Instructor: Mihana (Hana) Mitchell   mihana.mitchell@ufl.edu
Office: Griffin-Floyd 313 – Zoom: https://ufl.zoom.us/j/5813248145
Office hours: M 3:30-5:30, W 3:30-4:30 and by appointment

Lecture: Online via Zoom (Link will be posted on Canvas)

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 Internet technology. We will use our theoretical understanding to consider the ethical implications of putting into use, some of these technologies, as well as what things we ought to consider in the course of innovating and developing these technologies to begin with. Finally, we will consider how psychological factors inhibit ethical behavior, and we will identify and evaluate different 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 CRITICALTHINKING – 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 short writing assignments (600-800 words each), two papers (1100-1500 words each), two exams, and regular 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).

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 and have them in front of you during lecture, as I refer to them frequently and expect you to answer specific questions about the texts.*

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://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbnxicmVhdG9uc2V3YzR1fGd4OjQ1MmU3OWFiNzAzZTk2M2M

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.

GRADE DISTRIBUTION & GRADING POLICIES

1. Attendance & Participation   20%
2. 3 Short Writing Assignments (SWAs - each 600-800 words long)   30% (10% each)
3. 2 Argumentative Essays (AE - each 1100-1500 words long)   30% (15% each)
4. Discussion board posting   20%

Grading Scale:
This course will employ the following grading scale:

A	4.0	94-100		C	2.0	74-76
A-	3.67	90-93		C-	1.67	70-73
B+	3.33	87-89		D+	1.33	67-69
B	3.0	84-86		D	1.0	64-66
B-	2.67	80-83		D-	0.67	60-63
C+	2.33	77-79		E	0.0	0-59

If your total number of points for the course falls between two grades in the end, I will round to the nearest mark. X.5 rounds up; for example, 93.5 percent of all points will earn you an A. Any 93 below 93.5 is an A-.
UF policy on assigning grade points:
https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx

GRADED WORK & ASSIGNMENTS

Attendance and Participation Grade
This semester you will be expected to attend Zoom meetings 30 times. You must come to class on time and prepared. This means keeping current on the reading assignments and being aware of the course schedule and activities, as presented in this syllabus, discussed in class, and announced on the course website. It also means having the day's reading in class with you. Consistent high-quality class participation—in large and small groups—is expected. "High-quality" in this case means:
- informed (i.e., shows evidence of having done assigned work),

- thoughtful (i.e., shows evidence of having understood and considered issues raised in
  readings and other discussions), and
- considerate (e.g., takes the perspectives of others into account).

3 Short Writing Assignments (SWAs)

Each SWA should be between 500-700 words and is worth 100 points. These will be short argumentative essays, in which you will explain an ethical theory or a potential innovative practice and develop and defend a position of your own regarding it.
- o Due dates: Monday, May 24th
                Monday, June 28th
                Monday, August 2nd

2 Argumentative Essays (AEs)

Each AE should be between1100-1500 words and worth 150 points. 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.
- o Due dates: Wednesday, June 9th
                Wednesday, July 21st

Discussion Board Posting (DBP)

DBP & Replies are together worth 200 points total. Further description of how the discussion board postings and replies are to work can be found on our Canvas site in the folder: "Discussion Board"

COURSE POLICIES AND STUDENT RESOURCES

Attendance & Participation Policy

Students are expected to attend class regularly and on time. Four absences will be automatically excused, but any additional absences will lower your attendance and participation grade according to the chart below. Remember that attendance and participation are worth 200 points out of 1000 for the semester--Unexcused attendance & participation. If you are absent for an excused reason, you will not lose any points and the absence will not exhaust one of your free absences. In most cases you need documentation of the excuse (see below). Excused absences are limited to the following cases:
- *Health*. If your physical or mental health causes you to miss class, a note from your doctor or from the Dean of Students *within one week of the absence* will count as documentation for this.
- *Personal Reasons*. The Dean of Students will send me a note of excuse if you have personal reasons for needing one, such as a death in the family or an ongoing medical issue. I need your note from the DOS *within one week of the absence.* Note: I do not get involved in adjudicating good personal reasons from bad ones. I let the DOS handle that.
- *Some UF Activities* are excused absences. You must provide a note for activities absences *prior to the day of absence*. Notes may come from the activity supervisor, such as a coach. Regular activities absences will lead to make-up assignments.
- *Religious observances*. See your TA at the beginning of the semester about this.

