

ETHICS

SPRING 2024

INSTRUCTOR

Daniel John Sportiello, Ph.D.
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701-355-8109

OFFICE HOURS

Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays,
2:00 PM–2:50 PM, and
Tuesdays and Thursdays,
9:30 AM–10:15 AM

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A study of morality and its relation to human happiness. It articulates the philosophical foundations of a teleological ethics of virtue, such as that of Aristotle or Aquinas; it compares this ethical theory with at least one rival, such as consequentialism or deontology, and applies each to some of life's most serious ethical questions. PHI 308 students are required to complete additional work for the course. A student may not receive credit for both PHI 208 and 308.

COURSE OUTCOMES

This course asks you to do all of these:

- Articulate the relationship between morality and a flourishing human life.
- Articulate the philosophical foundations of a virtue-based teleological ethical theory, as found in Aristotle or Aquinas.
- Articulate the philosophical foundations of at least one rival to this theory, such as consequentialism.
- Apply these ethical theories to some of life's most serious ethical questions.
- Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of these ethical theories.

Note that, to measure your attainment of these outcomes, you must do certain assessments.

ASSESSMENTS

Your final grade will be determined by your performance on fifteen quizzes, on five tests, on a reflection, and on an exam—and, for that matter, by your attendance:

- Fifteen quizzes will determine fifteen percent of your final grade. You must submit each quiz on Canvas prior to the start of the relevant class.
- Five tests will determine forty percent of your final grade. You must submit each test on Canvas prior to the end of the relevant day.

- A reflection will determine fifteen percent of your final grade. You must submit this reflection on Canvas prior to the end of the relevant day.
- An exam will determine twenty-five percent of your final grade. You must submit this exam on Canvas prior to the end of the relevant day.
- Attendance will determine five percent of your final grade. When your absence is excused, it will be counted as an attendance.

Note that, if you fail to do an assessment by the time that it is due—for any reason—then you may receive a grade of zero on that assessment. Because of this, you should not wait until the last minute to do any assessment! Note also that, to do well in these assessments, you must do certain readings.

READINGS

These readings are available at the bookstore—though you are free to buy them elsewhere:

- Aristotle. *Nicomachean Ethics*. Edited and translated by Robert C. Bartlett and Susan D. Collins. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012. ISBN: 978-0226026756.
- Saint Thomas Aquinas. *Treatise on Law*. Edited and translated by Richard J. Regan. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2000. ISBN: 978-0872205482.
- Immanuel Kant. *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*. Revised edition. Edited and translated by Mary Gregor and Jens Timmerman. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012. ISBN: 978-1107401068.
- John Stuart Mill. *Utilitarianism*. Second edition. Edited by George Sher. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2001. ISBN: 978-0872206052.
- Friedrich Nietzsche. *On the Genealogy of Morality*. Edited and translated by Maudemarie Clark and Alan J. Swenson. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1998. ISBN: 978-0872202832.

Any other readings are available on Canvas.

BENEDICTINE VALUES

All six of our [Benedictine Values](#) are implicated in this course. At its heart, though, is Hospitality—that is, a sort of vulnerability to the ideas of others.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Because discussion plays a crucial role in this course, it is crucial that you not only attend class but also listen attentively and contribute seriously to that discussion—not occasionally but every time that we meet. You should, in other words, be present at and participating in every class—unless, of course, you provide an official university excuse.

I reserve the right to drop you from the course should you miss ten classes without an official university excuse. This is in accord with the excessive absence policy, which is available for review [online](#).

TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Though laptops, tablets, and smartphones are profoundly useful, they are also profoundly distracting—not only to you but also to others. Therefore, you may not use laptops, tablets, and smartphones in class unless, at your request, I have given you permission to do so.

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

It should go without saying that academic dishonesty of any sort is wrong. Worse than that, though, academic dishonesty reveals a serious confusion regarding the reasons that one is in a course in philosophy—or, for that matter, at a university—in the first place. Such dishonesty is occasion for as much pity as anger.

Presenting the work of another as your own is academically dishonest. Whenever you copy the words of another, therefore, you must place those words within quotation marks and cite their source. (This goes for the words of any artificial intelligence, by the way!)

As a deterrent, let me promise that I will prosecute every instance of academic dishonesty. But do not misinterpret this promise: if you feel that you do not understand something well enough to explain it in your own words—whether in this course or in any other—then come to me for help. We will work together to overcome whatever difficulty stands in your way.

