

# PHI 4730 – Advanced Ethics

Monsoon 2023, Tuesday and Thursday, 10:10 to 11:40, AC04 003

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Office: AC01 616 | Office Hours: 11:40 to 12:20 Tuesdays and Thursdays

## About this Course: Topics and Goals

In this course, we will be read some recent books in ethical philosophy. We will read them slowly and carefully and from cover to cover. This will give us a very thorough understanding of a few particular topics.

Below are the **goals** for this course. Our class sessions and homework are designed not just to help you learn about contemporary ethical philosophy, but also for you to learn how to:

- Identify a philosopher's argument and summarize it in your own words
- Generate questions about, extensions of, and objections to the argument
- Reflect on, refine, and articulate your own views on the various topics we address

## Course Content

As a class, we will choose which books to read. Books will be provided online on the course Canvas website: <https://canvas.instructure.com/courses/7147244>. You may also purchase the books if you would like. **PLEASE BRING THE READINGS TO CLASS EACH DAY** in some easily accessible form (laptop, printed out, the actual book, etc.) so that we are able to discuss the texts.

## Assignments

There are three kinds of assignments in this class: **Perusall annotations**, **reading outlines**, and the **take-home final** or **final research paper** (your choice). There is also an **attendance requirement** which factors into your grade. Late Perusall annotations and outlines will not be accepted. Final exams or research papers are never late, but they have suggested due dates.

**Perusall Annotation Assignments** allow you to collaboratively read the readings by using the Perusall website.

**Reading Outlines** are to help you get a comprehensive understanding of the readings and to facilitate in-class discussions.

The **Take-Home Final Exam** asks you to summarize points from some of the readings we have done, and then offer extensions of the idea or argument or critiques of the idea or argument. The exam is divided into three parts, one for each book we read.

The **Final Research Paper**, which you can write instead of the final exam, is about 3,500 to 4,500 words. It asks you to do a bit of research in order to explore a topic raised in one of the books.

## Grading

Paper assignments (including the final exam) will be given one of two grades: **satisfactory** or **not yet satisfactory**. The level of achievement expected for a satisfactory paper is roughly that of a B+ paper in a typical course. You can resubmit any not yet satisfactory paper for a regrade. You can only submit two papers per week. So, if you want to resubmit papers, do not leave all your resubmissions until the end of the semester.

**For an A grade:** An average score of 75% or better on the Perusall assignments. Fifteen or more satisfactory reading outlines. An entirely satisfactory final exam or final research paper. Miss six or fewer class meetings.

**For a B grade:** An average score of 70% or better on the Perusall assignments. Fourteen or more satisfactory reading outlines. Two or more satisfactory final exam portions or a satisfactory final research paper. Miss seven or fewer class meetings.

**For a C grade:** An average score of 65% or better on the Perusall assignments. Thirteen or more satisfactory reading outlines. One or more satisfactory final exam portions or a satisfactory final research paper. Miss eight or fewer class meetings.

**For a D grade:** An average score of 60% or better on the Perusall assignments. Twelve or more satisfactory reading outlines. Miss nine or fewer class meetings.

I currently do not anticipate assigning + or – grades, but if I do, it will likely be on the basis of participation, both in class and on Perusall.

## Office Hours and Email

You can come meet me during office hours in my office AC01 616 from 11:40 to 12:20 on Tuesdays and Thursdays without an appointment to talk about anything you would like to talk about, like feedback on your papers or questions about the readings. If you cannot meet during office hours you can email me to schedule an appointment. If you contact me via email for any reason, please include “PHI 4730” in the subject line so that I know you are emailing about this course.

## Disabilities

If you have disabilities which require some form of accommodation, contact me ahead of time.

## ChatGPT/AI

You should not use ChatGPT or other AI tools for this course. The reason I assign papers, Perusall comments, etc. is not because I need more of them. I have enough student papers to last me the rest of my life. I assign them because the process of thinking about and writing them helps **you** develop the sorts of skills you are attending university to develop. Using ChatGPT or similar AI tools prevents you from developing these skills and it thus wastes your time. It also wastes my time, because I do not care what ChatGPT has to say, nor is it useful for me to give feedback on what ChatGPT has generated.

## Important Dates

Deadline to convert course to audit, withdraw from audit, change course to or from pass/fail, and withdraw with a W: 22 October. Deadline to withdraw with a W/F: 2 December.

## Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

Any time you use **words, phrases, ideas, or anything else** in your writing that you did not think up on your own, you must **cite** your source the best of your ability. Words and phrases not written by you must be enclosed in quotation marks to show that you did not write them yourself. Failure to cite a source is **plagiarism** and it's not okay. You should not need to use (or cite) outside sources for this class unless you write the research paper, but if you do use them, you must cite them. It is perfectly okay to use points made by your classmates in discussion (or anyone else), *as long as you cite them to the best of your ability*. The one exception is that you do not need to cite me on your writing assignments in this class, unless you want to. Plagiarism or other violations of academic integrity may entail sanctions like an F in the course.

## Resources

My website has resources on reading, writing, and researching at <http://dannyweltman.com/resources.html>. I encourage you to look at the resources that are available there.

## Readings

We will read three books: Jay Garfield, *Buddhist Ethics: A Philosophical Exploration*, Diana Heney, *Toward a Pragmatist Metaethics*, and Anna Alexandrova, *A Philosophy for the Science of Well-Being*.

## Schedule

- 29 August: Course introduction
- 31 August: Garfield preface and chapter 1
- 5 September: Garfield chapter 2
- 7 September: Garfield chapter 3
- 12 September: Garfield chapter 4
- 14 September: Garfield chapter 5
- 19 September: Garfield chapter 6
- 21 September: Garfield chapter 7
- 26 September: Garfield chapter 8
- 28 September: Garfield chapter 9
- 3 October: Garfield chapters 10 and 11
- 5 October: Garfield chapters 12 and 13
- 17 October: Heney preface and chapter 1
- 19 October: Heney chapter 2
- 26 October: Heney chapter 3
- 28 October (Saturday): Heney chapter 4
- 31 October: Heney chapter 5
- 2 November: Heney chapters 6 + 7
- 7 November: Alexandrova Introduction
- 9 November: Alexandrova Appendices A and B
- 14 November: Alexandrova chapter 1
- 16 November: Alexandrova chapter 2
- 21 November: Alexandrova chapter 3
- 23 November: Alexandrova chapter 4
- 28 November: Alexandrova chapter 5
- 30 November: Alexandrova chapter 6