

Syllabus for PHI 3650: Moral Philosophy
Class number 17323
Dr. Molly Gardner
University of Florida, Fall 2021

<p><u>Lecture:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mondays and Wednesdays, 1:55 – 2:45 p.m. Florida Gym, 1864 Stadium Rd, Room 0270 • Alternatively, you may attend the lecture via Zoom, for as many classes as you like. It is fine to attend every class in person, to attend every class via Zoom, or to switch back and forth. You do not need advance permission to either show up in class or to attend via Zoom. 	<p><u>Discussions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fridays, 9:35 – 10:25 a.m. in Weimer Hall 1070 • 11:45 a.m. – 12:35 p.m. in Matherly Hall 0012 • 12:50 – 1:40 p.m. in Weil Hall 0279 • You may also attend your discussion section using Zoom. Links will be posted on Canvas. You should attend (in Zoom or in person) <i>only the section you have registered for</i> unless you obtain permission to attend a different section.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Professor:</u> Molly Gardner (You may address me as either “Molly,” “Dr. Gardner,” or “Professor Gardner.”) • <u>Office Phone:</u> 352-294-0426 • <u>Email:</u> mollygardner@ufl.edu • <u>In Person Office Hour:</u> Wednesdays 3:30 – 4:30 p.m. and by appointment in 330 Griffin-Floyd Hall • <u>Zoom Office Hours:</u> Thursdays, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. and by appointment. • <u>Link for Zoom Office Hours:</u> https://ufl.zoom.us/j/5413165558 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Teaching Assistant:</u> Christopher Becker (You may address him as “Christopher.”) • <u>Email:</u> c.becker@ufl.edu • <u>Phone:</u> 610-984-7181 • <u>Zoom Office Hours:</u> Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1 – 2:30 p.m. • <u>Link for Zoom Office Hours:</u> https://ufl.zoom.us/j/2524062596

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

What do morally wrong actions have in common? What do right and wrong have to do with things that are good and bad? In this course we will explore *normative ethics*, the branch of philosophy that attempts to systematize and explain our moral judgments. The major theories we will consider include ethical egoism, utilitarianism, Kantianism, deontology, and virtue ethics. We will also briefly consider some problems in *metaethics*, the field that considers what morality really *is* and whether moral knowledge is possible; and *applied ethics*, the field that analyzes specific moral issues like climate change and our treatment of nonhuman animals. This course satisfies one of the area distribution requirements for either the philosophy major or the philosophy minor, and it counts toward the Humanities (H) general education requirement.

COURSE MATERIALS:

- **(SL):** Russ Shafer-Landau, *The Fundamentals of Ethics*, 5th Edition. ISBN 0190058315, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020. Available for purchase at the UF Bookstore or online for approximately \$49.99 (new) or \$37.50 (used). This textbook is required.
- **(Canvas):** All other readings will be uploaded to our Canvas website.

COURSE GOALS:

“Knowledge That”:

- Better understand some of the central developments in the field of ethics

“Knowledge How”:

- Improve your ability to read for arguments, reconstruct the arguments you have read, and evaluate the arguments you have reconstructed
- Improve your ability to reason about moral theories, arguments, and issues
- Improve your ability to express yourself in speech and writing with clarity, depth, and precision

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

4 Online Quizzes: 10 points each, lowest grade dropped (30 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.</i>	Final Exam: 50 points <i>The take-home final exam will consist of 4 multiple-choice questions, 3 short-answer questions, and 4 short essay questions.</i>

Total: 200 points

- **Lowest Quiz Grade Dropped:** Your lowest quiz grade will be dropped.
- **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.
- **Attendance and Participation:** See chart on next page

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 30 Monday/Wednesday lectures and 13 Friday discussions, either in person or via Zoom. This means there are 43 classes total. Four absences (from either lecture, discussion, or both) 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 either me or your teaching assistant to have your absences excused. We 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, your teaching assistant, or other students. For help brainstorming, formatting, and writing your papers, you are welcome to take drafts of your papers us 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 and your TA as many drafts of your papers as you like. However, we do not give *written* feedback on drafts—instead, we will provide you with *oral feedback* only, which means that you must come to a Zoom or in-person meeting with us 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.

