

PHI 3650: MORAL PHILOSOPHY
FALL 2022

INSTRUCTOR

Dr. Jaime Ahlberg (“Dr. Ahlberg” or “Professor Ahlberg”)

Office Hours: Mondays, 1-3 (and by appointment)

Office: 333 Griffin-Floyd Hall (tel. 352-392-2084)

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The most reliable way to communicate with me is via email. Please allow me at least 24 hours to respond to your emails.

TEACHING ASSISTANT

Julianna Costanzo

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 1-4pm

Office: FLO 316

e-mail:

TIME AND LOCATION: LECTURE

MW 11:45-12:35 (Period 5)

CSEE 119

TIME AND LOCATION: DISCUSSION SECTIONS

SECTION	TIME	LOCATION
031D	9:35-10:25	LIT 0125
031E	11:45-12:35	MAT 0016
01D2	12:50-1:40	TUR 2305

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course we will read some of the influential theories, classical texts, and contemporary reflections in the field of moral philosophy. Our exploration will primarily focus on the questions of normative ethics, such as: What fundamental principles, if any, should govern our ethical decisions? What constitutes a good life, or makes a human being good? What kinds of human relationships are worth having or striving for?

This course counts towards the Humanities (H) General Education Requirement. A minimum grade of C is required for credit toward the Philosophy major or minor and for general education credit.

TEXTS

Required (All books should be available at UF Bookstore)

1. Kant, *Grounding for the Metaphysic of Morals* (Hackett)
2. Mill, *On Liberty and Utilitarianism* (Bantam Classics)
3. Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. W.D. Ross (Oxford)
4. Selected Readings, available on course website (<http://lss.at.ufl.edu>)

Recommended

1. Anthony Weston, *A Rulebook for Arguments*, 4th Edition (Hackett: 2009)
2. A terrific guide to general writing rules is Strunk and White's *The Elements of Style*. The first edition is available online for free: <http://www.bartleby.com/141/>

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Grade Distribution

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. 8 Short Writing Assignments (SWAs) | 40% (5% each) |
| 2. 2 Essays | 50% (#1: 20%; #2: 30%) |
| 3. Participation/Attendance | 10% |

Grading Scale

This course will employ the following grading scale:

Letter	4 pt. scale	100 pt. scale
A	4.0 (3.835-4.0)	94-100
A-	3.67 (3.495-3.834)	90-93
B+	3.33 (3.165-3.494)	87-89
B	3.0 (2.835-3.164)	84-86
B-	2.67 (2.495-2.834)	80-83
C+	2.33 (2.165-2.494)	77-79
C	2.0 (1.835-2.164)	74-76
C-	1.67 (1.495-1.834)	70-73
D+	1.33 (1.165-1.494)	67-69
D	1.0 (0.835-1.164)	64-66
D-	0.67 (0.495-0.834)	60-63
E	0.0 (0.0-0.494)	0-59

Students should note that a final course grade of “C-” and below does not meet requirements imposed by many degree programs, or fulfill general education requirements. For more information on UF’s grading policies, see:

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

Attendance

Regular attendance will be essential to your success in the course, and it is required. Each student will be permitted 3 absences, beyond which legitimate and documented excuses for absences will be required. Examples of circumstances in which absences are excused include: legal obligations, death of a family member, university sponsored activities, and severe illness. Each unexcused absence will incur a penalty of a 1 letter grade deduction in one’s participation grade (e.g. an “A” will become a “B”). 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>.

Participation

Under the assumption that long-term learning and personal development depend primarily on one’s active engagement in the subject matter at hand, our class meetings will sometimes take the form of group discussions of the assigned readings and broader issues relating to them. This will be true for our larger lecture meetings on Mondays and Wednesdays, as well as your discussion section meetings on Fridays. In order to facilitate rich and reward class conversations, you should complete assignments promptly and thoughtfully and come to class prepared to share one or two coherent and articulate ideas, questions, or comments.

If you need help speaking out, let me know and we can brainstorm ways for you to be more involved in class discussions. I reserve the right to call on students who haven’t been participating and will occasionally calling on students at random to answer/comment to mix things up.

Please see Canvas course for full participation assessment rubric, but here is the general idea:

Excellent: Thoughtful, insightful observation or question (on assigned reading) that demonstrates solid understanding of text in question and any relevant analytical tools used to interpret it

Good: Sound, valid observation or question (on assigned reading) that demonstrates some understanding of text in question and any relevant analytical tools used to interpret it. Thoughtful, insightful observation or question on impromptu topic brought up in the course of lecture or discussion.

