

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

VALUES 511: ETHICS MATTERS: AN EXPLORATION OF SOME MORAL QUALITIES

This course aims to introduce graduate and professional students from a wide range of backgrounds to some common moral questions and to provide a basic philosophical framework for thinking about related issues that arise within their own disciplines or fields. It is assumed that the perspectives brought from different fields will prove mutually illuminating for all, and that the experience provided by this course in discussing and analyzing the moral problems and questions that arise within their own areas of expertise with those who come to the table with different interests and expertise will make each better able to articulate her own questions and positions and to do so in a more nuanced, and morally satisfying, way.

BOOKS

Cheshire Calhoun (ed.), **Setting the Moral Compass**, Oxford University Press, 2004
Avishai Margalit, **The Decent Society**, Harvard University Press, 1996.
Sarah Lawrence-Lightfoot, **Respect: An Exploration**. Perseus Books Group, 2000.

The other readings for the course are either available through electronic journals or will be provided in a course reader.

ASSESSMENT

Students will be asked to bring to class a short (2-3 page) response to some issue raised by that week's reading assignments seven times (of the student's choosing) during the term. (25%)
Small groups (2-4 persons) will be asked to make a presentation to the class. (15%)
Each student will write a final paper and submit a draft of that paper for approval and comment three weeks prior to the end of the term. (60%)

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND TOPICS

Week One: The Relationship Between Theory and Practice

Is there any point to thinking about moral issues? What is the point of thinking about morality? Is there such a thing as a moral expert?

Cheshire Calhoun, "Moral Failure." In **On Feminist Ethics and Politics**, edited by Claudia Card. 1999.

Karen Jones, "Second-Hand Moral Knowledge." *The Journal of Philosophy* 96:2 (1999), p. 55-78.

Michele Moody-Adams, "The Idea of Moral Progress." In **Setting the Moral Compass**, edited by Cheshire Calhoun, p. 256-272 Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Margaret Urban Walker, "Moral Understandings: Alternative 'Epistemology' for a Feminist Ethics." In **Justice and Care: Essential Readings in Feminist Ethics**, edited by Virginia Held. Westview Press, 1995.

Susan Wolf, "Moral Saints." *The Journal of Philosophy* (1982) p. 419-439.

Week Two: Moral Status

Whom ought we to be thinking about when we think about treating others well? What makes someone, or something, deserving of moral consideration?

David DeGrazia, "Taking Animals Seriously: Mental Life and Moral Status." *Philosophical Quarterly* 49:195 (1999).

Peter Singer, "All Animals are Equal." In **Animal Liberation**. New York: New York Review, 1975.

Bonnie Steinbock, "Disability, Prenatal Testing, and Selective Abortion." In **Prenatal Testing and Disability Rights**, edited by Adrienne Asch and Erik Parens, p. 108-123. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2000.

Mary Anne Warren, "Moral Status." In **A Companion to Applied Ethics**, edited by Frey and Wellman. Blackwell Publishing, 2003.

Weeks Three: Autonomy

We talk about it, and want to protect it for ourselves and respect it in others, but what is it, and why should we care about it?

Gerald Dworkin, selections from **The Theory and Practice of Autonomy**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

Marilyn Friedman, "Autonomy, Social Disruption and Women." In **Relational Autonomy: Feminist Perspectives on Autonomy, Agency, and the Social Self**, edited by MacKenzie and Stoljar. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Catriona MacKenzie and Natalie Stoljar, "Introduction: Autonomy Refigured." In **Relational Autonomy: Feminist Perspectives on Autonomy, Agency, and the Social Self**, edited by MacKenzie and Stoljar. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Susan Sherwin, "A Relational Approach to Autonomy in Health Care." In **The Politics of Women's Health: Exploring Agency and Autonomy in Health Care**. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998.

Weeks Four and Five: Respect

The notion of autonomy is often tied to that of respect. Here again we need to ask what it is and why it's valued. We also, of course, need to ask how it is shown to others and realized in ourselves.

