

**Dalhousie University**  
Faculty of Arts and Social Science  
Department of Philosophy

‘Evolutionary Ethics’

**PHIL 4115 / 5115 : Topics in Ethics I**  
Fall 2020, 3 Credit Hours, Seminar

## 1. COURSE INFORMATION

### 1.1. Territorial Acknowledgement

Dalhousie University is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq. We are all Treaty people.

### 1.2. Course Times + Location

**Time:** M 11:35 - 14:25 Atlantic.

**Delivery:** *In Person*, except when otherwise noted  
(See section on contingencies below)

**Location:** McCain ARTS & SS, Room 2118 (Studley Campus)

### 1.3. Office Hours + Location

**Time:** M 14:45 - 16:45 Atlantic

**Location:** McCain ARTS & SS, Room 3180 (Studley Campus): **OR**,  
virtually (Microsoft Teams), by appointment

### 1.4. Contact Information

Dr Travis LaCroix (He/Him),  
Email: [tlacroix@dal.ca](mailto:tlacroix@dal.ca) (preferred),  
Phone: +1 (902) 494-3628

### 1.5. Calendar Course Description

In this seminar course, students focus on a particular topic in ethical theory and investigate it in detail. When the course is offered, the topic is assigned by the Department at the end of the preceding academic year and is then posted at the Department and in the Faculty's timetable on the Web.

### 1.6. Description of Class Format

Barring any contingencies owing to university, provincial, or federal guidelines in response to the ongoing global pandemic, this course will be offered (primarily) in-person, and it will take the format of a seminar — i.e., our meeting will consist primarily of collaborative discussion rather than lectures. If we need to switch the format at some point in the semester, this information will be posted on the course webpage (<https://dal.brightspace.com>) under ‘announcements’. See ‘Contingencies’ (for Covid-19) section below.

### 1.7. Minimal Technical Requirements

This course will utilise D2L's Brightspace Learning Management System for readings, announcements, assignment submission, additional discussion, etc. If using a **PC (Windows)** or a **Mac (Mac OS)** it is recommended that you use **Firefox** to access Brightspace since some other browsers (Internet Explorer, Edge, Safari), may not fully support the software. Brightspace can be accessed at <https://dal.brightspace.com>.

### 1.8. Prerequisites (PHIL 4115 only)

At least two previous credits in philosophy or permission of the instructor.

### 1.9. Course Rationale

This course offers students a theoretical understanding of how evolutionary biology and the evolutionary history of *Homo sapiens* may come to bear on (human) normative and (meta-)ethical systems.

### 1.10. Course Learning Outcomes

As a result of participating in PHIL 4115/5115, students will be able to:

1. identify and describe the basic principles of evolutionary biology, especially in relation to 'sociobiology', which attempts to explain human behaviour in evolutionary terms.
2. critically digest, interpret, and analyse complex multi-disciplinary sources and synthesise their relation to the questions particular to this course.
3. evaluate the bearing of evolutionary biology on descriptive, normative, and meta-ethical theories, and how evolutionary biology may allow or disallow certain assumptions in meta- and normative ethics.
4. develop academic skills, including collaborating with their peers, summarising and presenting arguments, writing, editing, and using feedback about one's work to improve one's arguments and writings.

### 1.11. Required Texts

Except where otherwise noted, all of the **required** readings for this course will be made available online through the Learning Management System, <https://dal.brightspace.com/>. Details about the readings are given in the course schedule below (Section 1.14).

### 1.12. Detailed Course Description

In a 1973 article, evolutionary biologist Theodosius Dobzhansky proclaimed that 'nothing in biology makes sense except in the light of evolution'. One way to understand this provocative statement is that biology (in terms of the observed diversity of life and its distribution on the earth's surface) only makes sense in the light of evolution *because* it only makes sense if life on earth has a shared history. If we take this sentiment seriously, then to (truly) understand (nearly) any facet of human life, we ought to understand it in the context of the evolutionary history of *Homo sapiens* (as a species). Rather than assuming that ethics is the result of divine revelation or the application of our rational faculties, *evolutionary ethics* examines the possibility that morality is a social phenomenon, borne out of the biological and cultural evolution of intelligent, social creatures.

In this course, we will examine possible mechanisms of evolution that may apply to the evolution of moral behaviour in humans—including natural selection, sexual selection, kin selection, and group selection—in addition to social adaptations that may aid, foster, or give rise to moral behaviour—including altruism, signalling, cooperation, and conventions. We will also examine proto-morality and pro-social behaviour, as it appears in non-human animals (especially primates). On the philosophical side of things, we will discuss how a biological point of view allows and disallows certain normative concepts; we will also discuss criticisms of such a biological approach and contemporary challenges for evolutionary ethics.

