

# Jepe von Platz | Teaching Portfolio



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## 1. Teaching experience

### Formal teacher training

- I received teacher training as a teaching assistant at both University of Tennessee and University of Pennsylvania.
- I've participated in teacher training seminars at University of Tennessee, University of Pennsylvania, and Suffolk University.
- At Suffolk University I've also completed a three day training in syllabus design and development at the Center for Teaching Excellence.

### Courses taught at Suffolk University

[Note: 300/600 level courses are open to both undergraduate and graduate students]

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Spring 2016	<i>Bio- &amp; Medical Ethics</i> , Phil-363/663 <i>Ethics and Civic Life</i> , Phil-120
Fall 2015	<i>Ethics and Civic Life</i> , Phil-120 <i>Environmental Ethics</i> , Phil-362/662 <i>Distributive Justice</i> , Phil-H319/619
Fall 2014	<i>Social Ethics</i> , Phil-123 <i>Environmental Ethics</i> , Phil-362/662 <i>Distributive Justice</i> , Phil-H319/619
Spring 2014	<i>Bio &amp; Medical Ethics</i> , Phil-363/663 <i>Honors Introduction to Ethics</i> , Phil-H119
Fall 2013	<i>Prosperity: The Nature, Sources, and Ethics of the Good Society</i> , SF-1126 <i>Environmental Ethics</i> , Phil-362/662 <i>Distributive Justice</i> , Phil-H319/619
Spring 2013	<i>Honors Introduction to Ethics</i> , Phil-H119 <i>Bio- &amp; Medical Ethics</i> , Phil-363/663
Fall 2012	<i>Environmental Ethics</i> , Phil-362/662 <i>Distributive Justice</i> , Phil-319/619 <i>Prosperity: The Nature, Sources, and Ethics of the Good Society</i> , SF-1126
Spring 2012	<i>Honors Introduction to Ethics</i> , Phil-H119
Fall 2011	<i>Environmental Ethics</i> , Phil-362/662

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## Courses taught at Brown University

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Spring 2012 *John Rawls*, Graduate Seminar.  
Fall 2011 *Prosperity* (co-instructor), Undergraduate Seminar

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## Courses taught at the University of Pennsylvania

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Fall 2010 *The Social Contract*, Phil-008

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## Teaching Assistantships

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Spring 2009 *The Social Contract*, UPenn, for Samuel Freeman  
Fall 2008 *Ethics*, Phil-002, UPenn, for Adrienne Martin  
Spring 2008 *Introduction to Logic*, UPenn, for Scott Weinstein  
Fall 2007 *Introduction to Philosophy*, UPenn, for Susan Schneider  
Spring 2006 *Introduction to Philosophy*, University of Tennessee, for John Nolt  
Fall 2005 *Introduction to Philosophy*, University of Tennessee, for John Nolt

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## Thesis supervision and directed studies

Master's Thesis supervisor for Cori Roach, 2016  
Master's Thesis supervisor for Beatriz-Blasco Aguiar, 2015-2016  
Master's Thesis supervisor for Haley Albano, 2014  
Master's Thesis supervisor for Charles Mahdy, 2012-2013  
Master's Thesis supervisor for Avery Struthers, 2011-2012  
Honors theses supervisor for various students (total ca. 10), 2012-  
Independent study advisor (4 credits) for Wesley Nord, Spring 2016  
Independent study advisor (4 credits) for Amanda Carpenter, Summer 2014  
Independent study advisor (1 credit) for Jennifer McCourt, Spring 2014

## 2. Teaching evaluations

*Phil-363/663, Bio- & Medical Ethics, Spring 2016*

Scale from 0-5, where 0 = poor and 5 = excellent.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Overall, how much did you learn from this course?	5
Instructor fostered a respectful learning environment	5
The instructor stimulated your interest in learning the subject matter	5
The instructor was prepared for class	5
The syllabus reflected the structure of the course	4.9
The instructor was available outside of class as stated in the syllabus	5

*Phil-120, Ethics and Civic Life, Spring 2016*

Scale from 0-5, where 0 = poor and 5 = excellent.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Overall, how much did you learn from this course?	4.8
Instructor fostered a respectful learning environment	4.9
The instructor stimulated your interest in learning the subject matter	4.8
The instructor was prepared for class	5
The syllabus reflected the structure of the course	4.9
The instructor was available outside of class as stated in the syllabus	4.9

*Phil-319/619, Distributive Justice, Fall 2015*

Scale from 0-5, where 0 = poor and 5 = excellent.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Overall, how much did you learn from this course?	4.9
Instructor fostered a respectful learning environment	4.9
The instructor stimulated your interest in learning the subject matter	4.8
The instructor was prepared for class	5
The syllabus reflected the structure of the course	4.9
The instructor was available outside of class as stated in the syllabus	4.9

*Phil-362/662, Environmental Ethics, Fall 2015*

Scale from 0-5, where 0 = poor and 5 = excellent.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Overall, how much did you learn from this course?	4.9
Instructor fostered a respectful learning environment	5
The instructor stimulated your interest in learning the subject matter	4.9
The instructor was prepared for class	5
The syllabus reflected the structure of the course	4.9
The instructor was available outside of class as stated in the syllabus	5

*Phil-120, Ethics and Civic Life, Fall 2015*

Scale from 0-5, where 0 = poor and 5 = excellent.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Overall, how much did you learn from this course?	4.9
Instructor fostered a respectful learning environment	4.9
The instructor stimulated your interest in learning the subject matter	4.8
The instructor was prepared for class	5
The syllabus reflected the structure of the course	4.9
The instructor was available outside of class as stated in the syllabus	4.8

*Phil-319/619, Distributive Justice, Fall 2014*

Scale from 0-5, where 0 = poor and 5 = excellent.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Overall, how much did you learn from this course?	4.8
Instructor fostered a respectful learning environment	4.8
The instructor stimulated your interest in learning the subject matter	4.8
The instructor was prepared for class	5
The syllabus reflected the structure of the course	4.8
The instructor was available outside of class as stated in the syllabus	5

