



## PHIL 1005W Introduction to Ethics Fall 2023

MWF 11:15am-12:05pm

Wilson Hall, Room 129

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### INTRODUCTION

Ethics is a branch of philosophy that deals with moral principles, theories, and questions about right and wrong. Ethics is also an umbrella under which many subdisciplines, such as metaethics, normative ethics, and applied ethics fall.

In this course, students will encounter a variety of ethical theories. The texts we will read range from translations of ancient works to contemporary philosophical essays. This course proceeds in historical order to provide a sense of the trajectory of ethical thought over time.

### COURSE GOALS

- To engage and reflect on one's writing and editing processes
- To understand a variety of perspectives on ethical questions
- To improve skills in analysis, close reading, argumentation, and writing
- To understand foundational texts in the history of ethics
- To gain proficiency in applying ethical frameworks to contemporary problems

### OFFICE HOURS

M: 12:30-1:30pm  
Furman Hall Rm 108  
TH 3:30-4:30pm (zoom)  
or by appointment

### Instructor

Prof. Kelly Cunningham  
email: [kelly.cunningham.1@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:kelly.cunningham.1@vanderbilt.edu)

### Texts

*Almost every text is available through the Vanderbilt Library.* When not available digitally through the library, I will upload PDFs of them to Brightspace. They are listed on the last pages of this syllabus. Many of the texts we use have multiple translations, so **please copy and paste the citations or use the permalinks** to ensure you have the same version. You should always have a copy of the assigned text with you in class.

## ATTENDANCE, ACCESSIBILITY, & INTEGRITY

### Attendance & Participation

All students are expected to attend lectures and discussion sections. There is also a participation expectation for this course, and in order to participate you must be present. Excused absences will not affect your final participation grade. You are permitted 3 “no-questions-asked” absences per semester.

### Accessibility

Vanderbilt University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. To receive such accommodations students are to apply for services through the Student Access Center. The Center can be reached at [disabilityservices@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@vanderbilt.edu) and is located in the Baker Building, Suite 108.

### Technology Policy

The use of technology in the classroom (such as laptops or tablets) is often crucial for students with accessibility needs, but it can also be a distraction for some students. To ensure everyone’s needs are met to the best of our collective abilities, we will co-author our technology policy in class on Wednesday 8/23, and it will then be posted to Brightspace. Cell phones should be kept away during class.

### FERPA Compliance Reminder

To protect student privacy, FERPA guidelines state that professors are not to discuss grades via email. If you would like to discuss your grades, please come to office hours, email me to make an appointment or use your private “journal” discussion board on Brightspace.

### Academic Integrity

All students are required to make themselves familiar with the Vanderbilt University Undergraduate Honor Code:

*Vanderbilt University students pursue all academic endeavors with integrity. They conduct themselves honorably, professionally, and respectfully in all realms of their studies in order to promote and secure an atmosphere of dignity and trust. The keystone of the honor system is self-regulation, which requires cooperation and support from each member of the University community.*

As individuals, each person is called to uphold this code as described in the undergraduate honor code pledge:

*I pledge to pursue all academic endeavors with honor and integrity. I understand the principles of the Honor System, and I promise to uphold these standards by adhering to the Honor Code in order to preserve the integrity of Vanderbilt University and its individual members.*

In any case of suspected misconduct in this course, the case in question will be submitted for review by the Honor Council. This includes use of Chat GPT and other AI writing tools. If you are unsure as to whether the way you are using these technologies is permitted, please contact me *before* using it for your assignments.

## ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

**Participation:** Your participation grade will be based on participation in discussions and in-class activities.

**Journal Entries:** Doing philosophy requires not only respectful discussion and debate, but also personal reflection, close reading, and writing. Over the course of the semester you must complete 8 journal entries, which will be graded on a ✓-/✓/✓+ scale via Brightspace. For full points, all 8 entries must receive ✓ or higher. You are welcome to complete more than 8, but only the highest 8 scores will count toward your final grade. Prompts for your journal entries will be available for the following week immediately after Friday's class on Brightspace. Journal entries are due **before** the class when we'll be discussing the reading that you respond to (e.g. if you respond to the prompt for 8/25's reading, it should be posted before 11:15am on 8/25). Responses posted for readings after the start of class will not be graded. There are thirty opportunities for journal entries throughout the semester.

**Short Writing Assignments 1 & 2:** Prompts for writing assignments will be available two weeks before they are due. You should answer **only one** of the prompts. Papers should be no more than 1,200 words. Anything more than 10% over will be marked down by 2 points per 10% over. See final assignment for instructions on citations and formatting. A rubric is available on Brightspace.