In a paraphrase of a question posed by the linguist and cognitive scientist Massimo Piattelli-Palmarini, this course will essentially centre upon two converse questions:

1. What is **ethics**, that it may have evolved? And,
2. What is evolution, that it may apply to **ethics**?

### 1.13. Summary of Topics

#### *PART 1: WHAT IS EVOLUTION (THAT IT MAY APPLY TO ETHICS)?*

<b>Week 1</b>	Introduction
<b>Week 2</b>	Artificial, Natural, and Sexual Selection
<b>Week 3</b>	Kin Selection and Inclusive Fitness
<b>Week 4</b>	Reciprocal Altruism
<b>Week 5</b>	<i>Thanksgiving – No Class (University Closed)</i>

#### *PART 2: WHAT IS ETHICS (THAT IT MAY HAVE EVOLVED)?*

<b>Week 6</b>	Proto-Morality
<b>Week 7</b>	Coordination and Convention
<b>Week 8</b>	Norms and Normativity
<b>Week 9</b>	<i>Reading Week – No Class (University Open)</i>

#### *PART 3: PROBLEMS AND PRAGMATICS*

<b>Week 10</b>	Models of Evolution (and Their Limits)
<b>Week 11</b>	Descriptive Evolutionary Ethics
<b>Week 12</b>	Normative Evolutionary Ethics
<b>Week 13a</b>	Evolutionary Meta-Ethics
<b>Week 13b</b>	Linguistics Conventions and Moral Conventions (...and Wrapping Up)
<b>Week 14</b>	<i>Exam Period – No Class (University Open)</i>

### 1.14. Detailed Course Schedule.

Except where otherwise noted, all of the required readings for this course will be made available online through the Learning Management System, <https://dal.brightspace.com/>.

The readings that are listed as ‘required’ are, as you may expect, *required* to be read prior to the start of our meeting. I have also listed several ‘additional resources’, which may be used purely at your discretion. They may be helpful if you would like additional perspectives on a topic in a given week—something that is especially true if you decide to write a research paper on the topic.

The reading schedule ***is subject to change*** as the semester progresses; however, if the required reading changes, I will try give you at least two weeks’ notice. Any such changes will be announced in class *and* posted on the ‘course announcements’ section of the course webpage on Brightspace.

In addition to the required readings, the following *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* entries **may** be helpful throughout the course (especially when writing assignments), but these are not required:

Catherine Driscoll. 2018. ‘Sociobiology’ in Edward N. Zalta (ed.) *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2018 Edition). <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/sociobiology/>.

William FitzPatrick. 2020. ‘Morality and Evolutionary Biology’ in Edward N. Zalta (ed.) *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2021 Edition). <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/morality-biology/>.

Tim Lewens. 2018. ‘Cultural Evolution’ in Edward N. Zalta (ed.) *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2018 Edition). <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/evolution-cultural/>.

James Lennox. 2019. “Darwinism” in Edward N. Zalta (ed.) *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2019 Edition). <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2019/entries/darwinism/>.

Roberta L. Millstein. 2019. ‘Evolution’ in Edward N. Zalta (ed.) *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2019 Edition). <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/evolution/>.

Michael Rescorla. 2019. ‘Convention’ in Edward N. Zalta (ed.) *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2019 Edition). <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/convention/>.

Phillip Sloan. 2019. ‘Evolutionary Thought Before Darwin’ in Edward N. Zalta (ed.) *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2019 Edition). <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2019/entries/evolution-before-darwin/>.

