

**PHI 3641: Ethics and Innovation, Sections (MW)
Sections: 11G5, 11G6, 11GG, 11G7, 11GH, 11H5
Spring 2021**

Instructor: Dr. Elizabeth Palmer

eanpalmer@ufl.edu

Virtual Office hours: M 10:15-11:15, T 11:15-12:15, and by appointment

See the 'Office Hours' section below for access information

Lectures: MW, 2nd period, 8:30-9:20

In person lecture in LIT 0121 for sections 11G5, 11G6, and 11GG

Remote lecture via Zoom for sections 11G7, 11GH, 11H5:

Join URL:

<https://ufl.zoom.us/j/95034992171?pwd=cG5kSWNEQ3J3Z2p1STZwSGs5RERPQT09>

Meeting ID: 950 3499 2171

Passcode: 0v056m

Teaching assistant: Jake Haun

jake.haun@ufl.edu

Virtual Office hours (accessible via Canvas course calendar): T 2-4, F 2-3, and by appointment

All Discussion Sections (including those sections meeting in person for lecture) will be conducted remotely via Zoom:

Sections 11G5 (17866) and 11H5 (28227): F period 3

Join URL:

<https://ufl.zoom.us/j/92493999250?pwd=WjVQanRKNUtFVXd2bVpaT3lWakFvUT09>

Meeting ID: 924 9399 9250

Passcode: 935025

Sections 11G6 (17867) and 11G7 (28230): F period 4

Join URL:

<https://ufl.zoom.us/j/99480887598?pwd=WE5UVVXd1UXJSMVks5Z3R2TldCNzhVdz09>

Meeting ID: 994 8088 7598

Passcode: 040120

Sections 11GG (17868) and 11GH (28232): F period 6

Join URL:

<https://ufl.zoom.us/j/96750926154?pwd=YkppWUZxTkQvUnk1VllqRk1aRHdqQT09>

Meeting ID: 967 5092 6154

Passcode: 250140

Course Description and Objectives

This course is designed to familiarize students with some of the major ethical theories, with ethical issues surrounding innovation, and with some of the psychological obstacles to acting ethically. We will survey the main ethical theories – utilitarianism, deontological ethics, and virtue ethics – to provide a theoretical framework for our discussion of some of the different ethical issues surrounding innovations in fields such as bioengineering and artificial intelligence. Finally, we will consider how psychological factors inhibit ethical behavior, with an eye towards identifying strategies to combat them.

REQUIREMENTS SATISFIED BY SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THE COURSE

Students in this course can earn 4000 words towards the UF Writing Requirement (WR). The Writing Requirement (WR) ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. Course grades have two components. To receive writing requirement credit, a student must receive C or higher for the final course grade as well as a C or higher on the writing component of the course.

PHI 3641 satisfies the Ethics requirement for the Innovation Minor, serves as an elective for the Philosophy major or minor, and is a General Education – Humanities (H).

GENERAL EDUCATION OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course is a Humanities (H) subject area course in the UF General Education Program. Humanities courses provide instruction in the history, key themes, principles, terminology, and theory or methodologies used within a humanities discipline or the humanities in general. Students will learn to identify and to analyze the key elements, biases and influences that shape thought. These courses emphasize clear and effective analysis and approach issues and problems from multiple perspectives. A minimum grade of C is required for general education credit.

PHI 3641 accomplishes these goals by familiarizing students with key ethical theories, such as utilitarianism, deontological ethics, and virtue ethics as well as objections to them. With these theories as their framework, students will consider technological innovations and become adept at identifying the aspects of such innovations that raise ethical issues. We will consider and critically evaluate arguments for and against certain practices, such as germ-line engineering, through an ethical lens. Finally, PHI 3641 delves into some of the psychological and social pressures that inhibit ethical behavior with an eye towards identifying strategies for combatting them and promoting ethical behavior.

The General Education Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's) divide into three areas: **CONTENT** – students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories and methodologies used within the discipline; **COMMUNICATION** – students communicate knowledge, ideas and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the discipline; and **CRITICAL THINKING** – students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline-specific methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems.