COURSE INFORMATION

This course, PHI 308 05/06, meets for fifteen weeks on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 11:00 AM/12:30 PM in Welder Library 205. It is worth three credits, is required for the core curriculum, and is graded according to the usual scale. (Note that there won't be any rounding.)

STATEMENT ON WORKLOAD

Since this is a three semester-credit undergraduate-level course lasting fifteen weeks, students can expect to spend a minimum of three hours a week instructional time and another six hours a week studying outside of instructional time.

STATEMENT ON EXCUSED ABSENCES

The University has a policy on excused absences related to sponsored or sanctioned activities and events. The policy is available for review [online](#). Students participating in such activities and events are expected to review this policy and comply with it. As long as appropriate prior notification is given according to this policy, students and faculty reach a mutual agreement concerning make-up work, and students complete the work in question, faculty shall not penalize a student for missing a class or exam when they were granted an excused absence from the university. Any questions concerning the policy may be referred to

the course instructor who may refer the question to the athletic director, the student activities director, or academic affairs for an answer.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC HONESTY

Students are expected to read the University of Mary's [Academic Honor Code and Honor System](#) and abide by all the standards of conduct and requirements contained therein. When a student is in doubt about whether or not an action might constitute an Academic Honor Code violation, he or she should request clarification from the instructor *before* the action in question is undertaken.

STATEMENT ON REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

The University of Mary, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and in the spirit of our mission, offers support for disabled students who provide the required documentation. Students with disabilities who need accommodations should apply to the [Office of Student Accessibility Services](#). For further information, contact Dr. Lynn Dodge, coordinator of Student Accessibility Services, in the Student Success Center. You can reach her at 701-355-8264 or ljdodge@umary.edu.

COURSE COMMUNICATION CHANNEL

Students should communicate any questions or concerns relating to this course to the following individuals in the order listed below. To learn more about the University of Mary's process for responding to academic concerns, students should read its policy, which is available for review [online](#).

Dan Sportiello, Associate Professor of Philosophy > Vacancy, Associate Dean of Arts and Letters > Vacancy, Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences

1	Tuesday	January 9	No Class		
	Thursday	January 11	Introduction		
2	Tuesday	January 16	Virtue Ethics		
	Thursday	January 18	Virtue Ethics	<i>Ethics</i> , § 1	Quiz 1
3	Tuesday	January 23	Virtue Ethics	<i>Ethics</i> , § 2	Quiz 2
	Thursday	January 25	Virtue Ethics	<i>Ethics</i> , §§ 7.1–3	Quiz 3
4	Tuesday	January 30	Virtue Ethics		Test 1
	Thursday	February 1	Consequentialism		
5	Tuesday	February 6	Consequentialism	<i>Utilitarianism</i> , §§ 1–2	Quiz 4
	Thursday	February 8	Consequentialism	<i>Utilitarianism</i> , §§ 3–4	Quiz 5
6	Tuesday	February 13	Consequentialism	<i>Utilitarianism</i> , § 5	Quiz 6
	Thursday	February 15	Consequentialism		Test 2
7	Tuesday	February 20	Deontology		
	Thursday	February 22	Deontology	<i>Groundwork</i> , § 1	Quiz 7
8	Tuesday	February 27	Deontology	<i>Groundwork</i> , § 2	Quiz 8
	Thursday	February 29	No Class		
9	Tuesday	March 5	Deontology	<i>Groundwork</i> , § 3	Quiz 9
	Thursday	March 7	Deontology		Test 3
10	Tuesday	March 12	Existentialism		
	Thursday	March 14	Existentialism	<i>Genealogy</i> , § 1	Quiz 10
11	Tuesday	March 19	Existentialism	<i>Genealogy</i> , § 2	Quiz 11
	Thursday	March 21	Existentialism	<i>Genealogy</i> , § 3	Quiz 12
12	Tuesday	March 26	Existentialism		Test 4
	Thursday	March 28	Catching Up		

13	Tuesday	April 2	Natural Law		
	Thursday	April 4	Natural Law	<i>Treatise</i> , §§ 90–92	Quiz 13
14	Tuesday	April 9	Natural Law		Reflection
	Thursday	April 11	Natural Law	<i>Treatise</i> , §§ 93–94	Quiz 14
15	Tuesday	April 16	Natural Law	<i>Treatise</i> , §§ 95–97	Quiz 15
	Thursday	April 18	Natural Law		Test 5
16	Tuesday	April 23	No Class		Exam
	Thursday	April 25	No Class		