<b>Week 0</b>	—
6 Sept.	Labour Day – <i>No Class</i> (University Closed)
<b>Week 1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>
13 Sept.	<p><b><i>Required Readings:</i></b></p> <p>Syllabus</p> <p>Allan Gibbard. 2007/1993. 'Sociobiology' Chapter 47 in R. E. Gooding, P. Pettit, and T. Pogge (eds.) <i>A Companion to Contemporary Political Philosophy</i>. Vol, 2. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing. 767-780.</p> <p>Philip Kitcher. 2006/1993. 'Four Ways of "Biologizing" Ethics' in E. Sober (ed.) <i>Conceptual Issues in Evolutionary Biology</i>. 3 Ed. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press. 575-586.</p> <p><b><i>Additional Resources</i></b></p> <p>Richard Dawkins. 2016/1976. <i>The Selfish Gene</i>. Oxford: Oxford University Press.</p>
<b>Week 2</b>	<b>Artificial, Natural, and Sexual Selection</b>
20 Sept.	<p><b><i>Required Reading</i></b></p> <p>Peter Godfrey-Smith. 2009. 'Natural Selection and its Representation', Chapter 2 in <i>Darwinian Populations and Natural Selection</i>. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 17-40.</p> <p>David J. Hosken and Clarissa M. House. 2011. 'Sexual Selection' <i>Current Biology</i> 21(2): R62-R65.</p> <p><b><i>Additional Resources</i></b></p> <p>Amotz Zahavi and Avishag Zahavi. 1997. <i>The Handicap Principle: A Missing Piece of Darwin's Puzzle</i>. Oxford: Oxford University Press.</p> <p>Donald Symons. 1992. 'On the Use and Misuse of Darwinism in the Study of Human Behavior' in J. H. Barkow, L. Cosmides, and J. Tooby (eds.) <i>The Adapted Mind: Evolutionary Psychology and the Generation of Culture</i>. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 137-159.</p>

<b>Week 3</b>	<b>Kin Selection and Inclusive Fitness</b>
27 Sep.	<p><b><i>Required Reading</i></b></p> <p>W. D. Hamilton. 1964. 'The Genetical Evolution of Social Behaviour. II' <i>Journal of Theoretical Biology</i> 7(1): 17-52.</p> <p>Richard Dawkins. 1979. 'Twelve Misunderstandings of Kin Selection' <i>Zeitschrift für Tierpsychologie</i> 51: 184-200.</p> <p><b><i>Additional Resources</i></b></p> <p>Andy Gardner and Stuart A. West. 2013. 'Adaptation and Inclusive Fitness' <i>Current Biology</i> 23(13): R577-R584.</p> <p>Andy Gardner and Stuart A. West. 2014. 'Inclusive Fitness: 50 Years On' <i>Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences</i>. 369(1642): 20130356.</p> <p>Alan Grafen. 1984. 'Natural Selection, Kin Selection, and Group Selection', Chapter 3 in J.R. Krebs and N.B. Davies (eds.), <i>Behavioural Ecology</i> (2 Ed). Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 62-84.</p> <p>W. D. Hamilton. 1964. 'The Genetical Evolution of Social Behaviour. I' <i>Journal of Theoretical Biology</i>. 7: 1-16.</p> <p>R. C. Lewontin. 1970. 'The Units of Selection' <i>Annual Review of Ecology and Systematics</i> 1: 1-18.</p> <p>Samir Okasha. 2011. 'Précis of <i>Evolution and the Levels of Selection</i>' <i>Philosophy and Phenomenological Research</i>. LXXXII(1): 212-220.</p> <p>Hannah Rubin. 2018. 'The Debate over Inclusive Fitness as a Debate over Methodologies' <i>Philosophy of Science</i> 85(1): 1-30.</p> <p>John Maynard Smith. 1964. 'Group Selection and Kin Selection' <i>Nature</i> 201: 1145-1147.</p>
<b>Week 4</b>	<b>Reciprocal Altruism</b>
4 Oct.	<p><b><i>Required Reading</i></b></p> <p>Robert L. Trivers. 1971. 'The Evolution of Reciprocal Altruism' <i>The Quarterly Review of Biology</i>. 46(1): 35-57.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Cont'd...</i></p>

4 Oct. (Cont'd)	<p>Robert Trivers. 2006. 'Reciprocal Altruism: 30 Years Later' in P. M. Kappeler and C. P. van Schaik (eds.) <i>Cooperation in Primates and Humans: Mechanisms and Evolution</i>. Berlin Heidelberg: Springer-Verlag. 67-83.</p> <p>Leda Cosmides and John Tooby. 1992. 'Cognitive Adaptations for Social Change' in J. H. Barkow, L. Cosmides, and J. Tooby (eds.) <i>The Adapted Mind: Evolutionary Psychology and the Generation of Culture</i>. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 163-228.</p> <p><b>Additional Resources</b></p> <p>Robert Axelrod. 1984. 'The Robustness of Reciprocity', Chapter 9 in <i>The Evolution of Cooperation</i>. Cambridge, MA: Basic Books. 169-191.</p> <p>Robert Axelrod and William D. Hamilton. 1981. 'The Evolution of Cooperation' <i>Science</i> 211(4489): 1390-1396.</p>
<b>Week 5</b>	—
11 Oct.	Thanksgiving Day – No Class (University Closed)
<b>Week 6</b>	<b>Proto-Morality</b>
18 Oct.	<p><b>Required Reading</b></p> <p>Michael L. Wilson and Richard W. Wrangham. 2003. 'Intergroup Relations in Chimpanzees' <i>Annual Review of Anthropology</i> 32: 363-392.</p> <p>Jessica C. Flack and Frans de Waal. 2000. 'Any Animal Whatever: Darwinian Building Blocks of Morality in Monkeys and Apes' <i>Journal of Consciousness Studies</i> 7(1-2): 1-29.</p> <p>Michael Tomasello. 2000. 'Two Hypotheses about Primate Cognition', in C. Heyes and L. Huber (eds.) <i>The Evolution of Cognition</i>. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press. 165-183.</p> <p><b>Additional Resources</b></p> <p>Jelle de Boer. 2000. 'Moral Ape Philosophy' <i>Biology &amp; Philosophy</i> 26(6): 891-904.</p> <p>Frans B. M. de Waal. 2007. 'With a Little Help from a Friend' <i>PLoS Biology</i> 5(7): e190.</p>