Students will satisfy the **CONTENT** SLO by demonstrating a mastery of key ethical theories and some of their difficulties, the ability to identify features of a new technology or innovation likely to give rise to ethical issues, and the ability to identify and to anticipate inhibitors of ethical behavior. The **COMMUNICATION** SLO will be achieved by three skill developing short writing assignments (100-300 words each), three lengthier papers (1250-1500 words each), regular quizzes, and participation in class. Students will be required to explain various ethical theories and to evaluate them and then to use these theories to evaluate the ethical appropriateness of some innovative practices. Students will also demonstrate achievement of the **CRITICAL THINKING** SLO through the short writing assignments and papers, which will be on assigned topics designed to test students' critical thinking abilities. Writing assignments and papers will be graded on the bases of a student's comprehension of the relevant issues, development and cogent defense of her or his position, clarity of expression, and mechanics.

In short, at the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Explain and evaluate traditional ethical theories
- Apply those theories to ethical questions and issues, especially those concerning innovations

- Analyze, evaluate, construct, and present persuasive arguments for particular ethical positions
- Identify and describe some inhibitors to ethical behavior

Required Texts

Shafer-Landau, Russ. 2020. *The Fundamentals of Ethics*, 5th edition. (Oxford: Oxford University Press). ISBN: 9780190058333

Various articles on Canvas, accessible in the ‘Readings’ folder, located in the ‘Files’ folder. Websites where some of these can be found also appear in the syllabus, under the ‘Meetings and Readings’ section. . *I highly recommend that you print these out, annotate them, and have them available during class.*

Recommended texts and resources

On writing well generally: Strunk, William and E.B. White. *The Elements of Style*, 4th edition. (Pearson, 1999).

The full text can be found here:

<https://faculty.washington.edu/heagerty/Courses/b572/public/StrunkWhite.pdf>

On writing a philosophy paper:

Pryor, Jim. “A Brief Guide to Writing a Philosophy paper” (2008).

The pdf is available in the ‘Writing Information’ folder under ‘Files’ on Canvas, but it can also be found here:

http://philosophy.fas.harvard.edu/files/phildept/files/brief_guide_to_writing_philosophy_paper.pdf

University Writing Program:

The writing service offers one-on-one service with a tutor who will help students learn to become better writers and editors. It is free for all current UF students. Please see <https://writing.ufl.edu> for more information.

Evaluation

- 3 Skill Developing Short Writing Assignments (SDSWAs), each 100-300 words long and worth 5 points, totaling 15% of the course grade. These are short assignments where you’ll refine some the writing skills that you’ll be putting to use in the longer Argumentative Essays. Specifically and respectively, the tasks will be to explain a position, to construct an argument, and to anticipate and respond to a potential objection.
 - Due dates: Monday, January 25th
 Thursday, February 4th ***This assignment is due on a non-class day***
 Monday, February 15th

- 3 Argumentative Essays (AEs), each 1250-1500 words long and worth 25 points, totaling 75% of the course grade. These will be longer argumentative essays where you will offer more extended analysis of an ethical theory or a potential innovative practice, which will involve defending a position of your own AND responding to some potential objections.
 - Due dates: Monday, March 1st
Monday, March 15th
Wednesday, April 14th
- Various timed quizzes totaling 10% of your final course grade. You can expect to have approximately one of these per reading. These will be given via Canvas and will cover the assigned reading for a given day and/or information from a related lecture. When a quiz is assigned, you'll be notified via a Canvas announcement, and you'll have at least 18 hours from the time the announcement is sent to take the quiz before it closes on Canvas and is no longer available. Your two lowest quiz grades will be dropped.
 - Given that these quizzes are timed, you should read through and review all relevant material prior to taking the quizzes. You simply will not have time to think through and answer all the questions, if you're also having to search for the answers in the readings or your notes. *I recommend in the strongest possible terms, then, that you treat these as closed book/notes quizzes.*

