Content

Introduction

We live in a fast-changing world. We have to make decisions about our study, our social relations, and our future. All these decisions are influenced by the norms and values we have developed in the course of our life. The importance of moral considerations is strongly growing. Nowadays, talks about ethics are everywhere, in the bar, in the boardroom, on the shop floor, on television, and in the journals and daily papers. In this course we will explore the field of philosophical ethics: a scientific reflection about morality.

In the first part of this course, we will study the grand narratives in ethics. We read original texts of thinkers in order to understand their approach from their own works. Successively, we discuss the virtue ethics of Aristotle, living according to nature as proposed by the Stoics, the Christianized life as taught by Augustine and John Calvin, the utilitarian ethics of Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill, the moral law as developed by Immanuel Kant, dialogue approach of Jürgen Habermas, the grand style of Friedrich Nietzsche, and the 'humanity of the Other' as developed by Emmanuel Levinas. The challenge is to interpret these texts from the perspective of the author and its audience. A pitfall, that has to be prevented, is to read and to understand these texts from *our own perspective*.

In the second part of this course, we will study some key disciplinary approaches in ethics: environmental ethics and business ethics. Especially, we will pay attention to the application of the grand narratives in ethics to major problems in our society. We will analyze professional practices to identify different ethical aspects.

This course is on third year bachelor level. In the first part, we will focus on *intensive reading* of a limited amount of pages and a small number of texts. This means multiple readings, annotating, making notes and engaging actively with the material. The main ideas have to be unlocked by the reader. In the second part, the context of the ethical topic is more important. In both parts, an annotated copy of the text is your ticket to the lesson. *The students have to convince the tutor that they have prepared the meeting well.* In case a student cannot attend a meeting, s/he has to mail within a week a summary of the missed topic (250 – 350 words). Please inform the tutor in advance about absence.

All texts are available as e-reader. To facilitate the discussions – e.g. reference to pages during the discussions– it is required that the available texts are used.

There are two books who offer the required background information: Mark Timmons, *Moral Theory. An Introduction* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2013, 2nd ed.) and Glenn Rogers, *21st Century Ethics. An introduction to Moral Philosophy* (Simpson & Brook, 2012). The students have to choose one of these books as background literature and for the preparation of the assignments. Both books give a nice introduction and are suited for students with no or nearly no background in philosophy or ethics. Alasdair MacIntyre's *A Short History of Ethics* (Routledge, 1998, 2nd ed.) is recommended for students with a background in philosophy. This book is densely written and presents a critical approach.

Course methodology, attendance and lectures

In this course the methodology of problem-oriented learning will be applied. The last part of each session (about 30 minutes) will be used to define a problem statement and learning goals. An important objective of this course is to understand the specific approach of the grand narratives. For that reason, an adequate formulation of the problem statement is of utmost importance.

In the beginning of every meeting, one student will present an overview of his or her background research for the topic under discussion (maximum 15 minutes). For the first part of the course, this entails a biography of the philosopher(s) involved, an overview of his (their) work and a sketch of the major themes in his (their) thought. For the second part of the course, this entails an overview of the most important themes and traditions in the field. In addition, a handout of maximum 2 pages has to be given. Presenters: please take care that the students who are absent also receive the handout.

In the first meeting we will agree about the chairperson for each meeting. This can be done on alphabetical order or based on your enthusiasm for a certain topic. The chairperson presides over the meeting, leads the discussion, makes sure that all elements of the topic are sufficiently covered, arranges breaks on time, takes care that everybody gets their turn in the discussion, and so forth. He or she balances the session between the learning goals and the main elements of the topic. It is proposed that the chairperson also leads the discussion about the problem statement and the learning goals. If necessary, in the last 5 to 10 minutes of the meeting the tutor will shortly review the main elements of the topic under discussion.

After four to five meetings, the contribution of every student to the discussion will be evaluated. The group is invited to support the students who have difficulties in participating actively.