<b>Week 7</b>	<b>Coordination and Convention</b>
25 Oct.	<p><b>Required Reading</b></p> <p>David Lewis. 2002/1969. 'Coordination and Convention', Chapter I in <i>Convention: A Philosophical Study</i> Oxford: Blackwell Publishing. 5-51.</p> <p>David Lewis. 2002/1969. 'Convention Refined', Chapter II in <i>Convention: A Philosophical Study</i> Oxford: Blackwell Publishing. 52-82.</p> <p>David Lewis. 2002/1969. 'Convention Contrasted', Chapter III in <i>Convention: A Philosophical Study</i> Oxford: Blackwell Publishing. 83-121.</p> <p><b>Additional Resources</b></p> <p>Robert Axelrod. 1984. 'The Problem of Cooperation', Chapter 1 in <i>The Evolution of Cooperation</i>. Cambridge, MA: Basic Books. 3-26.</p>
<b>Week 8</b>	<b>Norms and Normativity</b>
1 Nov.	<p><b>Required Reading</b></p> <p>Edna Ullmann-Margalit. 2015/1977. 'Aim and Method', Chapter I in <i>The Emergence of Norms</i> Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1-17.</p> <p>Christina Bicchieri. 2006. 'The Rules We Live By', Chapter 1 in <i>The Grammar of Society: The Nature and Dynamics of Social Norms</i>. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1-54.</p> <p>Christine M. Korsgaard. 2014/1996. 'The Normative Question', Chapter 1 in <i>The Sources of Normativity</i>. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 7-48.</p> <p><b>Additional Resources</b></p> <p>Cristina Bicchieri, Ryan Muldoon, and Alessandro Sontuoso. 2018. 'Social Norms' in Edward N. Zalta (ed.) <i>The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy</i> (Winter 2018 Edition).  <a href="https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2018/entries/social-norms/">https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2018/entries/social-norms/</a>.</p> <p>Christian Bicchieri and Hugo Mercier. 2014. 'Norms and Beliefs: How Change Occurs' in M. Xenitidou and B. Edmonds (eds.) <i>The Complexity of Social Norms</i>. Computational Social Sciences. Cham: Springer. 37-54.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Cont'd...</i></p>



1 Nov. (Cont'd)	Dylan Hadfield-Menell, Mckane Andrus, and Gillian Hadfield. 2019. 'Legible Normativity for AI Alignment: The Value of Silly Rules. <i>AIES '19: Proceedings of the 2019 AAAI/ACM Conference on AI, Ethics, and Society</i> . 115-121.
<b>Week 9</b>	—
8 Nov.	Fall Study Break – <i>No Class</i> (University Open)
<b>Week 10</b>	<b>Models of Evolution (and their Limits)</b>
15 Nov.	<p><b><i>Required Reading</i></b></p> <p>John Maynard Smith. 1976. 'Evolution and the Theory of Games' <i>American Scientist</i> 64(1): 41-45.</p> <p>Brian Skyrms. 2014/1996. 'Sex and Justice', Chapter 1 in <i>The Evolution of the Social Contract</i>. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1-22.</p> <p>Brian Skyrms. 2014/1996. 'Fairness and Commitment', Chapter 2 in <i>The Evolution of the Social Contract</i>. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 23-42.</p> <p>Brian Skyrms. 2014/1996. 'Mutual Aid', Chapter 3 in <i>The Evolution of the Social Contract</i>. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 43-63.</p> <p>Brian Skyrms. 2014/1996. 'Correlated Convention', Chapter 4 in <i>The Evolution of the Social Contract</i>. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 64-80.</p> <p>Justin D'Arms. 2000. 'When Evolutionary Game Theory Explains Morality, what does it Explain?' <i>Journal of Consciousness Studies</i> 7(1-2): 296-99.</p> <p><b><i>Additional Reading</i></b></p> <p>Robert Axelrod. 1984. 'The Success of TIT FOR TAT in Computer Tournaments', Chapter 1 in <i>The Evolution of Cooperation</i>. Cambridge, MA: Basic Books. 27-54.</p> <p>Justin D'Arms, Robert Batterman, and Krzysztof Górný. 1998. 'Game Theoretic Explanations and the Evolution of Justice', <i>Philosophy of Science</i> 65(1): 76-102.</p>