*Phil 363/663, Environmental Ethics, Fall 2014*

Scale from 0-5, where 0 = poor and 5 = excellent.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Overall, how much did you learn from this course?	4.9
Instructor fostered a respectful learning environment	4.9
The instructor stimulated your interest in learning the subject matter	4.9
The instructor was prepared for class	4.9
The syllabus reflected the structure of the course	4.9
The instructor was available outside of class as stated in the syllabus	4.9

*Phil-123, Social Ethics, Fall 2014*

Scale from 0-5, where 0 = poor and 5 = excellent.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Overall, how much did you learn from this course?	4.6
Instructor fostered a respectful learning environment	4.8
The instructor stimulated your interest in learning the subject matter	4.7
The instructor was prepared for class	4.9
The syllabus reflected the structure of the course	4.7
The instructor was available outside of class as stated in the syllabus	4.9

*Phil 363/663, Bio- & Medical Ethics, Spring 2014*

Scale from 0-5, where 0 = poor and 5 = excellent.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Overall, how much did you learn from this course?	4.8
Instructor fostered a respectful learning environment	5
The instructor stimulated your interest in learning the subject matter	4.7
The instructor was prepared for class	5
The syllabus reflected the structure of the course	5
The instructor was available outside of class as stated in the syllabus	5

*Phil H119A, Honors Introduction to Ethics, Spring 2014*

Scale from 0-5, where 0 = poor and 5 = excellent.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Overall, how much did you learn from this course?	4.7
Instructor fostered a respectful learning environment	4.9
The instructor stimulated your interest in learning the subject matter	4.7
The instructor was prepared for class	5
The syllabus reflected the structure of the course	5
The instructor was available outside of class as stated in the syllabus	5

*Phil 363/663, Environmental Ethics, Fall 2013*

Scale from 0-5, where 0 = poor and 5 = excellent.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Overall, how much did you learn from this course?	4.8
Instructor fostered a respectful learning environment	4.9
The instructor stimulated your interest in learning the subject matter	4.7
The instructor was prepared for class	5
The syllabus reflected the structure of the course	5
The instructor was available outside of class as stated in the syllabus	4.9

*Phil 319/619, Distributive Justice, Fall 2012*

Scale from 0-5, where 0 = poor and 5 = excellent.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Overall, how much did you learn from this course?	4.8
Instructor fostered a respectful learning environment	5
The instructor stimulated your interest in learning the subject matter	5
The instructor was prepared for class	5
The syllabus reflected the structure of the course	4.9
The instructor was available outside of class as stated in the syllabus	5

*SF-1126; Prosperity: The Nature, Sources, and Ethics of a Good Society, Fall 2013*

Scale from 0-5, where 0 = poor and 5 = excellent.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Overall, how much did you learn from this course?	4.4
Instructor fostered a respectful learning environment	4.8
The instructor stimulated your interest in learning the subject matter	4.7
The instructor was prepared for class	5
The syllabus reflected the structure of the course	5
The instructor was available outside of class as stated in the syllabus	5

*Phil 363/663, Bio- & Medical Ethics, Spring 2013*

Scale from 0-5, where 0 = poor and 5 = excellent.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Overall, how much did you learn from this course?	5
Instructor fostered a respectful learning environment	5
The instructor stimulated your interest in learning the subject matter	5
The instructor was prepared for class	5
The syllabus reflected the structure of the course	5
The instructor was available outside of class as stated in the syllabus	5

*Phil H119A, Honors Introduction to Ethics, Spring 2013*

Scale from 0-5, where 0 = poor and 5 = excellent.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Overall, how much did you learn from this course?	5
Instructor fostered a respectful learning environment	5
The instructor stimulated your interest in learning the subject matter	4.9
The instructor was prepared for class	5
The syllabus reflected the structure of the course	4.8
The instructor was available outside of class as stated in the syllabus	5

*Phil 319/619, Distributive Justice, Fall 2012*

Scale from 0-5, where 0 = poor and 5 = excellent.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Overall, how much did you learn from this course?	5
Instructor fostered a respectful learning environment	5
The instructor stimulated your interest in learning the subject matter	5
The instructor was prepared for class	5
The syllabus reflected the structure of the course	4.9
The instructor was available outside of class as stated in the syllabus	5

*Phil 363/663, Environmental Ethics, Fall 2012*

Scale from 0-5, where 0 = poor and 5 = excellent.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Overall, how much did you learn from this course?	4.8
Instructor fostered a respectful learning environment	5
The instructor stimulated your interest in learning the subject matter	4.8
The instructor was prepared for class	5
The syllabus reflected the structure of the course	4.8
The instructor was available outside of class as stated in the syllabus	5

*SF-1126; Prosperity: The Nature, Sources, and Ethics of a Good Society, Fall 2012*

Scale from 0-5, where 0 = poor and 5 = excellent.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Overall, how much did you learn from this course?	5
Instructor fostered a respectful learning environment	4.9
The instructor stimulated your interest in learning the subject matter	4.8
The instructor was prepared for class	5
The syllabus reflected the structure of the course	4.9
The instructor was available outside of class as stated in the syllabus	5

*Phil H119, Honors Introduction to Ethical Theory, Spring 2012*

Scale from 0-5, where 0 = poor and 5 = excellent.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Overall, how much did you learn from this course?	4.2
Instructor fostered a respectful learning environment	4.7
The instructor stimulated your interest in learning the subject matter	3.6
The instructor was prepared for class	4.9
The syllabus reflected the structure of the course	4.6
The instructor was available outside of class as stated in the syllabus	5

*Phil 363/663, Environmental Ethics, Fall 2011*

Scale from 0-5, where 0 = poor and 5 = excellent.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Overall, how much did you learn from this course?	5
Instructor fostered a respectful learning environment	5
The instructor stimulated your interest in learning the subject matter	5
The instructor was prepared for class	5
The syllabus reflected the structure of the course	5
The instructor was available outside of class as stated in the syllabus	5



*Phil 008: The Social Contract, UPenn, Fall 2010*

Scale from 0-4, where 0 = poor and 4 = excellent.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Overall evaluation of the teacher	3.89
Overall quality of the course	3.50
Accessibility outside of course	3.87
Ability to communicate subject matter	3.87
Ability to stimulate interest	3.87
Amount learned from this course	3.47
Amount of work required for this course	3.00
Would you recommend this course to a major?	3.73
Would you recommend this course to a non-major?	2.93

### 3. Statement from my Department Chair

The following is an extract from a letter written by my department chair, Gregory Fried, as part of his annual report to Suffolk University.