The minimum attendance for this course is 10 out of 12 sessions. Students who have missed 3 or 4 meetings (with valid reasons) have to make an additional assignment.

In the beginning of the course two lectures will be given. In the first lecture, an overview of the history of philosophy and ethics will be given. It will be shown that there are fundamental discontinuities between different periods in philosophy: Greek thinking, Christian thinking, modern thinking and postmodern thinking. In the second lecture an overview of the main ethical approaches will be given. These lectures are mandatory. In case a student cannot attend one of the lectures, s/he has to inform the lecturer in advance and has to write a paper about the missed topic (2000 – 2500 words).

During the course the movie *Des hommes et des dieux* will be watched together. This movie gives a clear illustration of the ethics of Levinas. Attendance is also are mandatory.

Paper

The final exam for the course consists in writing a paper (4500 +/- 500 words, A4, 1.5 linespace, 12 pt. font). This paper has to be about an ethical topic of your own choosing. Preferably, it will be linked to the main disciplines of your UCM study and your future career.

At the end of week 3 of this period, every student has to prepare an outline of 500 – 750 words with a description of the topic, formulation of the problem statement, first selection of ethical perspectives to be applied (two to three), concept set-up: chapter titles and an indication of main literature. The outline has to be mailed to the tutor who will provide personal feedback.

At the end of week 7 every student has to be made a detailed set-up of the paper including some preliminary conclusions (around 1500 words). This set-up will be discussed in a small group of students. You are required to use at least two primary sources, as well as a minimum of two academic secondary sources. Preferably, use one or more new ideas or concepts discussed in the second part of the course. Ethics is not only about reflection but also about behavior and decisions. Therefore, it is required that the student gives his or her own view upon the ethical topic in a separate section. If possible, the students are invited to relate their own view with their basic beliefs about man, nature and God.

The student has to choose his or her own topic. Some of examples of topics that have been chosen in the previous years are: ethics of oil extraction in Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, ethics and intersexuality, ethics of counterterrorism, Nietzsche and God's moral rule, ethics and suicide, moral status of animals, journalism ethics in the internet age, white lies, ethical dialogue between Kant and Calvin, case study of the invasion in Afghanistan, ethics of international surrogacy, practices of Fanny Mae in mortgages, ethics and the World Trade Organization, ethics of nuclear energy, ethics of the humanitarian intervention in Libya, obedience and powerful unethical leaders, Charity, Prenatal diagnostics, Waste food, Dutch integration debate, ethics in games, the art of my personal life, slum tourism, brain doping, physical perfection, bombing of Dresden, neuro enhancement, food speculation, autonomous weapons, and robo-ethics. The students are invited to write a good case study as a starting point for the ethical evaluation.

The general set-up of the paper will be:
1) Introduction incl. problem statement
2) Case description
3) Evaluation case study based on the first ethical perspective
4) Evaluation case study based on the second ethical perspective
5) Discussion
6) Own opinion
7) Literature

The paper will be mainly judged on content (line of thought, phrasing of ideas, criticism, own view). Formal requirements like grammar, spelling, readability and layout will play a minor role.

Planning of the course

Febr 5th	Introduction
Febr 8th	Aristotle
Febr 12th	Carnival
Febr 15th	Carnival
Febr 19th	Epictetus
Febr 22th	Augustine and Calvin
Febr 26th	Bentham and Mill
March 1st	Kant
March 1st	Handing in the outline of the paper (mail, word file)
March 5th	Habermas
March 8th	Nietzsche
March 8th	Feedback outline per mail
March 9th	MJV available at UCM from 13.30 – 16.00 hrs for personal feedback outline and support paper
March 12th	Levinas (Evening: movie Des hommes et des dieux)
March 15th	Environmental Ethics
March 15th	Design groups for discussion set-up paper
March 19th	Business Ethics
March 22th	Evaluation and discussion set-up paper in small groups
March 24th	MJV available at UCM from 13.30 – 16.00 hrs for support paper
March 26th	No meetings
March 29th	No meetings
March 29th	Handing in the paper (mail to MJV, word file or PDF, and uploading in Eleum; at latest 24.00 hrs)
April 9th	Feedback paper and grading per mail
April 12th	Feedback paper personally: MJV available at UCM from 10.00 – 12.30 hrs
April 12th	Finalizing the overall grade