All other absences are typically unexcused, including some very good reasons to miss a

class, like career or family events. I support your interest in these things, and understand why you might prioritize them over class, but that does not make them excused absences.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work are consistent with university policies specified at:
https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx.

	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

Late Work
Work is due as specified in the syllabus. Late work is subject to a 1/3 grade penalty for each 24- hour period it is late (e.g., a paper that would've earn an A if turned in in class on Monday becomes an A- if received Tuesday, a B+ if received Wednesday, etc., with the weekend counting as two days). *No writing assignment will be accepted 4 days after the due date*

If you have a foreseeable conflict with a due date for any reason, including activities, religious observances, and so on, you should make alternative arrangements with your TA well in advance so that we can set an early deadline. Computer errors (including disk, printer, or e-mail problems) are not acceptable excuses for late work.

Extensions on written work without penalty are granted only if you have a documented reason for your request and if you take the initiative to make contact as soon as the need arises.

Zoom Policies

The participation portion of your grade for this class will be calculated on the basis of your attendance and your participation in class activities. Since the pedagogical approach of this course depends heavily on student engagement and interaction, you are required, at a minimum, to participate in class activities through the audio function of Zoom.

A good discussion course depends upon our being able to assess your attention and reactions and uptake of the material, and on fellow students being able to see engagement from one another. **I therefore request your video presence in all class meetings**. Students unable or unwilling to turn on cameras for some or all meetings may ensure a full attendance grade by coming to two office hours appointments over the course of the semester to talk about the content of the course.

Zoom sessions will not be recorded by the instructor and may not be recorded by students. As in all courses, unauthorized recording and unauthorized sharing of recorded material is prohibited.

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) I will evaluate and provide feedback on all written assignments with respect to 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) All papers will be submitted through Canvas and subject to anti-plagiarism detection via Turnitin software. Furthermore, there'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.** I'm happy to assist you.

(5) I strongly recommend that you **not** use outside sources for any of the writing assignments. This is for four reasons.
   a. 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.
   b. 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.
   c. 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.
   d. 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.

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.

Class Demeanor

Students are expected to arrive to class on time, give the class your full attention the entire class period, and behave in a manner that is respectful to the instructor and to fellow students. Opinions held by other students should be respected in discussion, and conversations that do not contribute to the discussion should be kept to a minimum.

Academic Honesty

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." (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 disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started or by calling 352-392-8565. 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 be aware that accommodations are not retroactive. Hence, you should contact the office as soon as possible in the term for which you are seeking accommodations. Please also don't hesitate to contact me during the semester if you have any individual concerns or issues that need to be discussed.

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.