**Case Study Presentation:** Early in the semester, you will select a day to do a short (8-10 minute) presentation of a case study of your choice. Your case study can take any format you'd like, but it cannot be one that we cover together in class. An assignment description and rubric will be available on Brightspace at least three weeks before the first presentation day. Your final case study grade will be comprised of three parts:

1. Written case description and analysis (40%)
2. In-Class Presentation (40%)
3. Three Peer Reviews (completed in class on a day that you are *not* presenting) (20%)

**Final Essay:** Your final essay will build on your case study presentation. You are welcome to use material from your first and second essays as well, but it is expected that you revise and edit if you do so. Your final essay should be ~2,500 words (i.e. 5-7 double spaced, in an easily legible 12pt font) You should format your paper and references using the same style and format throughout. I do not care which citation style/format you use so long as you are consistent. My recommendation is to use a citation style that is common in your discipline so that you practice something you will use beyond this class. MLA, Chicago, and APA are all common in philosophy. It is due December 14<sup>th</sup> by midnight.

## EVALUATION

### Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Numerical Equivalent
A	93-100
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	63-66
D-	60-62
F	0-59

### Grade Breakdown

Assignment	% of Final Grade
Participation	5%
Journal Entries	10%
Short Writing Assignment #1	20%
Short Writing Assignment #2	20%
Case Study Presentation	20% (total)
	8% Written portion
	8% In-Class Presentation
	4% Peer Reviews
Final Paper	25%

## COURSE SCHEDULE

You are required to read the assigned text *before* the meeting in which it will be discussed. Always bring your text to class. Case Studies vary in format, but will be made available via link or PDF file on Brightspace. With the exception of journal entries, all assignments and things you should have prepared for class that day are ***in bold and italics***. Breaks are indicated in blue. All assignments should be uploaded to the appropriate space on Brightspace.

Week	Topic	Readings & Assignments	
1	Welcome Week	W 8/23	Syllabus day, no readings,
		F 8/25	Kristie Dotson, "Concrete Flowers", Case Study #1
2	Virtue Ethics (Aristotle)	M 8/28	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , Book I, chapters i-v, vii-x, xiii
		W 8/30	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> Book II, chapters i-vi, viii-ix

		F 9/1	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> Book III chapters i-vii <b>Prompts for Short Paper #1 Available</b>
3	Virtue Ethics (Aristotle & Confucius)	M 9/4	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> Book X chapters i-iv, vi-vii, ix
		W 9/6	Writing Workshop #1, <i>be prepared to choose presentation days</i>
		F 9/8	Confucius, <i>The Analects of Confucius</i> , Book I & II
4	Virtue Ethics (Confucius)	M 9/11	Confucius, <i>The Analects of Confucius</i> , Book III & Book VII
		W 9/13	Confucius, <i>The Analects of Confucius</i> , Book XX
		F 9/15	Case Study #2
5	Modern Ethics (Hume)	M 9/18	David Hume, <i>Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals</i> , Section 1 <b>First writing assignment due before start of class, upload to Brightspace</b>
		W 9/20	David Hume, <i>Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals</i> , Section 2
		F 9/22	David Hume, <i>Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals</i> , Section 3,
6	Modern Ethics (Hume and Kant)	M 9/25	David Hume, <i>Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals</i> , Appendixes 1 & 2
		W 9/27	Immanuel Kant, <i>Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals</i> , Preface and Section I
		F 9/29	Immanuel Kant, <i>Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals</i> , Section 2 (stop at 4:425) <b>Prompts for Short Paper #2 Available</b>
7	Modern Ethics (Kant)	M 10/2	Immanuel Kant, <i>Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals</i> , Finish Section II
		W 10/4	Immanuel Kant, <i>Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals</i> , Section III
		F 10/6	Writing Workshop #2: Planning, Drafting, Editing Proofreading, <b>be prepared to share case choice and source(s)</b>
8	Modern Ethics (Mill)	M 10/9	John Stuart Mill, <i>Utilitarianism</i> , chapter I
		W 10/11	John Stuart Mill, <i>Utilitarianism</i> , chapter II
		F 10/13	John Stuart Mill, <i>Utilitarianism</i> , chapter III, <b>Second Writing Assignment Due before start of class, upload to Brightspace</b>
9	Modern Ethics (Mill) Fall Break	M 10/16	John Stuart Mill, <i>Utilitarianism</i> , chapter V
		W 10/18	Case Study #3