Final grade and resits

The final grade is determined by:

    (a)   Active participation (25 %)

    (b)   Presentation of back ground research (10 %)

    (c)   Paper (65 %)

A resit is only possible for the paper. In that case s/he has to write a paper about another topic of about 2000 - 2500 using one ethical perspective.

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Assignment 1: Aristotle: a virtuous life

The first formal text that specifically treats the subject of ethics is the *Ethica Nicomacheia* of Aristotle (384-322 B.C.). Originally, it was intended for a broad audience of educated Greek men. The text is a condensed version of a lecture that would have been extensively explained to those listening. For that reason, the information density is fairly high. You will have to understand actively every phrase to extract the nutritious value contained in the short formulations.

Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* is characterized by four aspects:
1. It is a *teleological* ethics. That means: it discusses the telos or objective of our actions.
2. It is an *eudaimonian* ethics. The concept of *eudaimonia* is often misleadingly translated as 'happiness'. Its original meaning includes both the notion of 'well-doing' and 'well-being'. It is all about becoming a good man and a well-lived life.
3. It is a *virtue* ethics. Aristotle makes a distinction between intellectual and moral virtues. Virtues are not inborn but can be developed by instruction and training. A virtue is a quality of moral characteristic of a person that is desirable, expressed in actions and has a stable and durable character.
4. It is a *political* ethics. Aristotle focuses at the moral training of people as citizens.

In the course of history, a number of concepts of virtues are proposed. The various authors differ from each other in many ways: list of virtues, rank order of virtues, and concept of virtues. Often these lists, ranks and concepts are incompatible. What does this observation mean? Is it useless to develop a virtue ethics? Are the lists, ranks and concepts dependent on one's philosophy of life? Can science determine the 'only true' virtues? And … what are the most important virtues of our times?

Literature
Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book I (7-8) and II. Text from Stephen Darwall (ed.), *Virtue Ethics*, Blackwell, 2003, pp7-25. The text is available as e-reader.

Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 2nd edition, Chapter 14, pp181-191.
The text is available as e-reader.

General literature
Mark Timmons, *Moral Theory. An Introduction*, pp269-299.
Glenn Rogers, *21st Century Ethics. An introduction to Moral Philosophy*, pp40-44, 164-177.

Assignment 2: Epictetus: Living according to nature

After the flowering of Athenian splendor, the philosophical work of Plato and later Aristotle gave impetus to the development of several schools of thought, at first in the Hellenic world and later within the Roman Empire. Among the more well-known are Epicurism and Scepticism. We will focus on Stoicism, because it developed a particular attitude towards human action that had an enduring influence, both on the development of later Christian ethical thought as well as in modern times.

We will read several selected passages from the *Discourses of Epictetus*. Epictetus (55-135) was a teacher and Greek-Roman philosopher. Originally he was a slave from Hierapolis in Anatolia (modern Turkey). After gaining his freedom he moved to Nicopolis on the Adriatic coast of Greece and opened a school of philosophy there. Epictetus himself never wrote down his thoughts, but they were compiled by one of his close followers, Flavius Arrian.

The Stoics believed that we live in a natural order that is controlled by the divine Logos. Man is part of that reality and human life is a life in agreement with the order of nature. Human life is good when it is a true reflection of the given order of nature. A life in agreement with the natural order is a life in agreement with the will of God and is a happy life.

