

**THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY**  
**Center for Talented Youth**

**ETHICS**

Course Description

Ethics is the study of how we ought to live. Since the ancient Greeks, philosophers have held ethics as one of the most important fields in philosophy because of its intimate ties with everyday life. This class will proceed in a fashion appropriate to the division of ethics. During the first part of the course, we will discuss what ethics is, then turn to learning an assortment of important ethical theories, both *meta* and normative ones. The second part of the course will address practical problems in ethics (practical ethics) that survey different subdivisions of ethics. Among other issues, we will discuss animal rights and abortion from bioethics, and the problem of affluence and affirmative action from political philosophy.

Required Course Materials

Michael Palmer, *Moral Problems: A Coursebook*

John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism: 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition* (George Sher, ed.)

Immanuel Kant, *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals: 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition* (James Ellington, trans.)

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (Roger Crisp, trans.)

Pencil, paper, folder, and binder (1 in., 3-ring)

Course Reference Texts

Gregory Pence, *A Dictionary of Common Philosophical Terms*

Stephen Law, *Philosophy: Eyewitness Companions* (encyclopedia)

Grading

There are no formal grades for the course. Your performance will be measured by the following criteria: study questions, writing assignments, and class participation (including debates, group work, presentations, and discussions). There are no tests or quizzes since I do not endorse the use of tests or quizzes to measure the mastery of philosophical concepts and skills.

Course Goals

By the end of the course, you will have learned several moral theories and practical problems in ethics, how to read and understand philosophical literature, how to express your ideas into well-written and creative philosophical arguments, and how to be self-critical and constructively critical of others.

**ETHICS SYLLABUS**  
*subject to change without notice*

<b>WEEK 1</b>	<b>MORNING</b>	<b>AFTERNOON</b>	<b>EVENING</b>
<b>MONDAY, DAY 1</b>	Introductions Survey Class Rules Essay: What is Ethics? Diagnostic Test Discuss Syllabus	Discussion: What is Ethics? Lecture: What is Ethics? Philosophy?	Ethics Game Lecture: How to Read Philosophy Reading: Kant's Preface Lecture: Kant's View of Ethics
<b>TUESDAY, DAY 2</b>	Lecture / Reading: Logic Group Work: Logic Reading: Metaethics Lecture: Metaethics	Lecture: How to Write Philosophy Essay: Metaethics	Reading: P. Egoism Discussion: P. Egoism Group Work: P. Egoism Lecture: P. Egoism
<b>WEDNESDAY, DAY 3</b>	Reading: Ethical Egoism Discussion: Ethical Egoism Class Activity: Prisoner's Dilemma	Lecture: E. Egoism Reading: Relativism and Pluralism	Reading: Relativism and Pluralism Study Q's: Relativism and Pluralism
<b>THURSDAY, DAY 4</b>	Discussion: Metaethics Essay Lecture: Relativism and Pluralism Discussion: Relativism and Pluralism	Film: Is Morality Relative? Debate: Relativism	Reading: Utilitarianism Study Q's: Utilitarianism
<b>FRIDAY, DAY 5</b>	Lecture: Utilitarianism Discussion: Utilitarianism Film: Does the End Justify the Means?	Essay: Relativism and Utilitarianism Moral Jeopardy: Part I	No class

<b>WEEK 2</b>	<b>MORNING</b>	<b>AFTERNOON</b>	<b>EVENING</b>
<b>SUNDAY</b>	No class	No class	Reading: Kantianism (at library) Study Q's: Kantianism
<b>MONDAY, DAY 6</b>	Lecture: Kantianism Discussion: Kantianism Group Work: Kantianism	Film: Can Rules Define Morality? Essay: Kantianism	Reading: Virtue Ethics Study Q's: Virtue Ethics
<b>TUESDAY, DAY 7</b>	Lecture: Virtue Ethics Discussion: Virtue Ethics Group Work: Virtue Ethics	Film: Is Ethics Based on Virtue? Essay: Virtue Ethics	Reading: TA's reading
<b>WEDNESDAY, DAY 8</b>	TA day	TA day	Movie: John Q
<b>THURSDAY, DAY 9</b>	Discussion: John Q Reading: Special Responsibilities Study Q's: Special Responsibilities Lecture: Special Responsibilities	Discussion: Special Responsibilities Debate: Special Responsibilities	Reading: Abortion Study Q's: Abortion
<b>FRIDAY, DAY 10</b>	Lecture: Abortion Discussion: Abortion Prepare for Debate	Debate: Abortion Moral Jeopardy: Part II	No class

<b>WEEK 3</b>	<b>MORNING</b>	<b>AFTERNOON</b>	<b>EVENING</b>
<b>SUNDAY</b>	No class	No class	Reading: Animal Rights Study Q's: Animal Rights
<b>MONDAY, DAY 11</b>	Lecture: Animal Rights Discussion: Animal Rights Prepare for Colloquium Film: Humane Slaughter?	Animal Rights Colloquium	Bioethics Colloquium
<b>TUESDAY, DAY 12</b>	Rap Session: Spice 1 Reading: Problem of Affluence Study Q's: Problem of Affluence Prepare for Debate	Genetics Debate: Meeting of the Minds	Lecture: Problem of Affluence Discussion: Problem of Affluence
<b>WEDNESDAY, DAY 13</b>	Reading: Affirmative Action Study Q's: Affirmative Action	Lecture: Affirmative Action Discussion: Affirmative Action	Debate: Affirmative Action
<b>THURSDAY, DAY 14</b>	Prep for Logic Debate Movie: Crimes & Misdemeanors Discussion: Morality & Happiness Wine & Cheese Party	Moral Jeopardy: Marathon	Logic Debate
<b>FRIDAY, DAY 15</b>	Reflections on Class		