Date	What we will be up to in class	Reading (to be done before class)
Week 1		
M – 5/10/21	Syllabus Review	None
W – 5/12/21	Autonomous Vehicles	(1) Lin, "The Ethics of Autonomous Cars" (pdf) (2) Green, "Autonomous Vehicles could cost America 5 million jobs. What should we do about it?" (pdf)
F – 5/14/21	Autonomous Vehicles	(1) Awad, Dsouza et al, "The Moral Machine Experiment" (pdf) (2) Johnson, "Self-driving cars will have to decide who should live and who should die. Here's who the human would kill" (pdf) (3) *Optional*: take the Moral Machine Survey at http://moralmachine.mit.edu/
Week 2	SWA 1 – Opens	
M – 5/17/21	Moral Reasoning	(1) Shafer-Landau (hereafter SL) Introduction, especially "Moral Reasoning" pp 10-15.
W – 5/19/21	Ethical Relativism	(1) SL – Chapter 19, "Ethical Relativism"
F – 5/21/21	Notes for SWA 1 Discussion Board Posting (DBP)	(1) Pryor's "A Brief Guide to Writing the Philosophy Paper" in the Writing Information folder under Files on Canvas. (2) "Discussion Board Posting & Group Schedule" (doc found on CANVAS)
Week 3	**Group A – DBP** AE 1 – Opens	
M – 5/24/21	Consequentialism ***SWA 1 – Due by 11:59 pm***	(1) SL – Chapter 9, "Consequentialism: Its Nature and Attractions"
W – 5/26/21	Consequentialism	(1) SL – Chapter 10, "Consequentialism: Its Difficulties"
F – 5/28/21	Deontological Ethics Group A - DBP	(1) SL – Chapter 11, "The Kantian Perspective Fairness and Justice"
Week 4	**Group B - DBP**	
M – 5/31/21	No class – Holiday	
W – 6/2/21	Deontological Ethics	(1) SL – Chapter 12, "The Kantian Perspective: Autonomy, Free Will, and Respect"
F – 6/4/21	Group B – DBP	
Week 5	**Group C - DBP**	
M – 6/7/21	Virtue Ethics	(1) Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics* (excerpt) (2) SL – Chapter 17, "Virtue Ethics" pp 272-282.
W – 6/9/21	Virtue Ethics ***AE 1 – Due by 11:59 pm***	(1) SL – Chapter 17, "Virtue Ethics" (Objections) pp 283-291.
F – 6/11/21	Paper Writing – Peer Review Group C - DBP	Have a draft of your AE 1 in a "shareable format" available
Week 6	**Group A – DBP** SWA 2 – Opens	
M – 6/13/21	Germ-Line Engineering	(1) Watch: How CRISPR lets us edit our DNA – TED https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TdBAHexVYzc

		(2) Savulesco, "New breeds of humans: the moral obligation to enhance" (pdf)
W – 6/15/21	Germ-Line Engineering	(1) Savulesco, "New breeds of humans: the moral obligation to enhance" (pdf) (2) Sandel, "The Case Against Perfection" (pdf)
F – 6/17/21	Germ-Line Engineering Group A - DBP	(1) Sandel, "The Case Against Perfection" (pdf)
Week 7	**No DBP**	
6/21/21 – 6/25/21	No class – Summer Break	
Week 8	**Group B - DBP**	
M – 6/28/21	Review of Germ-Line Engineering Animal Ethics ***SWA 2 – Due by 11:59 pm***	(1) Cohen, "The Case for the Use of Animals in Biomedical Research" (pdf)
W – 6/30/21	Animal Ethics	(1) Cohen, "The Case for the Use of Animals in Biomedical Research" (pdf)
F – 7/2/21	Group B - DBP	
Week 9	**Group C - DBP**	
M – 7/5/21	No class - Holiday	
W – 7/7/21	Animal Ethics	(1) Norcross, "Puppies, Pigs, and People: Eating Meat and Marginal Cases"
F – 7/9/21	Group C – DBP	
Week 10	**Group A – DBP** **AE 2 – Opens**	
M – 7/12/21	Animal Ethics	(1) Norcross, "Puppies, Pigs, and People: Eating Meat and Marginal Cases"
W – 7/14/21	Obedience & Authority	(1) Milgram, "Behavioral Study of Obedience" (pdf)
F – 7/16/21	Group A - DBP	
Week 11	**Group B - DBP**	
M – 7/19/21	Obedience & Authority	(1) Ross & Nisbett, "Putting It All Together: Stanley Milgram and the Banality of Evil" (pdf)
W – 7/21/21	Obedience & Authority ***AE 2 – due by 11:59 pm***	(1) American Psychological Association, "Obeying and Resisting Malevolent Orders" (pdf)
F – 7/23/21	Group B - DBP	
Week 12	**Group C – DBP** **SWA 3 – Opens**	
M – 7/26/21	Nonrational factors influencing ethical decision making	(1) Rogerson & et. al, "Nonrational Processes in Ethical Decision Making" (pdf)
W – 7/28/21	Nonrational factors influencing ethical decision making	(1) Rogerson & et. al, "Nonrational Processes in Ethical Decision Making" (pdf)
F – 7/30/21	Group C - DBP	
Week 13	**Reading Week**	
M – 8/2/21	***SWA 3 – due by 11:59 pm***	