

Sabancı University  
FALL 2020

## **HUM 317: MAJOR WORKS OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY**

Instructors: Elif Yavnik, Nedim Nomer

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Wednesday 10.40-12.30

Thursday 10.40-11.30

Office Hours: By appointment, via Zoom

\*Please note that this syllabus is tentative and subject to change.

### **Course Description**

This course aims to familiarize students with the field of moral philosophy, with both the cornerstones in its history and certain pressing debates today. It is organized in two parts. The first part provides a background in traditional approaches. It examines virtue ethics, deontology, consequentialism, social contract theories, as well as a criticism of traditional moral philosophy. With that background, the second part then focuses on contemporary discussions in moral philosophy. It addresses issues such as human enhancement, animal rights, deep ecology, and global justice, among others. In both parts, the reading are selected from the main names in the areas.

### **Course Requirements and Grading**

#### Attendance:

The course will be held synchronously on Zoom.

Attendance will be taken during all live sessions. Attendance follow-up starts at the end of the add-drop period.

Please keep your cameras on during class.

After 2 unexcused absences your attendance grade will fall 1 point with every unexcused absence. (That is to say, with 3 unexcused absences you get a 9/10, with 4 you get 8/10, etc.)

Absences for medical reasons are excused when documented with a doctor's report. An absence may also count as excused in case a life situation that you need to attend arises: in that case email and check with me beforehand.

#### Participation in class:

Thoughtful and meaningful participation in class and during is highly encouraged.

Outstanding contribution to the class and proof of engagement with the course material beyond course requirements may bring your final course grade by half a letter (thus bringing it up from a B- to a B, for example), at the instructor's discretion.

### Grading:

Attendance: %10

In-class Quizzes: %20

Group Presentations: %10

Midterm: %30

Final: %30

### In-class Quizzes:

There will be unannounced quizzes during class time. There will be no make ups for missed quizzes. If a student is absent on the day we have a quiz but they have emailed me before class to let me know about their excuse, that quiz will not be included in their quiz average. Anyone who is absent without an excuse will automatically get a zero on that quiz. At the end of the semester everyone's lowest quiz grade will be dropped.

### Group Presentations:

We will have group presentations on the last week of class. During the semester the students will form presentation groups and decide on the topics they want to present on. (I encourage you to talk to me as soon as you begin thinking about a topic. We can even brainstorm about it in class, about how to treat it as an issue in moral philosophy, and everyone can benefit.) The students are to then send me an email with their group members' names, their topic, and a one-page outline of their research, by December 4th. Each group will have around half an hour to present and lead discussion on their topic. Everyone in the group is expected to contribute to both the preparation and the presentation stages.

### Point to letter grade conversion chart:

A	100-96
A-	95-92
B+	91-88
B	87-84
B-	83-80
C+	79-76
C	75-72
C-	71-68
D+	67-64
D	64-59
F	58-0

### **Academic Integrity**

Major Works courses do not tolerate dishonesty and plagiarism.

Plagiarism is an ethical and academic offense.

Papers with plagiarism issues will be graded F, and your semester grade may be F depending on the severity of the offense.

The offense may also be referred to as the University Ethics Committee.

Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fraud, and any failure to cite all materials and sources in your work.

**Anti-Discrimination Policy**

The classroom will be free from all discrimination based on, including but not limited to, race, ethnicity, creed, religion, language, disability, gender, and sexual orientation. The students are expected to maintain this environment.

**Special Needs**

It is the policy of Sabancı University to accommodate students with special needs and disabilities. To determine accommodations and/or academic adjustments, please let us know and contact the Disabled Students Support Unit of CIAD ([specialneeds@sabanciuniv.edu](mailto:specialneeds@sabanciuniv.edu)).

**Reading and Course Schedule** – All readings will be made available on SUCourse.

## INTRODUCTION

WEEK 1  
October 7&8                      Plato, *Republic*, selection  
James Rachels, “The Challenge of Cultural Relativism”, selection

## HISTORY OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY

WEEK 2  
October 14&15                      Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, selection

WEEK 3  
October 21&22                      Kant, *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, selection

WEEK 4  
October 28&29                      No Class – National Holiday

WEEK 5  
November 4&5                      Hobbes, *Leviathan*, selection; Locke, *Second Treatise*, selection

WEEK 6  
November 11&12                      Mill, *Utilitarianism*, selection

WEEK 7  
November 18&19                      Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals*, selection

WEEK 8  
November 25                      **MIDTERM**  
November 26                      No class

## ISSUES IN MORAL PHILOSOPHY

WEEK 9  
December 2&3                      Care Ethics:  
Virginia Held, “Care and Justice in the Global Context”  
December 4                      **Deadline to turn in the group presentation project outline**

WEEK 10  
December 9&10                      Animal Rights:  
“Experimentation with Animals”

WEEK 11  
December 16&17                      Deep Ecology:  
Arne Naess (selections)

WEEK 12  
December 23&24                      Transhumanism:  
Nick Bostrom; Janet Kourany (selections)

WEEK 13  
December 30&31                      Global Justice:  
Peter Singer; Thomas Pogge (selections)

WEEK 14  
January 6&7                      **Group Presentations**