

Syllabus for PHI 4662: Ethical Theory I
Dr. Molly Gardner
University of Florida, Spring 2021

Meeting Information:

Tuesdays, 3 – 4:55 p.m., Thursdays 4:05 – 4:55 p.m., Anderson Hall, 1507 W. University Ave., Room 0134 and online (Zoom link will be posted on Canvas).

Our first class on 1/12/21 will also be entirely online.

Contact Information:

Professor: Molly Gardner (You may address me as “Molly,” “Dr. Gardner,” or “Prof. Gardner.”)

Office Phone: 352-294-0426 (Calls will be forwarded to my cell phone.)

Email: mollygardner@ufl.edu

Zoom Office Hours: Wednesdays 1 – 4 p.m. and by appointment, all by Zoom. (Link will be posted on Canvas.)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will focus on the role of consequences in ethical theory. It is widely believed—by consequentialists, of course, but even by many deontologists—that the consequences of our actions matter morally. But this idea raises further questions. For example, there are causal consequences, logical consequences, and even counterfactual consequences. Do some kinds of consequences matter more than others? Moreover, some consequences are immediate, whereas others obtain millions of years in the future. Does the importance of consequences fade with time? And what should we say in a case where a significant consequence, like climate change, cannot be traced back to any single individual’s action, like driving a car? The prerequisite for this class is either a 3000-level philosophy course or department permission.

COURSE MATERIALS:

- All readings will be uploaded to our Canvas website.

COURSE GOALS:

- “*Knowledge that*”: Better understand some of the central developments in the field of ethical theory
- “*Knowledge how*”: Improve your ability to read for arguments, reconstruct the arguments you have read, and evaluate the arguments you have reconstructed
- “*Knowledge how*”: Improve your ability to reason about ethical theories, arguments, and issues
- “*Knowledge how*”: Improve your ability to express yourself in speech and writing with clarity, depth, and precision.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

5 Quizzes: 10 points each, lowest grade dropped (40 points total) <i>Each quiz will consist of 4 multiple-choice questions and 3 short-answer questions.</i>	Attendance and Participation: 20 points <i>(See chart on next page.)</i>
2 Papers: 50 points each (100 points total) <i>Each paper should be between 1200 and 1400 words long.</i>	Final Exam: 20 points <i>The final exam will consist of 4 multiple-choice questions and 2 essay questions.</i>
2 Peer Review Reports: 10 points each (20 points total) <i>For each report, you will read another student's paper and offer feedback for improvement.</i>	Extra Credit: You will have the opportunity to get up to 3 extra credit points over the course of the semester. Information about extra credit opportunities will be posted periodically on Canvas.

Total: 200 points

DETERMINING YOUR SEMESTER GRADE:

A	186 to 200 points
A-	180 to 185 points
B+	172 to 179 points
B	164 to 171 points
B-	160 to 163 points
C+	152 to 159 points
C	144 to 151 points
C-	140 to 143 points
D+	132 to 139 points
D	124 to 131 points
D-	120 to 123 points
E	0 to 119 points

Please note that your course grade is determined by points, not percentages, and that all points have equal weight, regardless of the assignment. Canvas is sometimes misleading when it tells you what “percentage grade” it thinks you have; if you are in doubt about what your true course grade is going to be, ***ignore the percentage that Canvas gives you*** and simply calculate the number of points you have earned and the number of points you can still earn, keeping in mind that we will drop your lowest quiz grade.

UNIVERSITY GRADING POLICIES:

For information on how your grade for this course will be averaged with your grades in other courses at the University of Florida, see the following:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx> . Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION GRADE:

This semester you will be expected to attend 15 Tuesday classes and 13 Thursday classes, either in person or via Zoom. For attendance purposes, I will count each Tuesday class as 2 class periods; this means that if you are absent on a Tuesday, you will count as having 2 absences.

Over the course of the semester, four absences will be *automatically excused*, but any additional absences will lower your attendance and participation grade according to the following chart: (Remember that attendance and participation are worth 20 points out of 200 for the semester.)

	Poor participation	Excellent participation
0 absences	18	20
1 absence	18	20
2 absences	18	20
3 absences	18	20
4 absences	18	20
5 absences	15	18
6 absences	14	17
7 absences	13	16
8 absences	12	15
9 absences	11	14
10 or more absences	0 to 10	13

There is almost never a need to email me to have your absences excused: I do not need to know why you were gone. As the chart above illustrates, 4 absences are *automatically* excused no matter what reason you had to be absent, and any additional absences will lower your attendance and participation grade *regardless of your reason for being absent*.