Further things to note:

- (1) Course grades have two components. To receive writing requirement credit, a student must receive a C or higher for the final course grade as well as a C or higher on the writing component of the course. The writing component is determined by your scores on clarity and mechanics for all writing assignments.
- (2) We will evaluate and provide feedback on all written assignments with respect to comprehension, argument, grammar, punctuation, clarity, coherence, and organization.
- (3) You will frequently be assigned a new writing assignment very soon after turning another one in. Don't let this stress you out. The point is to provide you as much time as possible to work on the assignments and to better balance your other commitments.
- (4) No skill development short writing assignment (SDSWA) or argumentative essay (AE) will be accepted after its due date without penalty except by 24-hour prior arrangement with the instructor, Dr. Palmer, or a **documented** university approved excuse.

UF's policy: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/1516/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

The penalty for late writing assignments is as follows: points equaling a full letter grade deduction will be subtracted from your grade *for each day the assignment is late*. Lesser deductions will apply to assignments turned in less than 24 hours after the due date. *No writing assignment will be accepted 4 days after the due date.*

- (5) Hopefully, you won't miss any quizzes, but, if you do, the first two missed quizzes cannot be made up, even if you have a documented excuse. Instead, they'll count towards your allotted two drops.

Should you miss more than two quizzes, and you provide appropriate documentation of a University approved excuse for any missed quiz after the first two, you may make it up. However, such arrangements must be made within 24 hours of the missed quiz. See

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx> for what the university considers acceptable excuses.

- (6) All papers will be submitted through Canvas and subject to anti-plagiarism detection via Turnitin software. Furthermore, we've discovered numerous cases of plagiarism that Turnitin has missed, including cases where students have modified papers found on sites such as Course Hero, and turned them in as their own. Any suspected act of academic dishonesty is reported to the Dean's Office, which prevents students from dropping courses in cases of suspected academic dishonesty. **Plagiarism or cheating on any assignment will automatically result in a 0 for the assignment and possibly a grade of "E" for the course. If you have any questions about how to cite properly, don't hesitate to get in touch.** We're happy to assist you.
- (7) We strongly recommend that you **not** use outside sources for any of the writing assignments. This is for four reasons.
- Grades for writing assignments have a Comprehension component that requires you to show proficiency with the course material, specifically the texts assigned for class and the information conveyed in lecture and discussion. Students who rely on outside sources frequently fail to properly focus on this information, and their grades suffer as a result.
 - Some students are tempted to use outside sources when they're having difficulty understanding the material. However, if you find yourself in this situation, outside sources frequently don't help. This is because many of these sources are professional and are pitched at a different audience. So you may find them more confusing than helpful, which will affect your writing. Although I don't want to dissuade you from looking at other sources for your edification, please be careful and don't hesitate to discuss the material or your ideas with us.
 - Although there are many reputable sources, many are disreputable as well, especially online sources. It can be difficult to tell which sources are reliable and which are not without already being very familiar with the material.
 - There is a higher risk of inadvertently plagiarizing. When writing, it's good to be focused on the ideas and lines of argument. But it's also easy to lose track of the sources of your information and to fail to cite when you should. If this happens with class material, then we know where the information is coming from, and there's usually little concern that you're representing someone else's work as your own. However, *this is not the case with outside sources*. **If you fail to identify an outside source, then, whether you intend to or not, you are representing someone else's work as your own, and that's plagiarism.** See the section of the syllabus on Academic Dishonesty for more on this.

The table below provides the grading scale for this course as well as the corresponding grade values. For more on UF's grading policy, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>.

