



UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY  
FACULTY OF ARTS  
Department of Philosophy

**PHIL 499 Lec 01**  
**“Topics in Philosophy: Obligation”**  
FALL TERM 2020

**COURSE OUTLINE**

**Instructor Name:** Ish Haji

**Email:** ihaji@ucalgary.ca

**Office Hours:** Tu/Th 9:30 – 10:30. You may reach me via email during these hours.

**COURSE DELIVERY INFORMATION**

(1) Lecture: Hybrid Delivery. Discussions (Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:30 to 1:30). We will meet online for part but not all of the originally scheduled class meeting time during which we will engage in online discussion via Zoom. The sessions may be recorded.

(2) Handouts for course modules will be posted on D2L under *Content*. Among other things, they contain complete summaries of lectures that would have been presented during regular class. Announcements for what you should study on your handouts each week for the weekly online discussions will be posted on D2L. Handouts are copyrighted.

**PREREQUISITE(S):** 6 units in courses labelled Philosophy with 3 units at the 300 level or above.

**COURSE INFORMATION**

Topics on the nature of obligation to be studied in this course include the analysis of obligation; changeability of obligations over time; genuine moral dilemmas; supererogation and suberogation; the overridingness of moral obligation; and freedom presuppositions of obligation.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES/LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Students should be able to

1. Explain or discuss key concepts such as *being obligatory*, *being supererogatory*, *being a prima facie obligation*.
2. Critically analyze philosophical texts on various aspects of obligation.
3. Acquire in depth knowledge on key topics introduced in the course.
4. Write a convincing argument for or against fundamental issues to be discussed in the course.
5. Engage in constructive oral argumentation regarding relevant concepts, principles, or theories introduced in the course.

**REQUIRED/RECOMMENDED TEXTBOOKS, READINGS AND MATERIALS**

Students will be supplied with a list of papers or book chapters. Each of these is available online in journals or other venues to which our University Library subscribes. Handouts and lecture summaries will be posted on D2L.

**COURSE ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION**

**Assessment Components and Grading Schemes**

(1) Three papers. The first (four-page) paper will be worth 30% of the final grade. The second and third (four-page) papers will each be worth 35% of the final grade. Writing and the grading thereof is a factor in evaluation. Writing should be clear, coherent, and to the point.

(2) Three Summaries: For each paper you will write a one-page summary. You will present your summary in an online session and it may be workshopped by the class as a whole. These summaries are not graded, although a missing, ill prepared, or ill presented summary will reduce the grade of your corresponding paper by two whole letter grades. (See the policy on late assignments below.)

#### *Tentative Assignment Dates*

First summary:	Thursday, October 01
First paper:	Thursday, October 08
Second summary:	Thursday, October 29
Second paper:	Friday, November 06
Third summary:	Tuesday, December 01
Third paper:	Tuesday, December 08

(3) Class Participation: You are expected to be an active participant during online discussions. Prepare the appropriate course material and have questions and comments ready.

(4) There will be no Registrar-scheduled final exam.

(5) There will be no provisions for “extra-credit.” A passing grade on any particular component of the course is not required for a pass in the course as a whole.

#### *Grading Method*

Each paper will be assigned a letter grade. The student’s overall grade for the course will be an average of the student’s letter grades on the student’s papers. Letter grades will be averaged by using the following scheme.

#### *Conversion of Number Grades into Letter Grades*

A+ = 100-96; A = 95-90; A- = 89-85; B+ = 84-80; B = 79-75; B- = 74-71; C+ = 70-67; C = 66-62; C- = 61-59; D+ = 58-54; D = 53-50; F = 49-0.

#### *Late or Missing Assignments*

No unexcused late papers or summaries will be accepted without adequate justification. Missing papers will receive an “F” (a numerical score of zero). Each missing, ill prepared, or ill presented summary will reduce the grade of the corresponding paper by two whole letter grades.

### **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/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf](http://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/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/policies/files/policies/procedure-for-accommodations-for-students-with-disabilities.pdf](http://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/procedure-for-accommodations-for-students-with-disabilities.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/Registrar/registration/course-outlines](http://ucalgary.ca/Registrar/registration/course-outlines)

- 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 [arts.ucalgary.ca/advising](http://arts.ucalgary.ca/advising) for contact details and information regarding common academic concerns.

For questions specific to the philosophy program, please visit [phil.ucalgary.ca](http://phil.ucalgary.ca). Further academic guidance is available by contacting David Dick (Undergraduate Program Director [dgdick@ucalgary.ca](mailto:dgdick@ucalgary.ca)) or Jeremy Fantl (Honours Advisor [jfantl@ucalgary.ca](mailto:jfantl@ucalgary.ca)). If you have questions regarding registration, please email Rebecca Lesser (Undergraduate Program Administrator [phildept@ucalgary.ca](mailto:phildept@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/ssc](http://ucalgary.ca/ssc).

### **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 [ucalgary.service-now.com/it](http://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](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](http://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/policies/files/policies/Intellectual%20Property%20Policy.pdf](http://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/Intellectual%20Property%20Policy.pdf)

The University of Calgary is under the jurisdiction of the provincial Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act, as outlined at [ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip](http://ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip). 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 ([ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright-policy.pdf](http://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright-policy.pdf)) and requirements of the copyright act ([laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html](http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html)).