Needs Improvement: Student attempts to engage but contributions are uninformed and/or not thoughtful about the course material.

Unacceptable: Student absent from class or unengaged, and/or unable to offer questions or comments during class.

Short Writing Assignments (SWAs)

Over the course of the semester, students will be expected to complete 8 short (200-300 word) writing assignments on the course readings. Each SWA will be worth 5% of your final course grade. Opportunities for 9 SWAs will be offered and students may drop their lowest SWA score. All SWAs must be typed and include the student's name, date, and discussion section number, and be ready for hard copy submission by the start of class (11:45am). Handwritten SWAs will not be accepted. Late or emailed SWAs will only be accepted with a documented excuse (see "Attendance & Participation", above). Prompts will be announced in class and posted on the course e-learning page. Please see grading rubric in Canvas.

Essays

Two essays will be due during the semester, and will combine to be worth 50% of your final grade (they will be worth 20% and 30% of your final grade, respectively).

I will assign topics for you to write on two weeks in advance of the papers' due dates. These are relatively short essays (ranging from 4-6 pages), so you will be challenged to address your topic in a concise manner. Undoubtedly, you will want to write more than the word limit permits, and the trick will be to discern what information is most important to include, and how to express it in the most succinct way possible. If you have trouble limiting your essay to the word count, consider visiting the writing center or ask a friend with an objective eye to ruthlessly edit it for you.

All papers must be typed, double-spaced with one-inch margins, 12 pt Times New Roman font. You must include a word-count at the top of your first page. Please also include your name, the date you hand in the assignment, and title your essays. If it is difficult for you to choose a title, consider that a clue that you may need to focus your essay more.

Each paper must be uploaded onto UF's e-learning site, in Canvas, by the deadline. You can log in and find the course web page here: <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/>. The papers will be graded electronically by Julianna, and returned to you electronically. I will consider allowing you to turn in a paper late without penalty only if you have a valid and/or documented reason for doing so. If you turn in a paper without a valid and/or documented reason, 5 points (out of 100) will be deducted for each day it is late (including weekend days!). We will discuss the paper topics and requirements more as the course progresses, and the due dates listed on the Reading and Assignment Schedule should be considered provisional. Please see grading rubric in Canvas.

Full details of all assigned readings and of all writing assignments and essays will be posted in the Canvas e-learning site during the course of the semester.

CLASSROOM POLICIES

Etiquette

As a group we will strive to maintain an intellectual space that enables meaningful and constructive dialogue. This kind of environment requires that participants show mutual respect, a willingness to listen, and tolerance of opposing points of view. Philosophical methods encourage us to be analytically critical, but we would do well to remember that in the classroom environment we are engaged in a collective intellectual enterprise. The virtues of humility and charity, in addition to intellectual rigor and precision, should be practiced.

Respect for individual differences and alternative viewpoints will be maintained at all times.

COVID-19 Statement

In response to COVID-19, the following recommendations are in place to maintain your learning environment, to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions, and to further the health and safety of ourselves, our neighbors, and our loved ones.

- If you are not vaccinated, get vaccinated. Vaccines are readily available and have been demonstrated to be safe and effective against the COVID-19 virus. Visit one.ufl.edu for screening / testing and vaccination opportunities.
- If you are sick, stay home. Please call your primary care provider if you are ill and need immediate care or the UF Student Health Care Center at 352-392-1161 to be evaluated.
- 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.

Please take responsibility for the quality of your education and your educational environment. In practice, this means you should plan on coming to all classes prepared and on time, submitting your work in a timely manner, and seeking assistance from your instructors when you need help (see “Attendance & Participation”, above). It also means doing what you can to foster a classroom experience that is intellectually rigorous, constructive, and inclusive.

OBJECTIVES

General Education Student learning objectives (SLOs)

Students will gain a basic understanding of philosophy and learn how to utilize this knowledge to evaluate and develop their own ideas. Students will pursue these goals across these three categories:

- *Content*: Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, methodologies and theories used within the discipline. Assessment by short written assignments, essays, and in discussion.
- *Communication*: Students communicate knowledge, ideas, and reasoning clearly and effectively in written or oral forms appropriate to the discipline. Assessment by short written assignments, essays, and in discussion.
- *Critical Thinking*: Students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline specific methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems. Assessment by short written assignments, essays, and in discussion.

Note: A minimum grade of C is required for General Education credit.