<b>Week 11</b>	<b>Descriptive Evolutionary Ethics</b>
22 Nov.	<p><b><i>Required Reading</i></b></p> <p>Richard Joyce. 2006. 'The Nature of Morality', Chapter 2 in <i>The Evolution of Morality</i>. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press. 45-73.</p> <p>Christine M. Korsgaard. 2006, 'Morality and the Distinctiveness of Human Action' in F. de Waal (author), S. Macedo, and J. Ober (eds.) <i>Primates and Philosophers</i>, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. 98-119.</p> <p>Philip Kitcher. 2006. 'Between Fragile Altruism and Morality: Evolution and the Emergence of Normative Guidance' in G. Boniolo and G. De Anna (eds.) <i>Evolutionary Ethics and Contemporary Biology</i>. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 159-77.</p>
<b>Week 12</b>	<b>Normative Evolutionary Ethics</b>
29 Nov.	<p><b><i>Conditionally Required Readings:*</i></b></p> <p><b>*NOTE:</b> <i>For this meeting and the next, students registered in 4115 will choose <b>ONE</b> of the listed readings to summarise and present to the rest of the class. Presentations will consist in approximately 10 minutes of summary and analysis, followed by 20 minutes of discussion. See Assignment Section below for further details.</i></p> <p>John Mizzoni. 2017. 'Evolution and Virtue Ethics', Chapter 6 in <i>Evolution and the Foundations of Ethics: Evolutionary Perspectives on Contemporary Normative and Metaethical Theories</i>. London: Lexington Books. 115-134.</p> <p>John Mizzoni. 2017. 'Evolution and Natural Law Ethics', Chapter 7 in <i>Evolution and the Foundations of Ethics: Evolutionary Perspectives on Contemporary Normative and Metaethical Theories</i>. London: Lexington Books. 135-152.</p> <p>John Mizzoni. 2017. 'Evolution and Social Contract Ethics', Chapter 8 in <i>Evolution and the Foundations of Ethics: Evolutionary Perspectives on Contemporary Normative and Metaethical Theories</i>. London: Lexington Books. 152-170.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Cont'd...</i></p>

