



FACULTY OF ARTS  
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

**Philosophy 609 – Topics in the History of Philosophy  
Lec 01, Topic 3: “Kant’s Ethics”**

**Fall Term 2010**

**Course Outline**

**Lectures: W 12:00-14:30, ST 128**

**Instructor:** Elizabeth Brake

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**Office Hours :** Monday, 1 p.m. – 3 pm.

***Course Description***

This course is a close study of Kant’s ethics. We will begin with the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785), which sets out the structure of Kant’s moral theory and his most important arguments for it. We will consider different interpretations and criticisms of Kant’s theory. In the second half of the course, we will read portions of the *Metaphysics of Morals* (1797-98), which applies Kant’s theory in the realms of justice and virtue. Here we will consider specific topics such as property, marriage, lying, and the virtues. We will also discuss developments of Kant’s views in the *Critique of Practical Reason* (1788).

***Texts***

- Mary Gregor, ed., *Practical Philosophy* (Cambridge University Press, The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant).
- Additional assigned readings will be posted on Blackboard or via the Library website.

***Assessment***

<b><i>Weight</i></b>	<b><i>Assignment</i></b>	<b><i>Due date</i></b>
15%	Short writing assignment	Oct 6
25%	In-class test	Oct 20
15%	Presentation(with written component)	TBA
5%	Participation	
40%	Term paper (3-4000 words)	Dec 13

To pass the class, you must complete all assignments. Participation will be assessed on the basis of well-informed, constructive questions and contributions to discussion. Weekly, quality comments will earn full marks; failure to contribute at all over the course of the semester will earn no points. Detailed instructions will be given for each writing assignment. There will not be a Registrar-scheduled final exam.

I will not accept assignments by e-mail. Assignments handed in outside class must be submitted in the drop box on the 12<sup>th</sup> floor of Social Sciences. Late work will be penalized by 3 points each day it is overdue, unless there is a documented excuse.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Any instance of plagiarism – downloading papers from the Internet, copying or paraphrasing material from any source – will be reported to the Faculty of Arts and I will assign an F for the course or the assignment.

As stated in the University Calendar, letter grades reflect the following standards:

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 courses in the same subject.

F: Fail — unsatisfactory performance or failure to meet course requirements.

Grade scale:

A+	97-100	A	93-96	A-	90-92
B+	87-89	B	83-86	B-	80-82
C+	77-79	C	73-76	C-	70-72
D+	67-69	D	60-66	F	59 and below

Writing skills will be a factor in the evaluation of work.

There is a Blackboard site for this course. Log in at <<http://blackboard.ucalgary.ca/>> using your U of C e-mail username and password. I will use Blackboard

- to communicate grades
- to make announcements (including reading assignments)
- to post course documents (this outline, writing assignments, powerpoint slides)
- to link to philosophy web-sites.

**Books on library reserve:**

Works by Kant:

*Anthropology from a pragmatic point of view* (trans. Gregor, 1974)

*Critique of practical reason* (trans. Gregor, 1997)

*Groundwork of the metaphysics of morals* (trans. Gregor, 1998)

*Lectures on ethics* (trans. Heath, 1996)

*The metaphysics of morals* (trans. Gregor, 1991)

*Philosophical correspondence, 1759-99* (trans. Zweig, 1967)

*Practical philosophy* (mainly trans. Gregor, 1996)

Secondary literature:

Gregor, Mary, *Laws of freedom: a study of Kant's method of applying the categorical imperative in the Metaphysik der Sitten*

Guyer, Paul, *The Cambridge companion to Kant*

Korsgaard, Christine, *Creating the kingdom of ends*

O'Neill, Onora, *Constructions of Reason*

Paton, H. J., *The Categorical imperative: a study in Kant's moral philosophy*

Timmons, Mark, *Kant's Metaphysics of morals: interpretative essays*

Williams, Howard, *Kant's political philosophy*

Wood, Allen, *Kant's ethical thought*

## **Schedule**

This is a rough guide. Specific page assignments will be given out in class.

### **Sept 15** First meeting

#### **Sept 22** The analysis of ordinary moral concepts; acting from duty: Groundwork I

O. O'Neill, 'Kantian Ethics', in Peter Singer, ed., *A Companion to Ethics* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 175-185

M. Baron, 'On the Alleged Moral Repugnance of Acting from Duty', *The Journal of Philosophy* 81:4 (1984), 197-220

#### **Sept 29** The Categorical Imperative: Formula of Universal Law: Groundwork II

C. Korsgaard, *Creating the Kingdom of Ends* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 77-105

#### **Oct 6** The Categorical Imperative: Formula of the End in Itself: Groundwork II

O. O'Neill, 'Between consenting adults', *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 14:3 (1985), 252-277

#### **Oct 13** The Categorical Imperative: Formula of the Kingdom of Ends; equivalence of the formulae: Groundwork II

O. O'Neill, 'Universal laws and ends-in-themselves', in *Constructions of Reason* (Cambridge University Press, 1989), 126-144

### **Oct 20** Test

#### **Oct 27** The synthetic a priori connection of rationality to morality; the defense of freedom: Groundwork III

T. Hill, 'Kant's argument for the rationality of moral conduct', *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 66 (1985), 3-23

#### **Nov 3** The defense of freedom, cont.: excerpts, Critique of Practical Reason

#### **Nov 10** Kant's theory of justice; property rights: excerpts, Doctrine of Justice

H. Williams, 'Kant's concept of property', *Philosophical Quarterly* 27:106 (1977), 32-40

#### **Nov 17** Kant's account of marriage and the family: excerpts, Doctrine of Justice

B. Herman, 'Could it be worth thinking about Kant on sex and marriage?', in Louise Antony and Charlotte Witt, eds., *A Mind of One's Own* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1993), 49-67

#### **Nov 24** Kant's theory of virtue: excerpts, Doctrine of Virtue

R. Louden, 'Kant's Virtue Ethics', *Philosophy: The Journal of the Royal Institute of Philosophy* 61 (1986), 473-489

#### **Dec 1** Truth-telling: excerpts, Doctrine of Virtue, and 'On the Supposed Right to Lie from Philanthropic Motives'

#### **Dec 8** Love and respect: excerpts, Doctrine of Virtue

M. Baron, 'Love and respect in the *Doctrine of Virtue*', in Mark Timmons, ed., *Kant's Metaphysics of Morals: Interpretative Essays* (Oxford University Press, 2002), 391-407