“Prof. von Platz’s teaching has been exceptional. His course evaluations frequently receive *average* scores of a full 5 on the five-point scale in multiple categories, and virtually all are well above 4. His all-time average rating is an astounding 4.9.

His students rave about him: his knowledge, his clarity, his engagement, his ability to connect with them. I have seen Prof. von Platz in class, as well as in many other contexts as a teacher and scholar – advising, departmental colloquia and conferences, informal events with students — and he embodies a rare combination: the ability to set high standards while also putting students entirely at their ease. He inspires his students with a sense of informal collegiality, so that they are at their ease discussing the material, while at the same time, he has high expectations of their approaching the material rigorously and responsibly.”

## 4. Development

### Course and program development

I have developed a number of new courses for Suffolk University, including:

- Phil-319/619: Distributive Justice
- Phil-362/662: Environmental Ethics
- Phil-363/663: Bio- & Medical Ethics
- Phil-120: Ethics and Civic Life
- SF-1126: Prosperity: The Nature, Sources, and Ethics of the Good Society
- PPE-401: Political Economy

I've also created and am now director of a new interdisciplinary program and major at Suffolk University, namely, the Program and Major in Politics, Philosophy, and Economics. Find more information about this program (and get an idea of what we're currently doing) on these pages:

<https://www.suffolk.edu/college/departments/53076.php> and

<http://ppe.vonplatz.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/suffolkppe>

I've also been part of the task force responsible for the development of a Program and undergraduate major in Urban Ecology and Sustainability at Suffolk University.

Presently I'm part of a task force looking into the feasibility and attractions of creating an interdisciplinary BA in Law at Suffolk University.

I'm a permanent member of the following committees responsible for the development and maintenance of various programs at Suffolk: Honors, Critical Thinking, Study Abroad, and Environmental Studies

## Teaching materials developed

I've developed an extensive portfolio of teaching materials for the courses I teach regularly. These include (send me an email if you'd like to see any of these):

- A introductory guide to the study of philosophy, titled *How to Read, Think, and Write Philosophy*
- Handouts: for some courses I have very detailed handouts for every class, for other courses I have handouts on key concepts and methods.
- Blackboard lectures: for some of my courses I've developed online lectures that the students can access via Blackboard.
- Compendia: for three of my courses (*Distributive Justice, Prosperity, and Ethics and Civic Life*) I've developed compendia of course readings.
- I'm currently working on ways to use the online environment more actively for both communication and interacting with students.

## 5. Teaching philosophy and methods

“Man only becomes man by education” Kant reportedly told his students. I agree. Education, in a broad sense, is that by which we human beings develop our truly human dispositions and become fit to assume the various offices, rights and duties, of our social existence. Education thus has both individual and collective aims: education should provide the person with the resources she needs to live a fulfilling life as a productive member of society. For similar reasons, Dewey observed that education always is education for a type of human existence in a kind of social context. This observation invites the question: For what type of existence in what type of society do we educate our students? In a democratic society, the following is at least part of the answer: education should prepare our students to take responsibility for their own lives and to assume the role as free and equal citizen. How can we prepare our students for this role? Again, I agree with Dewey; we should give our students the resources to develop on their own. Or, to return to Kant, the end of education is to help our students become better at using their freedom responsibly (what Kant calls maturity).

I introduce these high-brow ideals of education because ideals matter for how (and what) we teach. What philosophy gives our students, and what I aim to give my students, is the ability to critically reflect on what sorts of lives they’d like to lead and how this individual end coheres with and is part of their social and political existence. The question is, of course, how I move from these general and abstract aspirations to specific and concrete practice: What goes on in my classroom that expresses these aims?

I provide my students with a space wherein they are viewed as mature and equal reasoners. In my classroom, what matters are the arguments and not age or gender or beauty or whatever else it is that so often determine the recognition and respect students receive. To this end, I try to foster serious but relaxed atmosphere: serious in that I expect my students to be prepared and pay attention and never ridicule or take lightly the reasons offered by other students; relaxed in that they should feel that they are simply taking part of an interesting conversation about some hard question and that, as long as they respect the other students, they can freely make up and speak their mind.

It is hard to read, think, and write about philosophy. To help my students, I use a variety of means (depending on the type and size of class): study questions, reading quizzes, reflection papers, online lectures, wikis, group work, exercises that show how the arguments interact with contemporary ideas.

In short, I design and teach my classes with the intent to sharpen my student’s ability to read, write, and think for themselves and to get them acquainted with questions, methods, and texts that aid them to better reflect on what they should do with their life and what society they should desire to live in.

### A Note on Exams

In terms of teaching methods, I believe in a multi-modality approach – I use discussions, lectures, papers, reflections, reading quizzes, group-work, presentations, and many other methods.

I've used many different forms of exams in my courses – oral exams, group exams, varieties of in class and take-home written assignments – but I increasingly use individual, take-home, written papers.

The final exam serves two purposes: it tests whether the students have achieved the learning goals and objectives for the course while at the same time gives them a final opportunity for achieving these goals. A written paper is good for both of these purposes. Philosophical skills and knowledge are acquired through conversation about the question discussed and the readings relevant to that question. The written paper gives the student an opportunity to enter into a conversation with an imaginary interlocutor about the question they're trying to answer. In her paper the student will be forced to summarize the readings (which require comprehension) and use them in this conversation about the question. In my experience, oral exams rarely offer teachers as good a picture of what the students have learned; nor do they offer students an equal opportunity to learn.

## 6. Sample syllabi

PHIL 319A/619A

### DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE, POVERTY, AND EQUALITY

Mondays and Wednesdays, 01:40pm - 02:55pm, in 73 Tremont, Room 100

Jeppe von Platz, [jplatz@suffolk.edu](mailto:jplatz@suffolk.edu), office phone: 617-573-8399

Office hours: Wednesdays, 10.30am to 12.30pm (or by appointment) in 1073 of 73 Tremont.