29 Nov. (Cont'd)	<p>John Mizzoni. 2017. 'Evolution and Deontological Ethics', Chapter 9 in <i>Evolution and the Foundations of Ethics: Evolutionary Perspectives on Contemporary Normative and Metaethical Theories</i>. London: Lexington Books. 171-192.</p> <p>John Mizzoni. 2017. 'Evolution and Utilitarian Ethics', Chapter 10 in <i>Evolution and the Foundations of Ethics: Evolutionary Perspectives on Contemporary Normative and Metaethical Theories</i>. London: Lexington Books. 193-209.</p> <p>John Mizzoni. 2017. 'Evolution and Care Ethics', Chapter 11 in <i>Evolution and the Foundations of Ethics: Evolutionary Perspectives on Contemporary Normative and Metaethical Theories</i>. London: Lexington Books. 211-227.</p> <p><b>Conditionally Additional Resources</b></p> <p><b>For Chapter 6 of Mizzoni (2017):</b>  Rosalind Hursthouse and Glen Pettigrove. 2016. 'Virtue Ethics' in Edward N. Zalta (ed.) <i>The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy</i> (Winter 2016 Edition). <a href="https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2018/entries/ethics-virtue/">https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2018/entries/ethics-virtue/</a>.</p> <p>Richard Kraut. 2018. 'Aristotle's Ethics' in Edward N. Zalta (ed.) <i>The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy</i> (Summer 2018 Edition). <a href="https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2018/entries/aristotle-ethics/">https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2018/entries/aristotle-ethics/</a>.</p> <p><b>For Chapter 7 of Mizzoni (2017):</b>  Mark Murphy. 2019. 'The Natural Law Tradition in Ethics' in Edward N. Zalta (ed.) <i>The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy</i> (Summer 2019 Edition). <a href="https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2019/entries/natural-law-ethics/">https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2019/entries/natural-law-ethics/</a>.</p> <p><b>For Chapter 8 of Mizzoni (2017):</b>  Ann Cudd and Seena Eftekhari. 2018. 'Contractarianism' in Edward N. Zalta (ed.) <i>The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy</i> (Summer 2018 Edition). <a href="https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2018/entries/contractarianism/">https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2018/entries/contractarianism/</a>.</p> <p>Fred D'Agostino, Gerald Gaus, and John Thrasher. 2021. 'Contemporary Approaches to the Social Contract' in Edward N. Zalta (ed.) <i>The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy</i> (Summer 2021 Edition). <a href="https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2021/entries/contractarianism-contemporary/">https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2021/entries/contractarianism-contemporary/</a>.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Cont'd...</p>
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29 Nov. (Cont'd)	<p><b>For Chapter 9 of Mizzoni (2017):</b>  Larry Alexander and Michael Moore. 2021. 'Deontological Ethics' in Edward N. Zalta (ed.) <i>The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy</i> (Summer 2021 Edition).  <a href="https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2021/entries/ethics-deontological/">https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2021/entries/ethics-deontological/</a>.</p> <p><b>For Chapter 10 of Mizzoni (2017):</b>  Walter Sinnott-Armstrong. 2021. 'Consequentialism' in Edward N. Zalta (ed.) <i>The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy</i> (Fall 2021 Edition).  Forthcoming URL:  <a href="https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2021/entries/consequentialism/">https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2021/entries/consequentialism/</a>.</p> <p><b>For Chapter 11 of Mizzoni (2017):</b>  Kathryn Norlock. 2019. 'Feminist Ethics' in Edward N. Zalta (ed.) <i>The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy</i> (Summer 2019 Edition).  <a href="https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2019/entries/feminism-ethics/">https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2019/entries/feminism-ethics/</a>.</p>
<b>Week 13a</b>	<b>Evolutionary Meta-Ethics</b>
6 Dec.	<p><b>Conditionally Required Readings:*</b></p> <p><b>*NOTE:</b> For this meeting and the previous, students registered in 4115 will choose <b>ONE</b> of the listed readings to summarise and present to the rest of the class. See Assignment Section below for further details.</p> <p>John Mizzoni. 2017. 'Evolution and Error Theory', Chapter 2 in <i>Evolution and the Foundations of Ethics: Evolutionary Perspectives on Contemporary Normative and Metaethical Theories</i>. London: Lexington Books. 21-50.</p> <p>John Mizzoni. 2017. 'Evolution and Expressivism', Chapter 3 in <i>Evolution and the Foundations of Ethics: Evolutionary Perspectives on Contemporary Normative and Metaethical Theories</i>. London: Lexington Books. 51-70.</p> <p>John Mizzoni. 2017. 'Evolution and Moral Relativism', Chapter 4 in <i>Evolution and the Foundations of Ethics: Evolutionary Perspectives on Contemporary Normative and Metaethical Theories</i>. London: Lexington Books. 71-92.</p> <p>John Mizzoni. 2017. 'Evolution and Moral Realism', Chapter 5 in <i>Evolution and the Foundations of Ethics: Evolutionary Perspectives on Contemporary Normative and Metaethical Theories</i>. London: Lexington Books. 93-112.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Cont'd...</p>