Robin Dillon, "Kant on Arrogance and Self-Respect." In **Setting the Moral Compass**, edited by Cheshire Calhoun, p. 191-216. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Thomas Hill, Jr., selections from **Respect, Pluralism and Justice**. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Thomas Hill, Jr., selections from **Autonomy and Self-Respect**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Sarah Lawrence-Lightfoot, **Respect: An Exploration**. Perseus Books Group, 2000.

Avishai Margalit, "The Concept of Humiliation." In **The Decent Society**, translated by Naomi Goldblum. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996.

Avishai Margalit, "The Grounds of Respect." In **The Decent Society**, translated by Naomi Goldblum. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996.

Laurence Thomas, "Self-Respect, Fairness and Living Morally." In **A Companion to African American Philosophy**, edited Lott. Blackwell, 2003.

Week Six: Integrity

Both self-respect and respect for others seems closely tied to integrity. Are they?

Cheshire Calhoun, "Standing for Something." *Journal of Social Philosophy* 92:5 (1995), p. 235-260.

James Childress, "Appeals to Conscience." *Ethics* 90:4 (1979).

Carolyn McLeod, "Integrity and Self-Protection." *Journal of Social Philosophy* 35:2 (2004), p. 216-232.

Lynn McFall, "Integrity". *Ethics* 98:1 (1987).

Bernard Williams, "The Structure of Consequentialism." In **Utilitarianism, For and Against**, edited by Smart and Williams. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973.

Week Seven: Trust

How are trust and respect related? Can we trust and respect others without relinquishing our own autonomy?

Annette Baier, "Demoralization, Trust, and the Virtues." In **Setting the Moral Compass**, edited by Cheshire Calhoun, p. 176-190. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Annette Baier, "Trust and Anti-Trust." *Ethics* 96:2 (1986).

Marilyn Friedman, "Diversity, Trust and Moral Understanding." In **Setting the Moral Compass**, edited by Cheshire Calhoun, p. 217-232. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Onora O'Neill, selections from **Autonomy and Trust in Bio-Ethics**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Week Eight: Privacy

Does appropriate moral respect for others require that their privacy also be respected? And if so, what would that mean in practice?

Anita Allen, selections from **Why Privacy Isn't Everything: Feminist Reflections on Personal Accountability**. Rowman and Littlefield, 2003.

Vilhjalmur Arnason, "Coding and Consent: Moral Challenges of the Database Project in Iceland." *Bioethics* 19:1 (2005)

Sissela Bok, selections from **Secrecy: On the Ethics of Concealment and Revelation**. Vintage, 1989.

Iris Marion Young, "A Room of One's Own: Old Age, Extended Care, and Privacy." In **Privacies: Philosophical Evaluations**, edited by Rössler and Beate. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004.

Week Nine: Responsibility

We've been talking about how we should treat each other and conceive of ourselves, but are morally questionable behaviors or attitudes always blameworthy?

Claudia Card, "Gender and Moral Luck." In **Identity, Character, and Morality: Essays in Moral Psychology**, edited by Flanagan and Rorty, p. 199-218. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1997.

Philippa Foot, selections from **Moral Dilemmas and Other Topics in Moral Philosophy**. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

James Rachels, "Euthanasia, Killing and Letting Die." In **Ethical Issues Relating to Life and Death**, edited by Ladd. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979.

Bernard Williams, "Moral Luck." In **Moral Luck: Philosophical Papers 1973-1980**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

Susan Wolf, "The Moral of Moral Luck." In **Setting the Moral Compass**, edited by Cheshire Calhoun, p. 113-127. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Week Ten: Forgiveness

Even when behavior or attitude is blameworthy, should we ever forgive? Can forgiveness be compatible with maintaining moral standards that seem necessary for our living together in civilized and mutually advantageous ways?

Cheshire Calhoun, "Changing One's Heart." *Ethics* 103:1 (1992), p. 76-96.

Laurence Thomas, "Forgiving the Unforgivable." In **Moral Philosophy and the Holocaust**, edited by Garrard. Ashgate, 2003.

Jeffrie E. Murphy, selections from **Getting Even: Forgiveness and Its Limits**. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005

Norvin Richards, "Forgiveness." *Ethics* 99:1 (1988).