Grade Scale	Grade Value
100-93 = A	A = 4.0
92-90 = A-	A- = 3.67
89-86 = B+	B+ = 3.33
85-82 = B	B = 3.00
81-79 = B-	B- = 2.67

78-76 = C+	C+ = 2.33
75-72 = C	C = 2.00
71-69 = C-	C- = 1.67
68-66 = D+	D+ = 1.33
65-62 = D	D = 1.00
61-60 = D-	D- = 0.67
59-0 = E	E = 0.00

Office Hours

Office hours are times during which we make ourselves available to you so you can ask questions, discuss material, and so on. *You do not need special appointments to show up for office hours!* During those times, we will be available virtually via Zoom conferences, which can be accessed through our course's Canvas site. Unfortunately, due to Covid, we cannot offer in person office hours this semester. Please don't let that dissuade you from attending though. We're here to help!

Office hours will be offered in different formats. Jake uses the waiting room function, but I (Dr. Palmer) do not, instead preferring to treat office hours as a venue for informal discussion where students benefit from hearing one another's questions and receive feedback on them. Given this is so, it's best to make an appointment if you want to ensure that we have an opportunity to speak privately. (Note: Students have indicated that they like the more open format I'm using. However, if most of you prefer that I use the waiting room function, I'm happy to do so; I'm flexible and want to do whatever works best for you, so just let me know...)

Dr. Palmer's Virtual Office hours: M 10:15-11:15, T 11:15-12:15, and by appointment**

Mondays' OH info:

Join URL:

<https://ufl.zoom.us/j/94757570022?pwd=U1BMMVZkWTZTTGVtYzFLWHRnTGtGQT09>

Meeting ID: 947 5757 0022

Passcode: 0b844k

Tuesdays' OH info:

Join URL:

<https://ufl.zoom.us/j/99286006972?pwd=Nlk5dUIVU2x6dUtiNXcrbXJiZkprUT09>

Meeting ID: 992 8600 6972

Passcode: 9i695t

****Mondays' OH appear on the Canvas calendar, but Tuesdays' do not. You'll have to use the link provided, which will also be added to the front page for the course on Canvas.**

Jake's office hours (T 2-4 and F 2-3) are accessible via the Canvas course calendar, but here's the Zoom information as well.

Jake's Tuesday OH info:

Join URL:

<https://ufl.zoom.us/j/93214841162?pwd=QUphY2NkaWsrS2VBMzV0YmtlVTR1UT09>

Meeting ID: 932 1484 1162

Passcode: 252105

Jake's Friday OH info:

Join URL:

<https://ufl.zoom.us/j/92535108920?pwd=ajNkSk9CTXIUSzBHOVM4NTgzTFptdz09>

Meeting ID: 925 3510 8920

Passcode: 4d151i

Course Policies

Attendance: This is a synchronous course; as such, classes will not be recorded. Accordingly, regular attendance then is very important. Failing to attend regularly results in missing explanations and discussions about the material and lost opportunities to ask questions, to check your understanding, and to try out potential lines of objections and responses. Students who miss out on these inevitably receive lower grades – often significantly lower – than their classmates who attend regularly.

We keep track of attendance. For those signed up for in person sections, I'll take attendance at the beginning of class. For those attending via Zoom, please mark your presence in each class by writing 'H' in the chat box.

I also request that you have your cameras on during our zoom classes. It's easier to engage if you can see people when you're talking to them. Equally, being able to see you helps me tell when you're confused, interested, or bored, which allows me to better respond to you.

Electronic Devices: For your own sake, during class, I ask that you keep all non-class related windows minimized, not look at email, or use your phones for anything that is not class related. This will help you pay better attention, which will improve your class performance.

Tardiness: As a courtesy to your classmates and me, please be on time. Should you be late, you're still welcome and encouraged to attend. However, if tardiness becomes problematic or habitual, I reserve the right to institute a waiting room for our classes and to let people in only when convenient.

Online Course Evaluation: Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

Academic Dishonesty

All students must conform to the policies of UF's honor code regarding cheating, plagiarism, and the use of copyrighted materials (see: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>). *Plagiarism or cheating on any assignment will automatically result in a 0 for the assignment and possibly a grade of "E" for the course.* Any suspected act of academic dishonesty is reported to the Dean's Office, which prevents students from dropping courses in cases of suspected academic dishonesty.

