

Sabancı University  
SPRING 2021

## **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**

#### Grading:

Attendance: %10

In-class Quizzes: %20

Group Presentations: %10

Midterm: %25

Final: %35

#### Attendance:

The course will be held synchronously on Zoom. Please keep your cameras on during class. Students are expected to attend the synchronous Zoom lectures, discussions, and real-time online exams with their SU email account.

Attendance will be taken during all live sessions on an hourly basis. Attendance follow-up starts at the end of the add-drop period. After 2 unexcused absences your attendance grade will fall by 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.) Students who miss 9 hours of class in total will receive a "0" for their attendance grade.

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 such cases please email me beforehand, if possible.

#### Participation in class:

Thoughtful and meaningful participation in class 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 up by half a letter (thus bringing it up from a B- to a B, for example), at the instructor's discretion.

#### 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 to submit a one-page outline of their research with their topic and group members' names by April 23rd. 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.

#### Midterm and Final Exams:

For proctored exams, your webcam and microphone should be on during the exam. In the case of non-compliance with this and other declared exam procedures, your exam will be void. Make sure to check that your webcam and microphone function properly before the exam.

#### 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.

Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fraud, and any failure to cite all materials and sources in your work. Plagiarism is an ethical and academic offense. In case the instructor suspects that an exam is not student's original work, the student will be given an oral examination.

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	Plato, Republic, selection
February 24&25	James Rachels, "The Challenge of Cultural Relativism", selection

### **HISTORY OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY**

WEEK 2	
March 3&4	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , selection

WEEK 3	
March 10&11	Kant, <i>Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals</i> , selection

WEEK 4	
March 17&18	Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i> , selection; Locke, <i>Second Treatise</i> , selection

WEEK 5	
March 24&26	Mill, <i>Utilitarianism</i> , selection

WEEK 6	
March 31	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>
April 1	Robert Nozick, "The Experience Machine"

## ISSUES IN MORAL PHILOSOPHY

WEEK 7 April 7&8	Care Ethics: Virginia Held, "Care and Justice in the Global Context"
WEEK 8 April 14&15	Animal Rights: "Experimentation with Animals"
WEEK 9 April 21&22	Deep Ecology: Andrew McLaughlin, "The Heart of Deep Ecology"; Arne Naess (selections)
April 23	<b>Deadline to turn in the group presentation project outline</b>
WEEK 10 April 28&29	Transhumanism: Nick Bostrom; Janet Kourany (selections)
WEEK 11 May 5&6	Global Justice: Peter Singer; Thomas Pogge (selections)
WEEK 12 May 12&13	NO CLASS – HOLIDAY
WEEK 13 May 19 May 20	NO CLASS – HOLIDAY <b>Group Presentations</b>
WEEK 14 May 26 May 27	<b>Group Presentations</b> Catch up and review before the final exam