When you email me you can expect a response in about 24 hours, a bit more if it's on a weekend or holiday.

#### ***What is this class about?***

Some of the most vexing political questions of our time are questions of distributive justice: How should we distribute the benefits and burdens of society? Is equality a value? Is poverty unjust? Should the state regulate the market? Why? How? In this class we focus on the philosophical dimensions of these questions and investigate and discuss some of the answers philosophers have proposed.

#### ***What I expect from you***

I promise to be well prepared, to respect you and your point of view, and to do my best to make this class worth your time and effort. In exchange, I ask that you do the readings and think about them. Come to class prepared and on time. Don't bring your laptop, for laptops are not permitted in this class, unless you have special needs that require it. Also: in this class we care about arguments, *no claim or opinion is silly or misguided*, if it is sincerely offered and argued for. Always respect your fellow students.

#### ***Course goals and methods***

##### Goals

After this course you should:

1. Understand and be able to articulate what the main questions of distributive justice are (and why they are important).
2. Understand and be able to articulate the main positions in the area of distributive justice – including the attractions and problems of these positions.
3. Be able to clearly articulate and defend by argument your own view on distributive justice.

##### Methods

To help us reach this goal, we have:

Readings class discussions, short papers, class presentations.

Readings, class discussions, short papers, class presentations.

Final paper and class discussions.

### ***Assignments and grading***

1. Reading quizzes: 20%. To give you an extra reason to do the readings for each class, there will be an in-class quiz for every class where there is an assigned reading. Only the twenty highest scores count. So, each of your twenty highest scoring quizzes count for 1% of your grade.
2. Five (/three) short papers (500-750 words): 30%. To help you understand the concepts and theories we will be working with, you will write short papers. You can skip one of these papers and the lowest scoring paper is dropped. So, of your short papers the three highest scoring count for a total of 30%.
3. Midterm paper (750-850 words) (10%): At the midpoint of the class you'll write your mid-term paper on left-liberalism / Rawls. This paper counts for 10%.
4. One class presentation: 10%. To help you understand, articulate, and present the main questions and positions in distributive justice, you will be asked to partner with another student and present and facilitate discussion of the material in one class.
5. Final paper (1250 words): 20%.
6. Participation: 10%. Your participation grade will be based on your presence and your contribution to making the class a good experience for all of us. Unexcused absences will hurt your participation grade. If you're shy or don't like to speak much in class: don't worry. You don't have to speak a lot to get credit for participation – and a good question can be worth as much as an insightful comment.

### ***Readings***

All readings will be available on Blackboard. The calendar of readings and assignments is on the following pages.



<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic and Readings</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
8/31	<u>1. Welcome</u>	Feel welcomed
9/5	<u>Labor Day – Suffolk University Closed</u>	Unite!

### **PART I: INTRODUCTORY**

9/6	<u>2. Distributive justice, an overview of our topic</u> Platz, “Introduction to Distributive Justice” (18 pages)	Quiz
9/7	<u>3. Egalitarianism</u> Arneson, “Egalitarianism”, sections 1-3 only and skip paragraphs on “Dworkin’s approach”, pages 19-21. (21 pages)	Quiz
9/12	<u>4. Sufficiencyarianism</u> Frankfurt, “Equality as a Moral Ideal”, skip section 3 and appendix, also look at: <a href="http://tiny.cc/q8h31x">http://tiny.cc/q8h31x</a> ; <a href="http://tiny.cc/19h31x">http://tiny.cc/19h31x</a> (total 35 pages)	Quiz
9/14	<u>5. Prioritarianism</u> Parfit, “Equality or Priority?”, skip sections X, XI, pages 112-115 of section XII, and the Appendix. (25 pages)	Quiz
9/17	<u>First short paper due at 6pm</u>	

### **PART II: CLASSICAL LIBERALISM**

9/19	<u>6. Classical liberalism: The Creative Powers of a Free Civilization</u> Hayek, <i>Constitution of Liberty</i> , chapters 2, 3 (sects. 1-4 only) Platz, “Right Liberalism” (draft), sections 1 and 2	Quiz
9/21	<u>7. Classical liberalism: Spontaneous Orders</u> Hayek, <i>Law, Legislation, and Liberty</i> , chap. 2, “Cosmos & Taxis”	Quiz
9/26	<u>8. Classical liberalism: The Market Order</u> Hayek, <i>Law, Legislation, and Liberty</i> , chapter 10	Quiz

- Platz, “Right Liberalism” (draft), sections 3 and 4
- 9/28    9. Classical liberalism: Hayek Against ‘Distributive Justice’    Quiz  
 Hayek, *Law, Legislation, and Liberty*, chapter 9  
 Platz, “Right Liberalism” (draft), sections 5-10
- 10/3    10. Classical liberalism: summary and discussion    Quiz  
 Hayek, *Constitution of Liberty*, chapter 15 (13 pages)  
 Platz, “Right Liberalism” (draft), section 11
- 10/8    Second short paper due at 6pm

### PART III: LEFT-LIBERALISM

- 10/5    10. Rawls / left-liberalism: the basic idea(s) (35 pages)    Quiz  
 Platz, “Left-Liberalism” (draft), sections 1-5.  
 Look also at Freeman’s glossary.
- 10/8    Second Short Paper due at 6pm
- 10/10    Columbus Day - Suffolk University Closed
- 10/12    11. Rawls / left-liberalism: justice as fairness (27 pages)    Quiz  
 TJ, chapter 1 (skip sections 5, pages 28-30, and sections 7-9),  
 chapter 2, intro and section 10
- 10/17    13. Rawls / left-liberalism: the original position (25 pages)    Quiz  
 Freeman “The Original Position” (skip sections 6, 7, 8),  
 Platz, draft chapter sections 6 and 7.
- 10/19    14. Rawls / left-liberalism: first principle of justice, liberties    Quiz  
 Rawls, *Justice as Fairness*, sections 12 (skip 12.3) and 13,  
 Platz, draft chapter section 8.1.
- 10/24    15. Rawls / left-liberalism: second principle of justice (21    Quiz  
 pages)  
 Rawls, *Justice as Fairness* sections 14, 15, 18 (skip subsections 18.5 & 18.6).  
 Platz, draft chapter section 8.2-9.