Let me say a word about plagiarism, since by far it's the most common honor code violation that I've encountered. Plagiarism is defined in the University of Florida's Student Honor Code as follows:

“A Student must not represent as the Student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

1. Stealing, misquoting, insufficiently paraphrasing, or patch-writing.
2. Self-plagiarism, which is the reuse of the Student's own submitted work, or the simultaneous submission of the Student's own work, *without the full and clear acknowledgment and permission of the Faculty to whom it is submitted.*
3. Submitting materials from any source without proper attribution.
4. Submitting a document, assignment, or material that, in whole or in part, is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment the Student did not author.” (my italics; <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>)

You're responsible for ensuring that you're familiar with the Honor Code and don't run afoul of it. The easiest way to avoid plagiarism, for example, is to ensure that you cite your sources. This is especially important if you use outside sources for the writing assignments. Please note, however, that *we strongly recommend that you refrain from using outside sources in your writing assignments.* If you're uncertain how to cite properly, let us know, and we'll be happy to assist you.

CANVAS E-learning Environment

This course is supplemented by online content in the e-Learning environment known as "Canvas." You can log in to Canvas and access the course site at <http://elearning.ufl.edu/>. If you encounter any difficulties logging in or accessing any of the course content, contact the UF Computing Help Desk at (352) 392-4537. Do not contact the course instructor regarding computer issues.

- Pdf readings are in 'Readings' folder under the 'Files' tab.
- Check the 'Assignments' tab for paper assignments and short writing assignments.
- Check the 'Announcements' tab for new course content and general information.

If you encounter any difficulties logging in or accessing any of the course content, contact the UF Computing Help Desk at (352) 392-4537. Do not contact the course instructor regarding computer issues

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. This class supports the needs of different learners; it is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs as early as possible in the semester. Please do not hesitate to me during the semester if you have any individual concerns or issues that need to be discussed.

The Disability Resource Center (<https://disability.ufl.edu/> 352-392-8565) helps to provide an accessible learning environment for all by providing support services and facilitating accommodations, which may vary from course to course. Once registered with DRC, students will receive an accommodation letter that must be presented to the instructor as early as possible in the semester when requesting accommodations..

Counseling and Wellness Center

UF provides counseling and other kinds of help for students in distress. You can call the on-campus Counseling and Wellness Center at **352-392-1575** and see their website at <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>.

The "U Matter, We Care" program provides resources for everyone in the UF community. See the website at umatter.ufl.edu/. Students can contact umatter@ufl.edu seven days a week for assistance for students in distress. There is also a phone number for this program: **(352) 294-CARE**.

Meetings and Readings

***Read all assigned material carefully before coming to class. **Make sure to read the article for each class that it is assigned:** i.e. if an article is assigned for more than one class, read it before *each* class during which we'll be discussing it. Be prepared to bring up any questions or objections you have and to join in a general discussion.

Note: This schedule is only tentative and subject to change. We may go faster with the result that readings are moved up, but it's more likely that we'll end up moving more slowly through the material. If you have any questions about what you should be reading for the next class or on due dates, please contact me.

Note: Quizzes are **not** included in the schedule below in order to allow lecture and discussion flexibility. Remember that (1) you can expect to have approximately 1 quiz per reading, and (2) you'll be notified of quizzes via Canvas announcement, and you'll have at least 18 hours from the time the announcement is sent to take the quiz before it closes on Canvas.***

Introductory matters and COVID Vaccinations

Monday, January 11th – Syllabus/Intro to Ethics

Wednesday, January 13th – Savulescu's "Good Reasons to vaccinate: mandatory or payment for risk?" (pdf)

Friday, January 15th – Discussion section

Monday, January 18th – NO CLASS

Wednesday, January 20th – Savulescu's "Good Reasons to vaccinate: mandatory or payment for risk?" (pdf)

Explaining a position discussion

Friday, January 22nd – Discussion section

Monday, January 25th – (1) Rutschman and Gatter’s “Why paying people to get the coronavirus vaccine won’t work”
(2) Samuels’ “What if the US just pays everyone \$1000 to take the Covid vaccine?”