There is one exception to this policy: in a case where at least *five* of your absences are justified by what the university deems to be “acceptable reasons,” please email me, and I will consider evaluating you on participation only. Please see the University of Florida’s policy for a list of acceptable reasons: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>. **This exception does not apply when fewer than five of your absences are for good reasons.** For example, if you had good reasons for being absent 4 times but were absent a total of 6 times, then the exception does not apply to you, and your maximum attendance/participation grade is 17 out of 20, as the chart above indicates.

LATE PAPERS OR MISSED QUIZZES:

If you miss a quiz deadline, you will receive a 0 for that quiz; there will be no make-up quizzes this semester. (But remember that your lowest quiz grade will be dropped.)

If you miss the deadline or anticipate that you *will* miss the deadline for a paper, please send me an email at mollygardner@ufl.edu *as soon as possible*, and I will consider whether to grant you an extension. I reserve the right to deduct between 0 and 10 points from a paper grade for lateness.

WORKING WITH OTHERS:

Although you are free to study for quizzes and the exam with other students, your work on the quizzes and exams must be your own. You may also discuss your paper ideas with me or other students. For writing your papers, you are welcome to take drafts to me or to the writing studio.

However, you must ultimately write your papers on your own, and you must cite your sources. Any citation style—MLA, Chicago, APA, or some variation—is acceptable. For information about how to avoid plagiarism, see the handouts I have uploaded to the non-required readings folder on Canvas.

Please note that you can bring me as many drafts of your papers as you like. However, I do not give *written* feedback on drafts—instead, I will provide you with *oral feedback* only, which means that you must set up a Zoom meeting with me to get feedback.

HONOR CODE:

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code.” On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions; for more information see this page: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>. You are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with me or your TA.

RECORDING OUR ZOOM MEETINGS:

Our class sessions may be audio visually recorded for students in the class to refer back to and for use of enrolled students who are unable to attend live. Students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. Likewise, students who un-mute during class and participate verbally are agreeing to have their voices recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the "chat" feature, which allows students to type questions and comments live. The chat will not be recorded or shared. As in all courses, unauthorized recording and unauthorized sharing of recorded materials is prohibited.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center:

<https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/> . 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.

COURSE EVALUATIONS:

You will be asked twice to evaluate the course: once midway through the semester (this is the “midterm” evaluation) and once at the end of the semester (this is the “end-of-semester” evaluation). The midterm evaluation is designed to help me and your teaching assistant address any problems with the course while there is still time for you to benefit from your suggestions; thus, the evaluations will not be shared publicly. The evaluation at the end of the semester will be used for additional purposes and the data will be shared on the University website.

For the official evaluation, you are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback is here: <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. You will be notified when the official evaluation period opens, and you can complete evaluations through the email you receive from GatorEvals, in your Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to you here: <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

COVID-19 REGULATIONS FOR IN-CLASS ATTENDANCE:

We will have face-to-face instructional sessions to accomplish the student learning objectives of this course. In response to COVID-19, the following policies and requirements are in place to maintain your learning environment and to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions.

If you are registered to attend class in person,

- You are required to wear approved face coverings at all times during class and within buildings. Following and enforcing these policies and requirements are all of our responsibility. Failure to do so will lead to a report to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution.
- This course has been assigned a physical classroom with enough capacity to maintain physical distancing (6 feet between individuals) requirements. Please utilize designated seats and maintain appropriate spacing between students. Please do not move desks or stations.
- Sanitizing supplies are available in the classroom if you wish to wipe down your desks prior to sitting down and at the end of the class.
- Follow your instructor’s guidance on how to enter and exit the classroom. Practice physical distancing to the extent possible when entering and exiting the classroom.

- If you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, please use the UF Health screening system and follow the instructions on whether you are able to attend class. Course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work. Find more information in the university attendance policies.

Even if you are registered to attend class in-person, you are always welcome to attend class via Zoom.

ACADEMIC RESOURCES:

- **E-Learning Technical Support:** <http://helpdesk.ufl.edu/> . Contact them via phone at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.
- **Career Connections Center:** Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services, <https://career.ufl.edu/>
- **Library Support:** See <https://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>.
- **Teaching Center:** Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. <https://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>
- **Writing Studio:** 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>
- **Student Complaints On-Campus:** <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-%20code-student-conduct-code/>
- **On-Line Students Complaints:** <https://distance.ufl.edu/getting-help/student-complaint-process/>

HEALTH AND WELLNESS RESOURCES:

- **U Matter, We Care:** If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit <https://umatter.ufl.edu/> to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- **Counseling and Wellness Center:** Call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis and non-crisis services or visit <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>.
- **Student Health Care Center:** Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit <https://shcc.ufl.edu/>.
- **University Police Department:** Go to <https://police.ufl.edu/> or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- **UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center:** For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608. <https://ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-center> .

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Please check our Canvas page for an updated schedule of readings, topics, and assignments.