



UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
FACULTY OF ARTS
Department of Philosophy

PHIL 347 Lec 01
Contemporary Moral Problems
SPRING 2022

COURSE OUTLINE

Instructor Name: Dr. Shelley Smith

Email: sasmi@ucalgary.ca

(Though I am usually quick at responding to emails, please allow 24 hours for a response and do not expect responses in the evening or on weekends.)

Office hours: via zoom or telephone by email request

COURSE DELIVERY INFORMATION

Synchronous remote: Tuesday/Thursday 6:00--8:45pm (Lectures will not be recorded)

PREREQUISITE(S)

There are no prerequisites for this course.

COURSE INFORMATION

A critical examination of some central moral problems with emphasis on understanding the nature of the problems and identifying alternative reasoned responses. By the end of the course students will understand the basics of several moral theories and be able to apply them in identifying and critically evaluating conflicts in moral consideration between individuals, and towards animals and the environment. This course will include discussion of controversial topics and sensitive issues.

COURSE OBJECTIVES/LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Broad knowledge of contemporary philosophical issues, problems, and views;
- Basic understanding of major ethical theories;
- Ability to critically digest, interpret, and analyze complex texts and arguments;
- Ability to write a convincing argument that takes adequate account of alternative positions; and
- Ability to engage in constructive and respectful dialogue.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

Required text (available in the bookstore): ***The Ethical Life: Fundamental Readings in Ethics and Moral Problems*** (5th Edition) Russ Shafer-Landau (editor), Oxford University Press. (2020) ISBN-13: 9780190058241

An e-book is available for rental: e-isbn: 9780190058258

Additional readings may be posted to D2L.

COURSE ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Course Assessment

All course components are to be submitted through the appropriate D2L dropbox prior to the due date/time. It is the student's responsibility to ensure timely and successful submissions.

- **Quizzes (online-D2L):** 3 online quizzes worth 10% each (Total 30%). Due dates:

- Quiz #1: Sunday, May 15th at 11:30pm
- Quiz #2: Sunday, May 22nd at 11:30pm
- Quiz #3: Sunday, May 29th at 11:30pm
- **Take-home midterm test worth 30%:** questions available online via D2L assignment dropbox Friday, May 27th at 8am and due Monday, May 30th at 11:30pm
- **Critical essay worth 40%:** due via D2L assignment dropbox Friday, June 17th at 11:30pm

There will not be a final exam for this course.

A passing grade on any particular component of the course is NOT essential for passing this course as a whole.

Late submissions will be accepted with appropriate documentation and prior arrangement with the instructor. I know that we remain in trying times, and I will work with you as circumstances require, but you must contact me **prior to** due dates to agree an extension.

If no arrangements are agreed prior to the due date, a late penalty of 1/3 letter grade a day will apply (i.e. an 'A' assignment a day late will be given an 'A-', two days late a 'B+', etc.) to a maximum of 5 days late. No assignments will be accepted (or graded) later than 5 days late.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is important to success in this class. It is always a good idea to have peer group support – get to know a couple of your peers. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to review the course materials missed (textbook readings, powerpoint notes, videos) and obtain class notes from a peer. Spring semester courses are condensed - significant material is covered every class. The instructor will not summarize lectures for you via email or Zoom.

Quizzes (30%)

The 3 quizzes (10% each) will cover readings and lecture material covering moral theories. The quizzes are to be written at home at a time most convenient for you, are open-book, timed (maximum 60 minutes), and consist of 25-30 multiple choice questions. Quiz #1 (deontological ethics) is due Sunday, May 15th at 11:30pm, Quiz #2 (consequentialist ethics) is due Sunday, May 22nd at 11:30pm, and Quiz #3 (social contract theory, virtue ethics and care ethics) is due Sunday, May 29th at 11:30pm. Questions will be drawn from all required readings, and lecture material (powerpoint notes and additional videos).

Adhering to due dates is highly recommended as your ability to engage critically with contemporary problems depends on your understanding of moral theory and your ability to apply it to specific questions and issues. The final deadline for completion of all 3 quizzes is Friday, June 10th at 11:30pm. NO quiz submissions will be accepted past that deadline for any reason.

Midterm Test (30%)

The midterm test will be a take-home short essay. You will be required to answer 1 of 3 questions in essay format based on course material covered to date. The questions will be posted to the D2L assignment dropbox Friday, May 27th at 8am and your essay due Monday, May 30th at 11:30pm. For all questions, you will be required to engage with course content, and textbook readings must be cited. Further guidelines will be provided in class and posted to D2L.

Critical Essay (40% each)

The final course assessment comprises a critical essay between 1,000-1,300 words in length (approximately 4-5 pages double-spaced). You will choose a specific issue/conflict from those discussed in class and critically evaluate the issue, defending a clearly stated position with reasonable supporting arguments (and cited where required). Further guidelines will be provided in class and posted to D2L.

Letter grades reflect the following standards, as outlined in the UCalgary Academic Calendar:

- A: Excellent – superior performance, showing comprehensive understanding of subject matter.
- B: Good – clearly above average performance with knowledge of subject matter generally complete.
- C: Satisfactory – basic understanding of the subject matter.
- D: Minimal pass – marginal performance; generally insufficient preparation for subsequent course in the same subject.
- F: Fail – unsatisfactory performance or failure to meet course requirements.