		F 10/20	FALL BREAK NO CLASS/ NO READING
10	Ethics at the Turn of the Century	M 10/23	W.E.B. DuBois, <i>The souls of Black folk</i> , "Of Our Spiritual Strivings" pages 7-15
		W 10/25	Jane Addams, <i>Democracy and Social Ethics</i> . Chapter III, "Filial Relations"
		F 10/27	<b>Student Presentations 1-3</b>
11	20 <sup>th</sup> Century Ethics	M 10/30	W.D. Ross, "Is there a moral end?" (pages 90-98)
		W 11/1	Jean-Paul Sartre, "Existentialism is a Humanism" (pages 17-72 or listen to it as a lecture)
		F 11/3	<b>Student Presentations 4-6</b>
12	20 <sup>th</sup> Century Ethics	M 11/6	Virginia Held, <i>The Ethics of Care</i> , Chapter 1
		W 11/8	Virginia Held, <i>The Ethics of Care</i> , Chapter 2
		F 11/10	<b>Student Presentations 7-9</b>
13	20 <sup>th</sup> Century Ethics	M 11/13	Annette Baier, "Trust and Antitrust"
		W 11/15	Annette Baier, "The Need for More Than Justice"
		F 11/17	Case Study #4
	BREAK	M 11/20	<i>Thanksgiving Break no class, no readings</i>
		W 11/22	<i>Thanksgiving Break no class, no readings</i>
		F 11/24	<i>Thanksgiving Break no class, no readings</i>
14	Ethics of the new Millennium	M 11/27	bell hooks, <i>All About Love</i> , Chapter 1
		W 11/29	Angela Davis, <i>Are Prisons Obsolete?</i> Chapter 1
		F 12/1	<b>Student Presentations 10-12</b>
15	Wrap-up Week	M 12/4	<b>Student Presentations 13-15</b>
		W 12/6	Wrap-up, Writing Workshop #3, <b>bring draft/outline to class, Case Study Peer Reviews due</b>
		F 12/8	<i>Reading Day, no class, no readings Additional Zoom office hours (during normal class time) available</i>

Your final essay/presentation is due at the end of the day of our Registrar scheduled final exam: **Thursday, December 14<sup>th</sup> by midnight**. You will submit it through the course Brightspace page. Please plan accordingly and submit **on time**. I am required to submit grades by Monday, December 18<sup>th</sup> at noon, so anything received after this time will receive a 0. The penalty for late submission on all assignments is a partial letter grade per day (e.g. a B paper that is one day late receives a B-; a B paper that is two days late receives a C+; & etc.).

## Reading List

1. Dotson, Kristie. "Concrete Flowers: Contemplating the Profession of Philosophy." *Hypatia*, vol. 26, no. 2, 2011, pp. 403–09, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1527-2001.2011.01176.x>. **(PDF available on Brightspace)**  
**Library Permalink:**  
[https://catalog.library.vanderbilt.edu/permalink/01VAN\\_INST/11nigse/cdi\\_crossref\\_primary\\_10\\_1111\\_j\\_1527\\_2001\\_2011\\_01176\\_x](https://catalog.library.vanderbilt.edu/permalink/01VAN_INST/11nigse/cdi_crossref_primary_10_1111_j_1527_2001_2011_01176_x)
2. Aristotle., et al. *The Nicomachean Ethics* [electronic Resource] / Aristotle ; Translated by David Ross ; Revised with an Introduction and Notes by Lesley Brown. Oxford University Press, 2009.  
**Library Permalink:**  
[https://catalog.library.vanderbilt.edu/permalink/01VAN\\_INST/6ll2l/alma991028037119703276](https://catalog.library.vanderbilt.edu/permalink/01VAN_INST/6ll2l/alma991028037119703276)
3. Confucius., and Burton Watson. *The Analects of Confucius* [electronic Resource] / Translated by Burton Watson. Columbia University Press, 2007.  
**Library Permalink:**  
[https://catalog.library.vanderbilt.edu/permalink/01VAN\\_INST/6ll2l/alma991043314586803276](https://catalog.library.vanderbilt.edu/permalink/01VAN_INST/6ll2l/alma991043314586803276)
4. Hume, David, and Tom L. Beauchamp. *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* / David Hume ; Edited by Tom L. Beauchamp. Oxford University Press, 1998. **(PDF available on Brightspace)**  
**Library Permalink:**  
[https://catalog.library.vanderbilt.edu/permalink/01VAN\\_INST/6ll2l/alma991031027409703276](https://catalog.library.vanderbilt.edu/permalink/01VAN_INST/6ll2l/alma991031027409703276)
5. Kant, Immanuel, and Mary J. Gregor. *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*. 1998.  
**Library Permalink:**  
[https://catalog.library.vanderbilt.edu/permalink/01VAN\\_INST/6ll2l/alma991043303886003276](https://catalog.library.vanderbilt.edu/permalink/01VAN_INST/6ll2l/alma991043303886003276)
6. Mill, John Stuart, and Roger Crisp. *Utilitarianism* / J.S. Mill ; Edited by Roger Crisp. Oxford University Press, 1998.  
**Library Permalink:**  
[https://catalog.library.vanderbilt.edu/permalink/01VAN\\_INST/6ll2l/alma991031031619703276](https://catalog.library.vanderbilt.edu/permalink/01VAN_INST/6ll2l/alma991031031619703276)
7. Du Bois, W. E. B. (William Edward Burghardt), and Brent Hayes Edwards. *The Souls of Black Folk* [electronic Resource] / W.E.B. Du Bois ; Edited with an Introduction and Notes by Brent Hayes Edwards. Oxford University Press, 2007. **(PDF available on Brightspace)**

