

Huron Brief Course Outlines

Fall/Winter 2023-2024

Course Title: Right and Wrong

Course Number and Section

PHILOSOPHY

1250F - 550

Instructor Name(s): David Conter

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Disclaimer: Information in the brief course outline is subject to change. The syllabus posted on OWL is the official and authoritative source of information for the course.

Course Description:

An introductory course about moral philosophy, presupposing no prior knowledge of either morals or philosophy. A variety of issues will be raised, including the following: the relation between morality and religion in the contemporary world and in the past; moral relativism (the view that different groups have different moral opinions and there is no choosing among these opinions); moral egoism (one should only do what is in one's own best interests); the connection between evolutionary theory and morality; the view that no one is responsible for anything, and (or because) what we do is always caused by forces or factors outside of our control; the idea that our actions ought to be governed by strictly universal rules; the notion that our actions are always to be chosen because they produce the best or most pleasurable consequences; and, finally, the relations between morality and law.

Learning Outcomes:

Students will learn to assess the seriousness of the philosophical issues that arise in connection with these views about morality.

Students will develop the skills to make comparative assessments of the various treatments of these problems offered by a variety of philosophers working in the Western tradition.

Students should gain a basic knowledge of many of the central themes that have emerged in specialized and informed thinking about ethical issues.

Students will also learn to apply ethical ideals and principles to specific fact scenarios which will be drawn from a number of news sources – mainly The New York Times, The Globe and Mail, and The Economist.

Textbooks and Course Materials:

Simon Blackburn, Being Good: A Short Introduction to Ethics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001)

Methods of Evaluation:

Assignment	Due Date mm/dd/yy	Weight - %
First 2-hour in-class open textbook essay test	10/06/2023	33%

Assignment	Due Date mm/dd/yy	Weight - %
Second 2-hour in-class open textbook essay test	11/10/2023	33%
2-hour textbook essay final exam	Dec. TBD	34%

In solidarity with the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Chonnonton peoples on whose traditional treaty and unceded territories this course is shared.