One of the central ideas of Stoicism is that of freedom from all passions, *apatheia*. This idea means that all emotional responses to external events have to be eradicated. For the Stoics *apatheia* is a rational response because we cannot control the world around us and can only control our own will. For this assignment, it would be helpful to do a little research into the background, history and main ideas of Stoicism. It is interesting to investigate to which extent the development of Stoic ethics was influenced by societal developments.

Presently, the idea of 'freedom from all passions' is most well-known from popular Buddhist writings, for example in the books of the Dalai Lama. Throughout Western history, this conception has surfaced periodically, although it never became a dominant feature of the late modern mind-set. Also, this idea comes to the fore in 'mindfullness'.

Literature
Flavius Arrian, *The discourses of Epictetus*.
Book I, ch. 1-4; book IV, ch. 1, par. 1-5, 51-61, 98-113, 128-130, 175.
Translated and edited by Robert Dobbin, Penguin books.
The text is available as e-reader.

General literature
Mark Timmons, *Moral Theory. An Introduction*, no pages.
Glenn Rogers, *21st Century Ethics. An introduction to Moral Philosophy*, pp46-48.

Assignment 3: Augustine and John Calvin: Christianized life

Western culture has been strongly influenced by the Christian view on nature, man and society. The most influential thinkers are Augustine of Hippo (354-430) (early church), Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) (Roman Catholic thought) and John Calvin (1509-1564)(Protestant thought). Christianity has shaped practices of life, moral beliefs and societal views. In Christian thinking, there is a strong relation between faith and moral life. The key idea is 'love' and not 'law'. Note: do not focus on the differences between Augustine and Calvin but on their key ideas as expressed in the texts.

Christianized life is from the early church on characterized by three aspects:
1. Christian life is living in the sight of the Lord. It means that man realizes that God will call him to account for the life he has lived.
2. Christian life is living out of grace. The idea of the fall is very important: man is unable to live fully according to the law of God. Therefore he needs grace to be justified by God. Living is living out of grace.
3. Man is created according to the image of God. The idea 'image of God' refers both to the status of man (nearly God) and to the assignment of man (steward).

In this assignment, we will investigate the ideas of Augustine and John Calvin. Augustine of Hippo or St. Augustine was heavily influenced by Manichaeism and afterward by the Neo-Platonism of Plotinus. After his conversion to Christianity and baptism in AD 387, Augustine developed his own approach to philosophy and theology. In *The Confessiones* he writes about how much he regrets having led a sinful and immoral life. He believed that the love and grace of Christ was indispensable to human freedom.

John Calvin is named as the father of the Reformation. His opus magnum is the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. It is important to find out why the Reformation took place and how the relation between the church and the individual believer changed. It is also important to investigate to which extent Christianity has shaped the basic ideas of our democratic society and whether Calvinism is still present in our society. Christianity is accused of a negative view on sexuality. Can this view be maintained from the perspective of the *Song of Salomon* and the letter of the apostle Paul to the Corinthians?

Literature
Augustine, *The Confessiones*
Ch. 2 sect 9-18; Ch. 3 sect 13-17; Ch.7 sect 26-27.
The text is available as e-reader.

Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion.*
Book I, Ch. 1 sect 1;
Book II, Ch. 7 sect 1-2; Ch. 8 sect 11; Ch. 8 sect 41-46.
The text is available as e-reader.

Bible (e.g. New Living Translation or New International Version)
The Old Testament book *Song of Salomon*
The New Testament book *1 Corinthians* 7 : 1 – 7
These texts can be found on internet.

General literature
Mark Timmons, *Moral Theory. An Introduction*, pp23-37.
Glenn Rogers, *21st Century Ethics. An introduction to Moral Philosophy*, pp50-65, 76-86.

Assignment 4: Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill: Living for public utility

We are all familiar with the saying 'the end justifies the means'. This saying states that the actions of human beings have to be judged with respect to the results. In this perspective, actions are not judged by their intentions or by their quality but by their results in a given situation or context. As a consequence, the same action can be good in one situation and wrong in the other.

Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) and John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) are the fathers of the *utilitarian ethics*. In their view, the morality of an action is determined by its utility. Both man were reformers who strived for a more equal and more human society. Their ethical approach is based on the 'hedonistic calculus' in which pleasure and pain (the 'pros' and the 'cons') can be weighted. The idea of the 'hedonistic calculus' has been summarized in the so-called *greatest happiness principle* as formulated by Hutcheson: "That nation is best which procures the greatest happiness for the greatest numbers, and that worst which in a like manner occasions misery".

Utilitarian ethics is characterized by four aspects:
1. The principle of consequences: it is not about the intention or the quality of the action but about its results.
2. The principle of utility: the moral standard is the maximal utility.
3. The principle of pleasure: it is about maximizing the satisfaction of needs.
4. The principle of sociality: it is about happiness for as much people as possible.

In the course of time, utilitarian ethics came under attack. How to weight pleasure and pain? What about the distribution of pleasure and pain? In which type of situations can this approach be applied fruitfully?

Utilitarianism and consequentialism are closely related philosophical positions. The starting point of utilitarianism is that we all attempt to seek happiness and to avoid pain for the greatest number of people. Consequentialism asserts that determining the greatest good for the greatest number of people (the utilitarian goal) is a matter of measuring outcomes, and so decisions about the morality of an action depends on the costs and benefits of that action (to be measured in specific outcome parameters).

Literature
Jeremy Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (J.H. Burns and H.L.A. Hart, Oxford University Press, 1996), Ch. 1:1-14; Ch. 4: 1-8; Ch. 5: 1-33; Ch. 10: 9-13 (p11-16, 38-50, 100-102). The text is available as e-reader.

Philip Pettit, *Consequentialism* (Peter Singer, ed., *A Companion to Ethics*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1991), pp95-107. The text is available as e-reader.

General literature
Mark Timmons, *Moral Theory. An Introduction*, pp111-138.
Glenn Rogers, *21st Century Ethics. An introduction to Moral Philosophy*, pp120-137.

Assignment 5: Immanuel Kant: Living according to the moral law

In his first major critical work, the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant (1724-1804) defines the limits and structure of the rational mind. Working from this foundation, his second *Critique of Practical Reason* redefined the field of ethics. To comprehend the span of Kant's entire work would probably not be feasible, even if this whole course was completely devoted to it. Therefore, we will read a section from his preliminary ethical book, aptly called *Groundwork for the Metaphysic of Morals*.

In his article 'Answering the Question: What is Enlightenment?' Kant defined the Enlightenment as: "Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-imposed immaturity. Immaturity is the inability to use one's understanding without guidance from another. This immaturity is self-imposed when its cause lies not in lack of understanding, but in lack of resolve and courage to use it without guidance from another. Sapere Aude! [dare to know] 'Have courage to use your own understanding!' – that is the motto of enlightenment." This definition founds Kant's view on ethics: every action has to be justified rationally. In the *Groundwork* Kant gives a key rule to judge whether a rule of imperative is rational or not: *categorical imperative*. This rule exists in three different wordings. The most well-known wording is: "Act only in accordance with that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it becomes a universal law." This approach is also called *deontology*: *deon* is duty and *logos* is reason.

In Kantian thought an action has to be done (imperative) despite its consequences. This element has raised a lot of discussions about the character of the moral law in face of evil.

Literature
Kant, I., *Groundwork for the Metaphysic of Morals*. Translated by Mary Gregor (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp2-3, 31-39. Those who can read German are encouraged to read the original *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten*.
The text is available as e-reader.

Korsgard, C.M., 'The right to lie: Kant on Dealing with Evil', *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, vol 15 (1986), pp325-337, 349.
The text is available as e-reader.

General literature
Mark Timmons, *Moral Theory. An Introduction*, pp205-240.
Glenn Rogers, *21st Century Ethics. An introduction to Moral Philosophy*, pp104-119.