10/26 16. Rawls / left-liberalism: summary and discussion (13 pages) Quiz  
 Rawls, *TJ*, chapter 4, section 31.  
 Platz, draft chapter sections 10-12

10/29 Midterm paper due at 6pm

#### **PART IV: LIBERTARIANISM**

10/31 17. Libertarianism: Introduction Quiz  
 David Boaz, *Libertarianism: A Primer*, chapter 3;  
 Platz “Libertarianism”, section 1. (Total, 36 pages.)

11/2 18. Libertarianism: ASU, against anarchy Quiz  
 Nozick, *ASU*, Preface, pages 3-6, and chapter 3 (but skip from beginning of section at 35 to paragraph “Utilitarian theory...” at p. 41, and skip section “Underdetermination of Moral Theory”)  
 Platz, “Libertarianism”, section 2. (Total, 31 pages.)

11/7 19. Libertarianism: (against) distributive justice Quiz  
 Nozick, *ASU*, chapter 7, section I (skip subsections “Sen’s Theory” and “Locke’s Theory of Acquisition”).  
 Platz, “Libertarianism”, sections 3 and 4. (Total 34 pages.)

11/9 20. Libertarianism: discussion Quiz  
 Cohen, “Robert Nozick and Wilt Chamberlin: How Patterns Preserve Liberty” (skip sections 7 and 8, but read the last page)  
 Platz, “Libertarianism”, section 5.

11/12 Third Short Paper due at 6pm

#### **PART V: THE QUESTION OF ECONOMIC LIBERTIES**

11/14 21. Liberalism and Economic Liberties Quiz  
 Platz & Tomasi, “Liberalism and Economic Liberty”

11/16 22. Neo-classical liberalism Quiz  
 Tomasi, “Democratic Legitimacy and Economic Liberty”,

skip sections II and V (30 pages)

- |              |  |             |
|--------------|--|-------------|
| <u>11/21</u> | <u>23. Discussion: are economic liberties basic rights?</u><br>Freeman, “Can Economic Liberties be Basic Liberties” (8 pages)<br>Tomasi, “Reply to Freeman: Thick Economic Liberty” (8 pages)<br>Both are available at:<br><a href="http://bleedingheartlibertarians.com/category/symposium-on-free-market-fairness/">http://bleedingheartlibertarians.com/category/symposium-on-free-market-fairness/</a> | Quiz        |
| <u>11/23</u> | <u>Thanksgiving recess!</u>  | Be grateful |
| <u>11/26</u> | <u>Fourth Short Paper due at 6pm</u>   |             |

### PART VI: SOCIALISM

- |              |   |      |
|--------------|---|------|
| <u>11/28</u> | <u>25. What is socialism?</u><br>Arnold, “Socialism”, skip sections 2, 8, and 9 (33 pages)                    | Quiz |
| <u>11/30</u> | <u>26. Socialism: freedom and money</u><br>Cohen, “Freedom and Money” (27 pages)                              | Quiz |
| <u>12/5</u>  | <u>27. Socialism, why not?</u><br>Cohen, <i>Why Not Socialism?</i> Sections I, II, and III (30 pages)         | Quiz |
| <u>12/7</u>  | <u>28. Socialism and capitalism: discussion</u><br>Brennan, <i>Why Not Capitalism</i> , selections (30 pages) | Quiz |
| <u>12/10</u> | <u>Fifth Short Paper due at 6pm</u>   |      |

### CONCLUSIONS

- |              |  |                    |
|--------------|--|--------------------|
| <u>12/12</u> | <u>29. Last class: summary and conclusions</u> | Participate        |
| <b>12/17</b> | <b>Final paper due at 6pm</b>                  | <b>FINAL PAPER</b> |

## **POLICIES AND RESOURCES**

### ***Prerequisites:***

PHIL 119, 120, 123, or 127.

### ***Academic Integrity Policy***

Cheating on examinations, plagiarism and/or improper acknowledgment of sources in essays or research papers, and the use of a single essay or paper in more than one course, without the permission of the instructor, constitute unacceptable academic conduct. Student work may be checked by plagiarism detection software.

Academic dishonesty will be reported to the Office of Student Affairs. Reports will be addressed through the Student Discipline System. An undergraduate student who has been found to have violated this policy is subject to an automatic grade of “F” in the course and to suspension, enforced withdrawal, or dismissal from the University or appropriate lesser penalties if warranted by the circumstances.

### ***The Early Alert Project***

This course participates in Suffolk’s Early Alert Project. For details, see <http://www.suffolk.edu/academics/3057.php>.

### ***Statement on Accommodations for Students with Disabilities***

If you anticipate issues with the format or requirements of this course, please meet with me. I would like to discuss ways to ensure your full participation in my classroom. If you determine that you need formal, disability-related accommodations, it is very important that you register with the [Office of Disability Services](#) (located at 73 Tremont Street, 9th floor, 617-994-6820, [disabilityservices@suffolk.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@suffolk.edu)) and notify me of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. Please consult the following website for more information about the Office of Disability Services here: [www.suffolk.edu/disability](http://www.suffolk.edu/disability)

### ***The Center for Learning and Academic Success (CLAS)***

CLAS offers academic coaching and tutoring in math, writing and English, and many other CAS and SBS courses. Students may join study groups, participate in drop-in services, or make appointments with tutors and academic coaches to reinforce course content, develop writing, and strengthen effective study habits. For a complete review of free services, workshops and online resources go to [www.suffolk.edu/CLAS](http://www.suffolk.edu/CLAS), call 617-573-8235, email [clas@suffolk.edu](mailto:clas@suffolk.edu) or visit CLAS on the 9<sup>th</sup> floor of 73 Tremont Street.

### ***Statement for International Students***

International Student Services Office (ISSO), a part of the Center for International Programs and Services, provides comprehensive support to international students regarding immigration status and DHS regulatory responsibilities. If you are an international student in F-1 or J-1 status, you are responsible to maintain full-time enrollment (minimum of 12 units) every semester, else your immigration status is at risk. For more information, go to <http://www.suffolk.edu/isso>, call 617-573-8034, email [isso@suffolk.edu](mailto:isso@suffolk.edu) or visit ISSO on the 9th floor of 73 Tremont.

