the same material (and the same study guide will apply). If you don't improve your score on the take-over exam, this won't hurt you – I will keep your original score. Doing a take-over exam is optional.

If you miss an exam during the semester, you will be permitted to take a make-up exam only if you have a legitimate, documented excuse (e.g., non-trivial illness, death in the family, religious obligation). Otherwise, you must use the take-over day to make-up your exam. If you must miss an exam, you need to let me know *in advance*.

4. One Presentation (10%). Each student will do a roughly 20 minute presentation towards the end of the semester, ideally on the topic of his/her second paper. The goal is to explain the thesis and the main argument(s) of the paper, while first providing whatever background is necessary to do that. These presentations are to help you get going on this paper, to help you clarify your project, to enable you to receive feedback on it from the class, and to teach us about your topic. In order to allow time for questions, suggestions, and discussion, you should prepare about 11-13 minutes worth of material for your roughly 20 minute presentation.

Grading

Your final grade for the course will be calculated as follows. I have also included space for you to record the actual scores that you receive, as you receive them:

			your scores:
Participation	10%	20 points	_____
First Exam	25%	50 points	_____
First Paper	15%	30 points	_____
Second Exam	25%	50 points	_____
Second Paper	15%	30 points	_____
Presentation	10%	20 points	_____

TOTAL:	100%	200 points	_____

Remember that you can take over one of the two exams (during finals week) to improve your score on it.

We will use a standard “non-curved” grading scale, as follows:

185-200 A	175-179 B+	155-159 C+	135-139 D+	0-119 F
180-184 A-	165-174 B	145-154 C	120-134 D	
	160-164 B-	140-144 C-		

A Possible Course Schedule (subject to change)

Readings are from our book, Boonin and Oddie's *What's Wrong?*, unless 'web' is indicated.

Date Readings, Assignments, Videos, etc. Due

[1] M 1/10	(first day stuff)
W 1/12	Boonin and Oddie, "Introduction," §§1, 2, 3, 5 (pp. 1-9, 24-30)
F 1/14	Marquis, "Why Abortion is Immoral," web .
[2] M 1/17	NO CLASS - MLK DAY
W 1/19	Paske, "Abortion and the Neo-Natal Right to Life," pp. 70-76.
F 1/21	(no new readings)
[3] M 1/24	Manninen, "The Metaphysical Foundations of Reproductive Ethics," web .
W 1/26	(no new readings)
F 1/28	Thomson, "A Defense of Abortion," pp. 89-98.
[4] M 1/31	Boonin and Oddie, §4.1 (pp. 9-12) from their "Introduction."
W 2/2	Baruch Brody, "Thomson on Abortion," pp. 99-101.
F 2/4	Beckwith, "Arguments from Bodily Rights," pp. 102-107.
[5] M 2/7	Norcross, "Puppies, Pigs, and People," §§ 1-3 (pp. 229-237), web . VIDEO: "Glass Walls," web . Press release from the American Dietetic Association (2009), web .
W 2/9	Cohen, "The Case for the Use of Animals in ... Research," web . (maybe) Norcross, "Puppies, Pigs, and People," the rest.
F 2/11	(no new readings)
[6] M 2/14	Singer, "Famine, Affluence, and Morality," pp. 135-142. The World Bank, "Understanding, measuring and overcoming poverty," web . Shah, "Poverty Facts and Stats," web .
W 2/16	Singer, "Singer Solution to World Poverty," <i>NY Times Magazine</i> (1999) web .
F 2/18	Arthur, "World Hunger and Moral Obligation," pp. 142-145.
[7] M 2/21	Slote, "Famine, Affluence, and Empathy," pp. 146-154.
W 2/23	REVIEW FOR MIDTERM
F 2/25	FIRST EXAM
[8] M 2/28	Martinich, <i>Philosophical Writing</i> (excerpt)
W 3/2	Boonin and Oddie, "Inference to the Best Explanation," pp. 16-21. LaFollette, "Licensing Parents," pp. 314-322.
F 3/4	Thompson Child & Family Focus, "Foster Parent Licensing," web . Colorado Dept. of Human Services, "Adoption: Process & Qualifications" web .
[9] M 3/7	Frisch, "On Licentious Licensing," pp. 323-327. Lemieux, "Parent Licensing," pp. 327-329. FIRST PAPER DUE

W 3/9	VIDEO: "Genetics: Cloning," web . Bonsor and Conger, "How Human Cloning Will Work," web . Council on Bioethics, "Human Cloning and Human Dignity," pp. 477-491.
F 3/11	VIDEO: Kagan on the Ethics of Human Cloning. NOTES DUE ON THIS.
[10] M 3/14	Elliott, "Uniqueness, Individuality, and Human Cloning," pp. 491-493. Hershenov, "An Argument for Limited Human Cloning," pp. 493-496.
W 3/16	Ericsson, "Charges Against Prostitution," pp. 235-46.
F 3/18	Pateman, "Defending Prostitution," pp. 247-49. Shrage, "Should Feminists Oppose Prostitution?" pp. 250-252.
S P R I N G B R E A K	
[11] M 3/28	Parfit, "Overpopulation and the Quality of Life," pp. 351-57.
W 3/30	Hurka, "Value and Population Size," p. 357.
F 4/1	Locke, "The Parfit Population Problem," p. 358.
[12] M 4/4	REVIEW FOR SECOND EXAM
W 4/6	SECOND EXAM
F 4/8	Return/review Second Exam, One Student Presentation
[13] M 4/11	Two Student Presentations
W 4/13	Two Student Presentations
F 4/15	Two Student Presentations
[14] M 4/18	Two Student Presentations
W 4/20	Two Student Presentations
F 4/22	NO CLASS
[15] M 4/25	Two Student Presentations
W 4/27	Two Student Presentations
F 4/29	SECOND PAPER DUE, FCQ's, REVIEW FOR TAKE-OVER EXAM.
[Finals] W 5/4	OPTIONAL TAKE-OVER EXAM, 1:30 p.m.

Class Mates

So that you will have someone from whom to get the notes (and any other pertinent info) should you miss class, introduce yourself to three classmates and write their information here:

Name:

Email:

Phone:

Issues, Complaints, etc.

If something is bothering you about the course, the readings, your classmates, the classroom environment, me, or anything related to our course, please do not hesitate to discuss the problem with me. If you don't feel like I am dealing with it to your satisfaction, please bring your problem to the attention of our department chair, Graeme Forbes (graeme.forbes@colorado.edu), and/or our director of undergraduate studies.

Academic Integrity

All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-725-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Other information on the Honor Code can be found at www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html and at www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode.

Anyone caught violating the academic integrity policy (in any way) will automatically receive an F for this course, and may be subject to expulsion from the university.

Disability Services

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact: 303-492-8671, Willard 322, and www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices.

Religious Observances

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to reasonably and fairly deal with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments, or required attendance. Please let me know well in advance about any such conflicts, so we can resolve them. Your class participation grade will not be negatively affected due to such conflicts. For more information about the university's policies on these matters, see www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html.

Classroom Behavior

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. For more information about the university's policies on these matters, see colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html and colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code.

Discrimination and Harassment

The University of Colorado at Boulder policy on Discrimination and Harassment, the University of Colorado policy on Sexual Harassment and the University of Colorado policy on Amorous Relationships apply to all students, staff and faculty. Any student, staff or faculty member who believes s/he has been the subject of discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH, the above referenced policies, and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at www.colorado.edu/odh.