Assignment 6: Jürgen Habermas: consensus in dialogue

How to justify a moral action or a normative claim in a pluralistic society? In Kantian thinking it is believed that universal ethical claims can be justified by means of rational method as expressed by the categorical imperative. However, in postmodern thinking, the idea of a universal ethics is under attack. Additionally, in postmodern society there is a growing plurality in values and norms. Such a plurality easily leads to a relativist position in ethics that undermines society and personal life. To overcome such relativism, Habermas (1929) investigates under which conditions universal ethical claims still can be made in a plural society: discourse ethics.

In discourse ethics it is believed that all who are affected by the adoption of a certain moral action or normative claim have to participate in the discussion. Only norms and standard that are the result of a free discussion between all participants can lay a justified claim to legitimacy. In other words, Kant proposed a 'practical reason' and Habermas a 'dialogical form of the practical reason'.

The discourse ethics is based on three important conditions:
   a) *The freedom of all participants.* That means that every participant is free to air his or her opinion or arguments in the discussion and no one is forced to adopt a certain point of view or accept a certain moral standard.
   b) *The equality of all participants.* The discussion is a 'power-free' dialogue. That means, every participant has an equal voice in proposing certain values, norms and procedures. Also, every participant has an equal voice in reaching consensus.
   c) *The emergence of consensus.* The discussion must lead to an agreement that is based on consensus. Every participant must agree with the proposed solution.

These conditions show that the discourse ethics focuses at the structure and dynamics of the dialogue. Values and norms are brought into the discussion by the participants and are subject to critical evaluation by the group. The objective is to reach consensus.

Literature
William Rehg, *Insight & Solidarity. The Discourse Ethics of Jürgen Habermas,* Berkely, University of California Press, 1997, pp30-36, 37-50.
The text is available as e-reader.

Jürgen Habermas, *Justification and Application. Remarks on Discourse Ethics,* Cambridge, MIT Press, 1994, pp105-111.
The text is available as e-reader.

Robert J Cavalier, 'Introduction to Habermas's Discourse Ethics', pp1-6.
The text is available as e-reader.

Assignment 7: Nietzsche: Attack on traditional morality

We continue our exploration in ethics with Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900). It is questionable whether Nietzsche can be sided with the ethicists. He did not elaborate an ethics in a traditional way. On the contrary, he attacked all traditional ethical theories.

Nietzsche views the history of ethics as a disaster. In his opinion, Enlightenment was not radical enough. He criticizes the religious ground structure of humanism: it still believes in higher ideals like reason, science, humanity, democracy, solidarity, freedom and so on. He wants to be a 'philosopher with a hammer' that destroys all these idols that threaten human freedom. Nietzsche announces the dead of God, implying that man himself is responsible for his existence. Nietzsche strongly supports the idea of 'higher humanity' and 'higher morality'. He espoused a 'Dionysian value-standard' instead of all non-natural modes of valuation. He espoused a kind of life in which the 'will to power' transforms existence to its highest possible intensity and qualitative expression.

Nietzsche's texts are very well-written and polemical, so its introduction. Try to combine the strings that have been woven in earlier assignments and see how they are employed by Nietzsche in his 'reverse engineering' of the basic ethical concepts. Try to find out why Nietzsche has been accused as being a source of thinking for Nazism.

Nietzsche pretends that he has cleared the way for higher humanity. However, has he really removed all religious ground structures? Or does his (ethical) approach contain a (small) idolatrous core?

Nietzsche's texts are not easy to read. It requires a lot of background information to appreciate these texts. Please, read and re-read them. If necessary, we will read some parts of the texts together in order to understand their message.

Literature
Nietzsche, F., [1882]. *The Gay Science*, Book III, sect 125.
Nietzsche, F., [1883-1885]. *Thus spoke Zarathustra*, Part I sect 1-3.
Nietzche, F. (2001 [1887]). *On the Genealogy of Morals*. Translated by I. Johnston. First essay, section 1-10.
The text is available as e-reader.