### ***Additional policies and resources***

This course is 4 credit hours, it follows the [Federal Government's Credit Hour definition](#). The university provides a range of student services. To learn more, explore this webpage: [www.suffolk.edu/syllabus](http://www.suffolk.edu/syllabus)

***Absences and Attendance Policy:*** [www.suffolk.edu/studenthandbook](http://www.suffolk.edu/studenthandbook)

### ***Continuity Plan***

In the case of interruption to campus access (such as a major snowstorm), we will continue with our course schedule as follows: Expect an email from me after a university announcement that our campus is closed. That email will provide you with instructions for how we will continue with instruction despite the closing. The specifics will depend on what we are covering at the time, but this will usually involve some combination of online discussion through Blackboard, video lectures by me, and other online materials, such as lectures, audio-PowerPoints, and similar mechanisms.

**Your continued enrollment in this course constitutes an acknowledgement that you have read the syllabus and syllabus supplement and will abide by its terms.**



Phil 362 / 662

## ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

Mondays 5:30PM - 8:10PM, in Sawyer, Room 325 (until further notice)

Jeppe von Platz, [jplatz@suffolk.edu](mailto:jplatz@suffolk.edu).

Office hours: Mondays 2-4pm in 1073 of 73 Tremont or by appointment. When you email me you can expect a response in about 24 hours, a bit more if it's on a weekend or holiday.

### ***About this class***

This class is about how we human beings ought to relate to our environment – to animals, plants, species, the climate, ecosystems, the universe. Which of these are of direct moral concern? Why are they of moral concern? How should we regard and treat them? Why?

We will read and discuss a variety of philosophical treatments of these questions. The aim of this class is to provide you with a better grasp of what is at stake in the relation between human beings and our environment, the ability to identify and articulate the relevant philosophical positions, and to use this knowledge to participate in the debate about how we should deal with environmental issues such as species extinction or global warming.

The class has two main parts. In the first part of the class, we deal with the questions of environmental ethics in general. In the second we look at more specific questions concerning sustainability and climate ethics.

### ***Books***

We have two books (both should be available at the bookstore):

- David R. Keller, *Environmental Ethics: The Big Questions* (Wiley Blackwell, 2010) (=EE)
- Stephen Gardiner et al. *Climate Ethics: Essential Readings* (OUP, 2010) (=CE)

Other readings will be made available through Blackboard (= BB)

### ***What I expect from you***

I promise to be well prepared, to respect you and your point of view, and to do my best to make this class worth your time and effort. In exchange, I ask that you do the readings and think about them. Come to class prepared. Bring the readings to class. Don't bring your laptop, for laptops are not permitted in this class, unless you have special needs that require it. Also: this is a philosophy class, which means that we are interested in arguments and that *no claim or opinion is silly or misguided*, if it is sincerely offered and argued for.

## **Course goals and methods**

### Goals

*After this class you should:*

1. Have a good grasp of the main questions of environmental ethics.
2. Understand and be able to articulate the main theories about what objects of our environment have moral standing (and what this means).
3. Understand and be able to articulate the ethical dimensions of anthropogenic global warming.
4. Be able to clearly articulate and defend by argument your own view on the central questions of environmental ethics.

### Methods

*To help us reach this goal, we have:*

- Readings, reflection papers.
- Readings, reflection papers, class discussions, first paper.
- Readings, reflection papers, class discussions, second paper.
- Papers, class and class discussions.

## **Assignments and grading**

### *1. Twelve reflection papers, 30% of grade (only ten highest scores count)*

You are expected to read a lot of philosophy. Reading philosophy is not always fun. It is very easy to do something else or to let the mind wander whilst the eyes scatter across the page. So, to help you engage with the readings, you'll be asked to write one-page reflection papers (350-500 words). I'll distribute questions for you to reflect on in your papers. The main point of these exercises is to help you engage with the readings, so don't worry about originality: the important part of the reflection papers is to show that you have read and understood the assigned texts, not that you think original thoughts about them. (Also: you can freely use ideas or text from your reflections in the longer paper assignments.)

Reflection papers must be turned in by email (as Word document) by the beginning of class the day they are due.

### *2. Two long papers (1000-1250 words): each counts 30% to the final grade*

I will distribute paper topics in advance. If you'd rather write on another topic, come talk to me about it and I'll let you know if it's a good one. Note: it is crucial that you begin thinking and writing early. Philosophy takes time. If you start writing the night before the paper is due, there's a high risk that your paper will suck. Don't take that risk.

Late papers are penalized with a third of a letter-grade per day. Please email me the paper as a Word document.



3. Participation, 10%

Your participation grade will be based on your presence and your contribution to making the class a good experience for all of us. I take attendance and unexcused absences will hurt your participation grade. If you're shy or don't like to speak much in class: don't worry. You don't have to speak a lot to get credit for participation. Just say something when you feel like it – and if you don't feel like it, try to take the point from your reflection paper and raise it in class.

Our schedule is below.

### **Schedule and Readings**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic and readings</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>		
<u>9/14</u>	<u>1. Introduction: What is environmental ethics? And, Do we need it?</u>  Sylvan “Is There a Need for a New, an Environmental, Ethic?” (EE)	None
<b>THE SCOPE OF MORAL CONSIDERATION</b>		
<u>9/21</u>	<u>Jeppe’s away for a conference – home assignment</u>	Reflection paper
<u>9/28</u>	<u>2. Anthropocentrism</u> (20 pages)  Keller, “Introduction: What is Environmental Ethics?” (EE) Locke “Nature as Economic Resource” (EE) Kant “Indirect Duties to Nonhumans” (EE) Supplement: Introduction and section 2 of the entry “Ethics” in the <i>Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy</i> ( <a href="http://www.iep.utm.edu/ethics/">http://www.iep.utm.edu/ethics/</a> )	Reflection paper
<u>10/5</u>	<u>3. Value, Valuable, and Valuing: Introducing non-Anthropocentrism</u> (35 pages)  Rolston III “Values in and Duties to the Natural World” (BB) Rolston III “Value in Nature and the Nature of Value” (EE)	Reflection paper