The quality of writing WILL be a component in grading.

In all written work, proper and complete citations are extremely important. See section below “Academic Misconduct/Honesty”.

Grading Scale:

A+ 96-100	B+ 80-84.99	C+ 65-69.99	D+ 50-54.99
A 90-95.99	B 75-79.99	C 60-64.99	D 45-49.99
A- 85-89.99	B- 70-74.99	C- 55-59.99	F 0-44.99

IMPORTANT DEPARTMENTAL, FACULTY AND UNIVERSITY INFORMATION

Academic Accommodations

It is the student’s responsibility to request academic accommodations according to the University policies and procedures. The student accommodation policy can be found at ucalgary.ca/legal-services/sites/default/files/teams/1/Policies-Student-Accommodation-Policy.pdf.

Students needing an Accommodation because of a disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: ucalgary.ca/legal-services/sites/default/files/teams/1/Policies-Accommodation-for-Students-with-Disabilities-Procedure.pdf. Students needing an Accommodation in relation to their coursework or to fulfil requirements for a graduate degree, based on a protected ground other than disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to their instructor.

Absence or Missed Course Assessments

Students who are absent from class assessments (tests, participation activities, or other assignments) should inform their instructors as soon as possible. If the reason provided for the absence is acceptable, instructors may decide that any arrangements made can take forms other than make-up tests or assignments. For example, the weight of a missed grade may be added to another assignment or test.

Student Support and Resources

Full details and information about the following resources can be found at ucalgary.ca/current-students/student-services

- Wellness and Mental Health Resources
- Student Success Centre
- Student Ombuds Office
- Student Union (SU) Information
- Graduate Students’ Association (GSA) Information
- Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points
- Safewalk

Academic Advising

If you are a student in the Faculty of Arts, you can speak to an academic advisor in the Arts Students' Centre about course planning, course selection, registration, program progression and more. Visit the Faculty of Arts website at <https://arts.ucalgary.ca/current-students/undergraduate/academic-advising> for contact details and information regarding common academic concerns.

For questions specific to the philosophy program, please visit arts.ucalgary.ca/philosophy. Further academic guidance is available by contacting Jeremy Fantl (Undergraduate Program Director jfantl@ucalgary.ca) or David Dick (Honours Advisor dgdick@ucalgary.ca).

Writing Assessment and Support

The assessment of all written assignments—and, to a lesser extent, written exam responses—is based in part on writing skills. This includes correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.), as well as general clarity and organization. Research papers must include a thorough and accurate citation of sources. Students are also encouraged to use Writing Support Services for assistance. For more information, and other services offered by the Student Success Centre, please visit ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success.

Required Technology

In order to successfully engage in their learning experiences at the University of Calgary, students taking online, remote, and blended courses are required to have reliable access to the following technology:

- A computer with a supported operating system, as well as the latest security, and malware updates;
- A current and updated web browser;
- Webcam (built-in or external);
- Microphone and speaker (built-in or external), or headset with microphone;
- Current antivirus and/or firewall software enabled;
- Broadband internet connection.

Most current laptops will have a built-in webcam, speaker and microphone.

Responsible Use of D2L

Important information and communication about this course will be posted on D2L (Desire2Learn), UCalgary's online learning management system. Visit <https://ucalgary.service-now.com/it> for how-to information and technical assistance.

All users of D2L are bound by the guidelines on the responsible use of D2L posted here: <https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/commitment-to-the-responsible-use-of-d2l/>. The instructor may establish additional specific course policies for D2L, Zoom, and any other technologies used to support remote learning. Instructional materials, including audio or video recordings of lectures, may not be posted outside of the course D2L site. Students violating this policy are subject to discipline under the [University of Calgary's Non-Academic Misconduct policy](#).

Media Recording

Please refer to the following statement on media recording of students: https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Media-Recording-in-Learning-Environments-OSP_FINAL.pdf

Academic Misconduct/Honesty

Cheating or plagiarism on any assignment or examination is as an extremely serious academic offense, the penalty for which will be an F on the assignment or an F in the course, and possibly a disciplinary sanction such as probation, suspension, or expulsion. For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please see the University of Calgary Calendar at ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html.

Intellectual honesty requires that your work include adequate referencing to sources. Plagiarism occurs when you do not acknowledge or correctly reference your sources. If you have questions about referencing, please consult your instructor.

University Policies

The Instructor Intellectual Property Policy is available at ucalgary.ca/legal-services/sites/default/files/teams/1/Policies-Intellectual-Property-Policy.pdf

The University of Calgary is under the jurisdiction of the provincial Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act, as outlined at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/access-information-privacy>. The instructor (or TA) must return graded assignments *directly* to the student UNLESS written permission to do otherwise has been provided.

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/sites/default/files/teams/1/Policies-Acceptable-Use-of-Material-Protected-by-Copyright-Policy.pdf>) and requirements of the copyright act (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>).