Assignment 8: Levinas: The humanism of the Other

We close our tour in the history of ethics with the ideas of Emmanuel Levinas (1906-1995). The ethics of Levinas can be described as a call to moral life, an appeal to the conscience of modern man. Levinas presents an ethics that originates in the horrifying experiences of World War II; especially, the murder of millions of Jews by Nazi-Germany. Further, his thought is rooted in the Talmud and the Hebrew bible.

The ethics of Levinas can be summarized in the slogan: in the face of the other I am called to responsibility. The core of moral life can be summarized with three words:
1. *Nonviolence*: the demarcation between rulers who can impose something and the alterity of the other who appeals is the line between violence and nonviolence.
2. *Justice*: justice is a dimension of the core of an ethical relation. Justice relates to judgment and conscience. Justice is also about doing justice to the powerless and the outlawed.
3. *Heteronomy*: since the Enlightenment Western philosophy emphasizes the autonomy and self-determination of man. However, Levinas radicalizes the heteronomy: the other is the source of morality. Levinas defends a 'humanism of the Other'.

The ethics of Levinas is closely related to with religion. However, not with religion in the traditional meaning of the word. In his view religion has to do with the true relation to the transcendent and the infinite. This true relation expresses itself in the relation to the stranger and the poor. In other words, the dimension of divine opens itself starting from the human face.

The philosophy of Levinas is not very accessible. The same holds for his mayor works. The best introduction to his thought appears to be the interview with Philippe Nemo. The introduction of David Hoges and the movie *Des hommes et des dieux* are very helpful to understand the value of this approach.

Literature
Levinas, E., *Ethics and infinity. Conversations with Philippe Nemo,* translated by Richard Cohen (Duquesne University press, Pittsburgh, 1995. Ch 7, 8, 10 (pp85-92, 95-101, 113-122).
The text is available as e-reader.

Hoges, David, *Emmanuel Levinas in the Reading of Christian and Christophe* (monks in the movie *Of Gods and Men*).
The text is available as e-reader.

Assignment 9: Environmental ethics

The problematic of climate change makes environmental ethics more important than it ever has been. In literature, there is a lively debate about the kind of ethics that is required. In the *Deep Ecology* movement, it is believed that traditional ethics is part of the problems. For that reason, a radical ethic is proposed.

In philosophical ethics, there is still a debate about the value of classical approaches. Some believe that new theories have to be developed (newism) and others believe that the classical approaches can be extended (existentionism) to include the specific questions and problems with respect to the nature, plants and animals. In addition, there is still a debate which approach is most fruitful: consequentialism, deontological theories or virtue ethics.

How fruitful is philosophical ethics? Can philosophical-ethical ideas easily be applied by a manager or an engineer to technological, environmental or societal problems? How to take into account the specific characteristics of the context? Which approach is most fruitful in a certain context? Or, do we need more than one approach? In the article 'Beyond Newism and Extensionalism. The Place of Engineering Praxis within Environmental Ethics' a model is presented that takes its starting point in professional practices. This model shows that practices have their own normativity and are shaped by the context of that practice, and the ideals and deepest beliefs of the actors.

Two statements will be discussed:
1) Nature has an intrinsic value. That means, it has an own value that transcends utility for humanity. Therefore, we have to protect nature.
2) Extensionalism offers a realistic approach from a political perspective. Newism is too radical to make a difference.

The group will be divided in two. One group advocates the position of classical ethics and the other group the position of deep ecology. It has to be noted that in this debate presuppositions of man and nature play an important role. It can be helpful to make these presuppositions explicit. Finally, close the debate by airing your own opinion. It has to be noted that the objective is not 'to win the debate' but 'to understand both positions and its basic beliefs'. The most respectful way to have a debate is to make the arguments of the collocutors as strong as possible and to attack 'strengthened arguments'. Additionally, it is important to investigate whether a consensus can be reached on a 'more abstract' or 'higher' level in order to address the climate issue.