<u>10/2</u>	<u>4. Sentientism: Utilitarian and Deontological</u> (26 pages)  Singer “All Animals are Equal” (EE) Regan “Animals as Subjects of a Life” (EE)	Reflection paper
10/12	<u>Columbus Day, no class</u>	Relax
<u>10/19</u>	<u>5. Biocentrism</u> (30 pages)  Taylor “The Ethics of Respect for Nature” (EE) Schmidtz “Are All Species Equal?” (BB) Supplement: Sagoff “Animal Liberation and Environmental Ethics: Bad Marriage, Quick Divorce” (BB)	Reflection Paper
<u>10/26</u>	<u>6. Ecocentrism: Wholes and Parts, Should we care about Ecosystems, Species, or Individuals?</u> (35 pages)  Leopold “The Land Ethic” (EE) Regan “How to Worry about Endangered Species” (BB) Sober “Philosophical Problems for Environmentalism” (BB)	Reflection paper
<u>11/2</u>	<u>7. Discussion, What is the scope of moral consideration?</u>  No reading	<b>First Long paper</b>

### CONFLICTING INTERESTS and SUSTAINABILITY

<u>11/9</u>	<u>8. Navigating a universe of conflicting moral reasons</u> (35 pages)  Rolston III “Feeding People versus Saving Nature” (BB) Attfield “Saving Nature, Feeding People, and Ethics” (BB) Schmidtz “Natural Enemies: An Anatomy of Environmental Conflict” (BB)	Reflection paper
<u>11/16</u>	<u>9. Sustainability and the Population Problem</u> (40 pages)  Malthus “An Essay on the Principle of Population” (EE) Ehrlich and Holdren “Impact of Population Growth” (EE) Hardin “The Ecological Necessity of Confronting Overpopulation” (EE) [Read only until and including section “Pollution”] Sen “Population: Delusion and Reality” (EE)	Reflection paper

## CLIMATE ETHICS

- |              |  |                             |
|--------------|--|-----------------------------|
| <u>11/23</u> | <p><u>10. Climate Ethics: Introduction</u> (40 pages)</p> <p>Bill McKibben, “A Special Moment in History” (EE)<br/>         Jamieson, “Adaptation, Mitigation, and Justice” (skip subsection “Agents and Beneficiaries”) (CE)<br/>         Supplement: IPCC, <i>Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability</i> (BB)</p>                        | <p>Reflection<br/>paper</p> |
| <u>11/30</u> | <p><u>11. Climate Ethics: A Perfect Moral Storm?</u> (50 pages)</p> <p>Gardiner “A Perfect Moral Storm: Climate Change, Intergenerational Ethics, and the Problem of Moral Corruption” (CE)<br/>         Supplement: IPCC <i>Climate Change 2014: Mitigation of Climate Change</i> (BB)</p>  | <p>Reflection<br/>Paper</p> |
| <u>12/7</u>  | <p><u>12. Climate Ethics: as a matter of rights</u> (40 pages)</p> <p>Caney “Cosmopolitan Justice, Responsibility, and Global Climate Change” (CE)<br/>         Caney “Climate Change, Human Rights, and Moral Thresholds” (CE)<br/>         Watch the documentary film <i>Cool It</i></p>   | <p>Reflection<br/>paper</p> |
| <u>12/14</u> | <p><u>13. Last class: climate ethics as a matter of distributive justice</u> (50 pages)</p> <p>Shue “Global Environment and International Equality” (CE)<br/>         Shue “Deadly Delays, Saving Opportunities: Creating a More Dangerous World” (CE)<br/>         Supplement: Shue “Subsistence Emissions and Luxury Emissions” (CE)</p> | <p>Reflection<br/>paper</p> |
| <u>12/18</u> | <b>FINAL PAPER DUE</b>   |                             |



Phil-H119AE

INTRODUCTION TO ETHICAL THEORY

Time and Place: Mondays 5:30PM - 8:10PM, in Sawyer, Room 1108

Jeppe von Platz, [jplatz@suffolk.edu](mailto:jplatz@suffolk.edu).

Office hours: I don't have fixed office hours this semester, but I'll be happy to meet with you or answer emails about *any* questions or issues you would like to talk about. If you email me, you should expect a response in about 24 hours, maybe a bit more if it's on a weekend or holiday.

**General note**

I might make changes to the syllabus during the semester – if I do I will send you an email and upload the revised version to our blackboard site.

If you anticipate issues related to the format or requirements of this course, please meet with me. I would like us to discuss ways to ensure full your full participation in the course. If you determine that formal, disability-related accommodations are necessary, it is very important that you be registered with the Office of Disability Services (located in 73 Tremont St., 7th floor, 617-994-6820) and notify me of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. We can then plan how best to coordinate your accommodations.

**About this class**

What should I do with my life? Should I always keep my promises? What's wicked about the Wicked Witch of the West? Should I give to those in need? Why? How much?

These are examples of ethical questions. By contrast with psychological and sociological questions that are about what makes people act the way they do, ethical questions are about how people, you and I, *ought* to be and act.

This class is an introduction to ethical theory. Ethical theory is the attempt to identify the principles and values in light of which we can answer our ethical questions. Different ethical theories identify different principles and values, and these different principles and values support different answers. One theory will tell you that torture is always wrong; another will tell you that torture is sometimes right.

To get a feeling for the world of ethical theory, we look at some of the most influential ethical writings from the history of Western philosophy – the ethical writings of Aristotle, Hume, Mill, and Kant. Through reading these classics we will try to understand the

most important ethical theories. This understanding, in turn, should make you better at thinking about ethical questions.

Be warned, this class will be very hard work. The readings are about as strange and inaccessible as they can be and you will be asked to read a lot. You will also be asked to write a lot.

I do, however, think that your efforts will be rewarded. Yes, the readings are strange and hard, but they are also mindblowingly awesome. – The philosophers we'll read are deeper than space and brighter than the sun, and they write about inherently interesting questions.