**Library Permalink:**

[https://catalog.library.vanderbilt.edu/permalink/01VAN\\_INST/6ll2l/alma991043271701703276](https://catalog.library.vanderbilt.edu/permalink/01VAN_INST/6ll2l/alma991043271701703276)

8. Addams, Jane, and Charlene Haddock Seigfried. *Democracy and Social Ethics* / Jane Addams ; Introduction by Charlene Haddock Seigfried. University of Illinois Press, 2002. **(PDF available on Brightspace)**

**Library Permalink:**

[https://catalog.library.vanderbilt.edu/permalink/01VAN\\_INST/6ll2l/alma991030595559703276](https://catalog.library.vanderbilt.edu/permalink/01VAN_INST/6ll2l/alma991030595559703276)

9. Ross, W. D. "SYMPOSIUM: IS THERE A MORAL END?" *Supplementary Volume - Aristotelian Society*, vol. 8, 1928, p. 90–98. **(PDF available on Brightspace)**

**Library Permalink:**

[https://catalog.library.vanderbilt.edu/permalink/01VAN\\_INST/11nigse/cdi\\_proquest\\_journals\\_1311786881](https://catalog.library.vanderbilt.edu/permalink/01VAN_INST/11nigse/cdi_proquest_journals_1311786881)

10. Sartre, Jean-Paul, et al. *Existentialism Is a Humanism = (L'Existentialisme Est Un Humanisme) : Including, a Commentary on The Stranger = (Explication de L'Étranger)* / Jean-Paul Sartre ; Translated by Carol Macomber ; Introduction by Annie Cohen-Solal ; Notes and Preface by Arlette Elkaïm-Sartre ; Edited by John Kulka. Edited by John Kulka, Translated by Carol Macomber, Yale University Press, 2007, <https://doi.org/10.12987/9780300242539>. **(Also available in lecture format via Youtube link on Brightspace)**

**Library Permalink:**

[https://catalog.library.vanderbilt.edu/permalink/01VAN\\_INST/6ll2l/alma991043973831803276](https://catalog.library.vanderbilt.edu/permalink/01VAN_INST/6ll2l/alma991043973831803276)

11. Held, Virginia. *The Ethics of Care: Personal, Political, and Global* / Virginia Held. Oxford University Press, 2006. **(PDF available on Brightspace)**

**Library Permalink:**

[https://catalog.library.vanderbilt.edu/permalink/01VAN\\_INST/6ll2l/alma991043332571503276](https://catalog.library.vanderbilt.edu/permalink/01VAN_INST/6ll2l/alma991043332571503276)

12. Baier, Annette. "Trust and Antitrust." *Ethics*, vol. 96, no. 2, 1986, pp. 231–60, <https://doi.org/10.1086/292745> **(PDF available on Brightspace)**

**Library Permalink:**

[https://catalog.library.vanderbilt.edu/permalink/01VAN\\_INST/11nigse/cdi\\_proquest\\_journals\\_1290289526](https://catalog.library.vanderbilt.edu/permalink/01VAN_INST/11nigse/cdi_proquest_journals_1290289526)

13. Baier, Annette, C. "The Need for More Than Justice." *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, vol. 17, 1987, pp. 41–56,

<https://doi.org/10.1080/00455091.1987.10715928>. **(PDF available on**

**Brightspace)**

**Library Permalink:**

[https://catalog.library.vanderbilt.edu/permalink/01VAN\\_INST/11nigse/cdi\\_proquest\\_journals\\_1290289526](https://catalog.library.vanderbilt.edu/permalink/01VAN_INST/11nigse/cdi_proquest_journals_1290289526)

14. hooks, bell. *All About Love : New Visions* / Bell Hooks. 1st Perennial ed., Perennial, 2001.

**Library Permalink:**



[https://catalog.library.vanderbilt.edu/permalink/01VAN\\_INST/6ll2l/alma991043861709603276](https://catalog.library.vanderbilt.edu/permalink/01VAN_INST/6ll2l/alma991043861709603276)

15. Davis, Angela Y. (Angela Yvonne). Are Prisons Obsolete? / Angela Davis. Seven Stories Press, 2003. **(PDF available on Brightspace)**