*****SDSWA 1 - Explaining a position - Due*****

Wednesday, January 27th – Shafer-Landau (*hereafter SL*) Introduction, especially “Moral Reasoning” pp. 9-18.

Friday, January 29th – Discussion section

Monday, February 1st – Shafer-Landau (*hereafter SL*) Introduction, especially “Moral Reasoning” pp. 9-18
How to construct an argument discussion

Ethical Theory

Consequentialism

Wednesday, February 3rd – SL Chapter 9, “Consequentialism: its Nature and Attractions”

Thursday, February 4th *SDSWA 2 – Constructing an Argument – Due at 9 am*****

Friday, February 5th – Discussion section

Monday, February 8th – (1) SL Chapter 9, “Consequentialism: its Nature and Attractions”

(2) SL Chapter 10, “Consequentialism: its Difficulties”

Wednesday, February 10th – SL Chapter 10, “Consequentialism: its Difficulties”

Anticipating and responding to objections discussion

Friday, February 12th – Discussion section

Deontological Ethics

Monday, February 15th – SL Chapter 11, “The Kantian Perspective: Fairness and Justice”

*****SDSWA 3 - Objection and Response - Due*****

Wednesday, February 17th – SL Chapter 12, “The Kantian Perspective: Autonomy and Respect”

Friday, February 19th – Discussion section

Monday, February 22nd – Catch up

Wednesday, February 24th – Pryor’s “A Brief Guide to Writing the Philosophy Paper” (pdf) found under the Writing Information folder in Files.
Discussion of AE 1

Friday, February 26th – Discussion section

Virtue Ethics

Monday, March 1st – SL Chapter 17, “Virtue Ethics”

*****AE 1 due*****

Wednesday, March 3rd – SL Chapter 17, “Virtue Ethics”

Friday, March 5th – Discussion section

Monday, March 8th – SL Chapter 17, “Virtue Ethics”/Discussion of AE 2

~~~~~ *Recharge Days* ~~~~~

Wednesday, March 10<sup>th</sup> – NO CLASS

Friday, March 12<sup>th</sup> – NO CLASS

Recommended: Chiang’s “The Lifesycle of a Software Object” (pdf)

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Applied Topics

Robots and Relationships

Monday, March 15th – Nyholm and Frank’s “From Sex Robots to Love Robots: Is Mutual Love with a Robot Possible?” (pdf)

*****AE 2 due*****

Wednesday, March 17th – Nyholm and Frank’s “From Sex Robots to Love Robots: Is Mutual Love with a Robot Possible?” (pdf)

Friday, March 19th – Discussion section

Monday, March 22nd – Danaher’s “The Case for Robot Friendship” (pdf)

Wednesday, March 24th – Danaher’s “The Case for Robot Friendship” (pdf)

Friday, March 26th – Discussion section

Recommended: watch the movie *Her* (2013) with Joaquin Phoenix and Scarlett Johansson

Germ-line Engineering

Monday, March 29th – Savulesco’s “New Breeds of Humans: the Moral Obligation to Enhance” (pdf)

Wednesday, March 31st – Savulesco’s “New Breeds of Humans: the Moral Obligation to Enhance” (pdf)

Friday, April 2nd – Discussion section

Monday, April 5th – Sandel’s “The Case Against Perfection” (pdf)

Wednesday, April 7th – Sandel’s “The Case Against Perfection” (pdf)

Friday, April 9th – Discussion section

Monday, April 12th – Catch up day

Ethical Inhibitors

Nonrational Factors influencing ethical decision making

Wednesday, April 14th – Rogerson and et al., “Nonrational Processes in Ethical Decision Making” (pdf)

*****AE 3 due*****

Friday, April 16th – Discussion section

Monday, April 19th – Rogerson and et al., “Nonrational Processes in Ethical Decision Making” (pdf)

Wednesday, April 22nd – NO CLASS