### ***What I expect from you***

I promise to be well prepared, to respect you and your point of view, and to do my best to make this class worth your time and effort. In exchange, I ask that you do the readings and think about them. Come to class prepared. Bring the readings to class. Don't bring your laptop, for laptops are not permitted in this class, unless you have special needs that require it. Also: this is a philosophy class, which means that we are interested in arguments and that *no claim or opinion is silly or misguided*, if it is sincerely offered and argued for.

### ***Assignments and Grading***

The only ways to learn philosophy is through talking and writing about philosophy. We'll be talking about philosophy in class. The following assignments should get you writing:

*One quiz: 5%:* in the first class there is a quiz on the readings.

*Five reflection papers: 25% (5% each):* the reflection papers are meant to help you reflect on the reading for the week they are due. For most of these I will give you a question that you can write about, but you are always free to reflect on another topic, as long as the focus of your reflection is that week's reading. Reflection papers should be 350-500 words long.

*Four discussion papers: 40% (10% each):* Each of the discussion papers is meant to help you get a fuller picture of one of the four main philosophers we read in this class. To that end, you will be given a question that invites you to present and discuss the ethical theory of the philosopher. A good discussion paper shows good understanding of the philosopher it is about. Discussion papers should be 550-800 words long.

*Two online discussions: 10% (5% each):* Two of our classes fall on days where the university is closed. Rather than have make-up classes the following Friday, I've decided to

have online classes these weeks. Online classes will run as follows: by Monday night I will upload a lecture on the reading. I will also have created a thread for that class in the discussion board on the Blackboard site for our class. Here you will find a question or two. You are to do two things: first, either post a reply to one of the questions or make your own thread (in either case your post should be at least 350 words); second, comment on *at least two* of your fellow students' posts. Your grade will be based on both your post and your comments. My hope is that our Blackboard discussion will make up for the class discussion that we'll miss these two weeks.

*Final paper:* 10%.

*Participation:* 10%: Your participation grade will be based on your presence and your contribution to making the class a good experience for all of us. I take attendance and unexcused absences will hurt your participation grade by 2% per absence. If you're shy or don't like to speak much in class: don't worry. You don't have to speak a lot to get credit for participation. Just say something when you feel like it – and if you don't feel like it, try to take the point from the paper you wrote that week and raise it in class.

Late papers are penalized by 10% per day late.

I use the following grading scale:

100-97 = A+	93-96 = A	90-92 = A-	87-89 = B+	83-86 = B
80-82 = B-	77-79 = C+	73-76 = C	70-72 = C-	60-69 = D
less than 60 = F				

I do not grade on a curve.

### ***Books (available at the bookstore)***

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (Penguin Classics)

David Hume, *Moral Philosophy* (Hackett Publishing)

Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (Hackett Publishing)

John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, *Utilitarianism and Other Essays* (Penguin Classics)

I will make all other readings available on Blackboard (in the Content section)

**Schedule, Readings, and Assignments**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Theme and readings</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
1/23	<p><u>1. Introduction to Ethical Theory</u>            Feinberg, “Psychological Egoism” (BB)            Rachels, “Challenge of Cultural Relativism” (BB)            (22 pages)</p>	Quiz
1/30	<p><u>2. Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i>: The Good</u>            Aristotle, NE, book I.            (28 pages)</p>	Reflection paper
2/06	<p><u>3. Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i>: the virtues of character</u>            Aristotle, NE, Books II, III (from 1114b25 to end), IV (sections i-v only)            (50 pages)</p>	Reflection paper
2/13	<p><u>4. Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i>: the virtues of thought, on friendship, and the meaning of life</u>            Readings: NE, Books VI, VIII (sections i-viii only), X            (42 pages)</p>	Discussion paper
2/20	<p><u>5. Hume, <i>Enquiry Concerning Morals</i>: Social Utility: Benevolence and Justice</u>            ONLINE CLASS (President’s Day)            Hume, <i>ECM</i>, sections I-IV (pp. 187-217) &amp; appendixes 1, 3 (pp. 268-274 &amp; 281-287).            (42 pages)</p>	Online discussion
2/27	<p><u>6. Hume, <i>Enquiry Concerning Morals</i>: Agreeable and Self-regarding</u>            Hume, <i>ECM</i>, sections V (skip paras 24-41), VI (part I only), VII (paras 1 and 29 only), VIII (paras 1 and 15 only), IX. Also: Essay VIII, “Of Suicide” (pp. 376-383)            (31 pages)</p>	Discussion paper
3/05	<p><u>7. Mill, <i>Utilitarianism</i>: What Utilitarianism Is</u>            Bentham, “Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation”, chapters 1 and 4;            Mill, <i>Utilitarianism</i>, chapters 1 and 2            (35 pages)</p>	Reflection paper

3/12	NO CLASS – Spring Break	Relax
3/19	<u>8. Mill, <i>Utilitarianism</i>: Proof and Justice</u> Mill, <i>Utilitarianism</i> chapters 4 and 5 (33 pages)	Discussion paper
3/26	<u>9. Kant, <i>Groundwork</i> : The Good Will</u> Kant, <i>Groundwork</i> , preface and section 1 (20 pages)	Reflection paper
4/02	<u>10. Kant, <i>Groundwork</i>: Universalize it</u> Kant <i>Groundwork</i> , section, 2 (until paragraph that begins “The Will” at Ak. 427) (16 pages – <u>danger!</u> these are 16 mean pages, don’t underes- timate the time needed to understand them)	Reflection paper
4/09	<u>11. Kant, <i>Groundwork</i>: Humanity as an End in Itself</u> Kant, <i>Groundwork</i> the rest of section 2 O’Neill “Between Consenting Adults” (41 pages)	Discussion paper
4/16	<u>12. Challenges to moral theory part I</u> ONLINE CLASS (Patriot’s Day) Stocker “The Schizophrenia of Modern Ethical Theories” Williams “Persons, Character, and Morality” (33 pages)	Online dis- cussion
4/23	<u>13. Challenges to moral theory part II</u> Baron “The Alleged Moral Repugnance of Acting from Duty” Conly “Utilitarianism and Integrity” Singer “Famine, Affluence, and Morality” (45 pages)	Final paper
4/27	Snow make-up, if needed	