Literature
A. Naess, 'The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movement', in R.C. Scharff and V. Dusek (eds), *Philosophy of Technology. The Technological Condition*, Blackwell, Malden, p467-470. The text is available as e-reader.

B. Deval, 'The Deep Ecology Movement', in R.C. Scharff and V. Dusek (eds), *Philosophy of Technology. The Technological Condition*, Blackwell, Malden, p471-479. The text is available as e-reader.

A. Spahn and M.J. Verkerk, 'Beyond Newism and Extensionalism. The Place of Engineering Praxis within Environmental Ethics', to be published. The text is available as e-reader.

General literature
Glenn Rogers, *21st Century Ethics. An introduction to Moral Philosophy*, pp288-303.

Assignment 10: Business ethics

What is the responsibility of (international) corporations? What is the responsibility of a Chief Executive Officer (CEO)? A widely accepted view is that the first responsibility of a corporation and its CEO is to serve the interests of the shareholders. The basic argument is that a CEO is appointed by the shareholders to make as much as possible profit from their investments. Another view is that a CEO has an own responsibility. He or she has to weight the justified interests of the different stakeholders of the company. The most important stakeholders that are mentioned in this case are employees, managers, customers, suppliers, local authorities, government and immediate vicinity. Sometimes action groups and environment are also mentioned. How to weight the different interests of stakeholders? Are the interests of some stakeholders more important than the interests of others? What is the role of power in this type of considerations?

These questions are very important in view of the financial crisis of the last years. The crisis was preceded by scandals in the financial world: Enron, WorldCom, Qwest, Global Crossing, Ahold, Shell and so on. In all these scandals complex financial products, non-transparent constructions, bonus payments and non-ethical behavior played an important role. How to prevent scandals and crises? Is additional supervision sufficient? What about the role of the CEO? What about the relation between organization, organization culture, style of management and ethics? Are employees independent individuals that can make ethical decisions? Or do employees work in a specific context where there degrees of freedom are strongly limited? And what is the influence of managers and colleagues on the behavior of individuals? What is the relation between organization ethics and personal ethics? How does 'power' come in?

In this meeting we will discuss the case 'Shutdown at Eastland'. In this case the group will be divided in three: CEO of the company, spokesman of the labor union who represents the employees, and the mayor of the city. Every group analyzes its own justified interests and invites the other groups to challenge them. This case will be discussed in three rounds. Instructions for every round will be given by the tutor.

Literature
M. Friedman, 'The Social Responsibility of Business Is to Increase its Profits', in T.L. Beauchamp and N.E. Bowie (eds), 6th ed, *Ethical Theory and Business*, Prentice Hall, New Jersey, p51-55.
The text is available as e-reader.

R.E. Freeman, 'A Stakeholder Theory of Modern Corporation', in T.L. Beauchamp and N.E. Bowie (eds), 6th ed, *Ethical Theory and Business*, Prentice Hall, New Jersey, p56-65.
The text is available as e-reader.

Case 'Shutdown at Eastland' in T.L. Beauchamp and N.E. Bowie (eds), 6th ed, Ethical Theory and Business, Prentice Hall, New Jersey, p95-96.
The text is available as e-reader.

L.K. Trevina and K.A. Nelson, *Managing business ethics*, 2nd ed., Wiley, New York. Chapter 5: 'Deciding what's right: a psychological approach', pp100-117.
The text is available as e-reader.

Assignment 11: Supporting classmates

The paper is the most important outcome for the judgment of this course. For that reason, every student has to read two to three set-ups of class mates and offer constructive support w.r.t. the problem statement, the case study, the ethical approaches, own opinion and conclusions.

During the tutor meeting of March 15th, groups of 3 to 4 persons will be made who will read and criticize each other set-ups.