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.bluer.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to you here: <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

RECORDING LECTURES:

I will not be using the Zoom record function this semester, although I did so in past semesters. Students are allowed to record *their own* video and/or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the

University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

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:

This schedule is tentative. Please check Canvas for updates.

Date	What we will do in class	Reading (to be done before class)
8/23/21	Introduction to Moral Philosophy	None
8/25/21	Reasoning about Morality	SL “Moral Reasoning,” p. 9 – 15
8/30/21	Reasoning about Morality	Boonin & Oddie, “Non-Deductive Arguments,” Canvas.
9/1/21	Reasoning about Morality	SL “Introduction,” p. 1 – 8 and 15 – 19.
9/6/21	Labor Day: No Class	
9/8/21	Quiz 1 due at 1:55 p.m. Consequentialism	SL “Consequentialism: Its Nature and Attractions” p. 124 – 142
9/13/21	Consequentialism	SL “Consequentialism: Its Difficulties” p. 143 – 166
9/15/21	Classical Utilitarianism	John Stuart Mill, <i>Utilitarianism</i> (excerpt), Canvas.
9/20/21	Hedonism	SL “Hedonism: Its Powerful Appeal,” p. 23 – 31
9/22/21	Hedonism	SL, “Is Happiness All that Matters?” p. 32 – 42
9/27/21	The Separateness of Persons	John Taurek, “Should the Numbers Count?” (excerpt), Canvas.
9/29/21	Consequentialism and Animals	Peter Singer, “All Animals are Equal,” Canvas.
10/4/21	Quiz 2 due at 1:55 p.m. Consequentialism and Animals	Alastair Norcross, “Puppies, Pigs, and People: Eating Meat and Marginal Cases,” Canvas.
10/6/21	Consequentialism and Climate Change	Walter Sinnott-Armstrong, “It’s Not <i>My</i> Fault: Global Warming and Individual Moral Obligations”
	Paper 1 due 10/10 at 11:59 p.m.	
10/11/21	Kantian Theory	Immanuel Kant, <i>Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals</i> (excerpt 1), Canvas
10/13/21	Kantian Theory	Immanuel Kant, <i>Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals</i> (excerpt 2), Canvas
10/18/21	Kantian Theory	Christine Korsgaard, “The Right to Lie: Kant on Dealing With Evil”

10/20/21	Kantian Theory	None
10/25/21	Ethical Pluralism	SL “Ethical Pluralism and Absolute Moral Rules” p. 233 – 251
10/27/21	Ethical Pluralism	SL “Ethical Pluralism: Prima Facie Duties and Ethical Particularism” p. 252 – 271
11/1/21	Quiz 3 due at 1:55 p.m. Contemporary Deontology	Fiona Woollard, “The New Problem of Numbers in Morality”
11/3/21	Deontology and Animals	Tom Regan, “The Case for Animal Rights”
11/8/21	Psychological Egoism	Joel Feinberg, “Psychological Egoism”
11/10/21	Ethical Egoism	SL, “Ethical Egoism” p. 109 – 123
	Paper 2 due 11/14 at 11:59 p.m.	
11/15/21	Virtue Ethics	SL, “Virtue Ethics” p. 272 – 294
11/17/21	Virtue Ethics	Allen Thompson, “Radical Hope for Living Well in a Warming World,” Canvas
11/22/21	Quiz 4 due at 1:55 p.m. Ethical Relativism	SL “Ethical Relativism” p. 315 – 331
11/24/21	Thanksgiving Break: No Class	
11/29/21	Moral Nihilism	SL “Moral Nihilism” p. 332 – 345
12/1/21	The Non-Identity Problem	David Boonin, “How to Solve the Non-Identity Problem”
12/6/21	Future Generations	Molly Gardner, “A Deontological Approach to Future Consequences,” Canvas.
12/8/21	Review for Final Exam and Lessons from the Course	None

The take-home final exam will be due on Wednesday, December 15 at 12 p.m.