6 Dec. (Cont'd)	<p><b>Conditionally Additional Resources:</b></p> <p><b>For Chapter 2 of Mizzoni (2017):</b>  Richard Joyce. 2021. 'Moral Anti-Realism' (Particularly Sec. 3.2) in Edward N. Zalta (ed.) <i>The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy</i> (Fall 2021 Edition). Forthcoming URL:  <a href="https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2021/entries/moral-anti-realism/">https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2021/entries/moral-anti-realism/</a>.</p> <p>J. L. Mackie. 1977. 'The Subjectivity of Values', Secs. 1-2, 6-7, and 10 of Ch. 1 in <i>Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong</i>, London: Penguin. 15-18, 27-35, 42-46.</p> <p>Richard Joyce. 2001. 'Error Theory and Motivation', Sections 1.0-1.1 of Ch. 1 in <i>The Myth of Morality</i>. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1-9.</p> <p><b>For Chapter 3 of Mizzoni (2017):</b>  Mark van Roojen. 2018. 'Moral Cognitivism vs. Non-Cognitivism' (Particularly Sec. 2.4 and 2.5) in Edward N. Zalta (ed.) <i>The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy</i> (Fall 2018 Edition).  <a href="https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2018/entries/moral-cognitivism/">https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2018/entries/moral-cognitivism/</a>.</p> <p><b>For Chapter 4 of Mizzoni (2017):</b>  Chris Gowans. 2021. 'Moral Relativism' in Edward N. Zalta (ed.) <i>The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy</i> (Spring 2021 Edition).  <a href="https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2021/entries/moral-relativism/">https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2021/entries/moral-relativism/</a>.</p> <p><b>For Chapter 5 of Mizzoni (2017):</b>  Geoff Sayre-McCord. 2021. 'Moral Realism' in Edward N. Zalta (ed.) <i>The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy</i> (Summer 2021 Edition).  <a href="https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2021/entries/moral-realism/">https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2021/entries/moral-realism/</a>.</p>
<b>Week 13b*</b>	<b>Linguistics Conventions and Moral Conventions (... and Wrapping Up)</b>
7 Dec.*	<p><b>*NOTE:</b> the date of this meeting is different than our usual meeting.</p> <p><b>Required Reading</b></p> <p>None</p>
<b>Week 14</b>	
13 Dec.	Exam Period – No Class (University Open)

## 2. GRADING

### 2.1. Assessment Details

There are two assessment schemes, depending on whether you are registered in PHIL 4115 (undergraduate section) or PHIL 5115 (graduate section). Any student who is registered in PHIL 4115 is welcome to be graded according to the 5115 scheme; if you wish to do so, please let me know via email (tlacroix@dal.ca) prior to our third meeting (27 September 2021). After this date, it will not be possible to change the scheme by which you are graded.

### 2.2. PHIL 4115 Grading Scheme

The breakdown for the final grade for the 4115 (undergraduate scheme) is given as follows (further details on each component is given below in Section 3.4):

Weight	Description	Deadline
10%	Attendance & Participation	<i>Ongoing</i>
10%	Reading Questions	<i>Weekly</i> , Starting Sun. Sept. 19
10%	Discussion-Lead Assignment	<i>To be scheduled by meeting 2</i>
10%	Collaborative Reading Presentation	Monday, 29 November
60%	3x Short (1500 word) papers	Tuesday, October 12, Tuesday, November 8, and Tuesday, December 14 (respectively)

### 2.3. PHIL 5115 Grading Scheme (Overview)

Weight	Description	Deadline
10%	Attendance & Participation	<i>Ongoing</i>
10%	Reading Questions	<i>Weekly</i> , Starting Sun. Sept. 19
20%	Discussion-Lead Assignment (x2)	<i>To be scheduled by meeting 2</i>
60%	Short (3000-word) research paper	Tuesday, December 7 (Draft) Monday, December 20 (Final)

### 2.4. Assignment Details

Where relevant, all assignments should be submitted via the course webpage. Detailed instructions for assignment submission will be posted on the course webpage (<https://dal.brightspace.com>).

#### 2.4.1. Attendance and Participation (**4115 and 5115**)

**10 marks total.** Timely arrival, attendance, and engagement in class will count toward the attendance and participation mark. It is expected that your contributions will be respectful and constructive. Each day will count for one mark, meaning that 10 of our 12 meetings will be counted toward the attendance and participation mark, meaning that you may have up to two undocumented absences without any effect on your final grade. See 'ground rules' (Sec. 3.3) below for expectations about class discussion.

#### 2.4.2. *Reading Questions (4115 and 5115)*

**10 Marks Total.** Each week, beginning after our first meeting (September 13), no later than the day before our Monday meeting, you should submit a question based on (at least) one of the readings for that meeting—i.e., your first question should be submitted no later than Sunday, September 19 in advance of our meeting on Monday, September 20.

The question you write should demonstrate that you've read the reading well enough to be at least confused by it. To quote David Dick (via Nicole Wyatt): "confusion is a philosophical heuristic, it either helps you identify a place where you don't understand, or where the argument doesn't make sense. Either one of these counts as philosophical progress".

These questions should be no longer than 300 words, and they will be used as a springboard for the discussion in our meeting. Each question will be worth 1% of the final grade. No late submissions will be accepted for this assignment.

#### 2.4.3. *Discussion-Lead Assignment (4115 and 5115)*

**10 Marks Each.** By the end of the second meeting, students must sign up to lead the discussion for **one** (4115) or **two** (5115) meeting(s).