Humanities Credit Objective

This course provides Humanities credit (H) for the purpose of general education requirements. All such courses include the following objective:

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. (From: <http://gened.aa.ufl.edu/program-area-objectives.aspx>)

Students will satisfy General Education—Humanities SLO's by: (i) preparing short writing assignments on central ideas and arguments in the philosophical works being read in the class that will serve as the basis for class discussion throughout the semester; (ii) participating actively in class discussions, in which students will consider the effectiveness of their fellow students' ideas and reasoning; (iii) preparing for and completing two essays on assigned topics designed to test students' critical thinking abilities, to be graded according to a rubric that specifies as criteria for assessment competent command of the relevant texts and material discussed in class, perspicuous identification of the issues raised by the assigned topics, and development of a response that cogently supports the students' claims with little or no irrelevance.

OTHER POLICIES AND INFORMATION

Academic Honesty

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 (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor. Plagiarism on any assignment will automatically result in a grade of "E" for the course. Plagiarism is defined in the University of Florida's Student Honor Code as follows: "A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes (but is not limited to): a. Quoting oral or written materials, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution. b. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student." Students found guilty of academic misconduct will be prosecuted in accordance with the procedures specified in the UF honesty policy. All assignments uploaded onto Canvas will be submitted through "Turn-it-in" to detect plagiarism.

Canvas e-Learning Environment

This course is supplemented by online content in the e-Learning environment known as "Canvas." To login to the e-Learning site for this course, go to <https://elearning.ufl.edu/>, click the **e-Learning in Canvas** button, and on the next page enter your Gatorlink username and password. You can then access the course e-Learning environment by selecting "PHI 3650" from the **Courses** pull-down menu at the top of the page. 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.

Online Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester. 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>.

CAMPUS RESOURCES

Health and Wellness U Matter, We Care

If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392- 1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS) Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575

University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies

ACADEMIC RESOURCES

E-learning Technical Support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learningsupport@ufl.edu. <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>.

Library Support <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>

Writing Studio 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

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Tentative Lecture Reading and Assignment Schedule
Please come to class having already read the assignments listed for that day.

Date	Assignment
Week 1 8/24	<u>Introduction to the Course</u> 1. In-class exercise: “The Construction of Moral Principles”
Week 2 8/29, 8/31	<u>I. Classical Utilitarianism</u> 1. Mill, <i>Utilitarianism</i> Ch. 2 2. Mill, <i>Utilitarianism</i> Ch.4
Week 3 9/7	No Class 9/5, Labor Day 1. Mill, continued 2. Dostoyevsky, <i>The Brothers Karamazov</i> excerpt (web)
Week 4 9/12, 9/14	1. Bernard Williams, “A Critique of Utilitarianism” (web)
Week 5 9/19, 9/21	1. Mill, <i>On Liberty</i> , Ch. 1; Ch. 2 pp. TBA; Ch. 5 (1 st page) 2. Mill, <i>On Liberty</i> , Ch. 3 pp. TBA; Ch. 4 pp. TBA
Week 6 9/26, 9/28	1. Mill, <i>On Liberty</i> , Ch. 5
Week 7 10/3, 10/5	<u>II. Deontology</u> 1. Kant, Preface and Ch. 1 2. Kant, Ch. 2 (pp.19-32) No Class Oct 7, Homecoming
Week 8 10/10, 10/12	1. Kant, Ch. 2 (pp. 32-48) 2. Kant, “On a Supposed Right to Lie Because of Philanthropic Concerns” 3. Sartre, “The Wall”
Week 9 10/17, 10/19	Catch-Up, Peer Review and Writing Workshop Days Essay #1 Due 11:59pm Friday, October 21 Uploaded onto Canvas
Week 10	1. Kant, excerpt from the <i>Lectures on Ethics</i> , “On Lying”

10/24, 10/26	2. Christine Korsgaard, "The Right to Lie: Kant on Dealing with Evil"
Week 11 10/31, 11/2	1. John Rawls, "Justice as Fairness" 2. The Rawls Game
Week 12 11/7, 11/9	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>IV. Virtue Ethics</u></p> 1. Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> Books I, II, and X Chs. 6-9 No discussion sections 11/11, Veteran's Day Holiday
Week 13 11/14, 11/16	1. Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> Book III Chs. 6-12, Book IV
Week 14 11/21	1. Aristotle, continued No class 11/23, no discussion sections 11/25, Thanksgiving Holiday
Week 15 11/28, 11/30	1. TBD 2. Susan Wolf, "Moral Saints"
Week 16 12/5, 12/7	1. Review, Writing Workshop Days Essay # Due due by 11:59pm Wednesday, December 7, uploaded onto Canvas