Note that this is not a presentation, per se—rather, you should *facilitate* (in addition to participating in) the discussion had by the rest of the class. In light of this, you should make sure to familiarise yourself with the readings well in advance. You can lead the discussion in any way you see fit for the reading that week, but you should get the discussion started by providing your own thoughts on the reading(s).

Students may feel free to meet with me in office to discuss their strategy for the meeting in which they are the discussion lead, prior to that meeting date. If you are absent on the day for which you signed up to be a discussion lead, you will receive a zero for this assignment. With advanced notice, and depending upon the course schedule, it may be possible to switch weeks if absolutely necessary; in this case, you should email me as soon as possible. Otherwise, once the schedule is set, you will be responsible for the discussion that week.

#### 2.4.4. *Short Paper Assignment (4115 Only)*

**60 Marks Total.** Everyone registered in PHIL 4115, unless being graded according to the graduate (5115) scheme, will be expected to submit three (3) short papers over the course of the semester. Each paper should be **no more** than 1500 words, and **no fewer** than 750 words. The *initial* submission for each of these papers should be as follows, though they may be submitted earlier than the posted dates:

**Paper 1:** Tuesday, October 12  
**Paper 2:** Tuesday, November 8  
**Paper 3:** Tuesday, December 14

Each individual paper will be graded on a PASS/FAIL basis. Failing papers *may be resubmitted* until such time as they are judged passing. Because of the possibility for resubmission, **no late submissions will be accepted for this assignment**; furthermore, if you do not hand your paper in by the initial deadline, OR if your initial submission is fewer than 750 words, you will be ineligible to submit a 'resubmission' at a later date. The **final date for resubmitting a short paper is December 20**.

The letter grade for the three papers together (60% of the final grade) will be calculated as follows:

3 Passing Papers	=	A
2 Passing Papers	=	B
1 Passing Paper	=	C
0 Passing Papers	=	F

Further details about the content of these papers will be discussed in class.

#### 2.4.5. Collaborative Reading Presentation (**4115 Only**)

**10 Marks Total.** By the end of the second meeting (September 20), students must sign up to 'teach' (summarise, present, and lead discussion) on **ONE** of the required readings listed for weeks 12 and 13.

In weeks 12 and 13, the 'conditionally required' readings are **only** 'required' if you are signed up to 'teach' that reading—although students are welcome to read as many or as few of these as they wish prior to the class in order to participate in the discussion.

Presentations will consist in approximately 10 minutes of summary and analysis, followed by approximately 20 minutes of discussion (note: actual times will vary depending upon enrolment). Further details will be given in class.

#### 2.4.6. Short (3000-word) Research Paper (**5115 Only**)

**60 Marks Total.** Students registered in the graduate section of this course (PHIL 5115) must submit a final research paper of approximately (i.e., 'no more than') 3000 words, exclusive of footnotes and bibliography.

If you wish to receive detailed feedback on the paper prior to the final submission deadline, a draft should be submitted no later than Tuesday, December 7. The final paper is due Monday, December 20.

The final draft of the paper should be accompanied by an abstract of no more than 150 words.



## 2.5. Grade Scale

The grade scale and definitions for letter grades for this course can be found online at [https://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/academic-support/grades-and-student-records/grade-scale-and-definitions.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/grades-and-student-records/grade-scale-and-definitions.html).

## 3. COURSE POLICIES

### 3.1. Contact Policy

My email policy is to respond to any enquiries within two workdays of receipt. If I have not responded to your email within this time frame, you are entitled to (and should) send a follow-up email. Please put the course code ('PHIL455') in the subject-line of your email. For scheduled office hours, you are welcome to drop-in without letting me know in advance. If the set times do not work for you, I am also available by appointment, either in-person or via Zoom. Please send an email to set up a time.

### 3.2. Late Submission Policy

Work that is submitted late, without a documented excuse, will be penalized 2 points per 24-hour period after the deadline. **NOTE:** *This policy applies only to the research paper (5115). No late submissions will be accepted for the reading questions/responses or the short paper assignments.*

### 3.3. Ground Rules for Discussion

These ground rules form a set of expected behaviours for conduct in discussions and lectures. They are meant to foster an intellectual atmosphere where we work together to achieve knowledge. They are also meant to ensure that discussions are spirited without devolving into argumentation and to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to be heard.

*DO:*

- Respect yourself and others (share your viewpoint and allow others to share theirs).
- Show respect for others by learning and using their preferred names and pronouns.
- Give each other the benefit of the doubt. (Be charitable.)
- Be cautious of universal claims.
- Listen actively and attentively.
- Keep an open mind. (Expect to learn something new, or to have your views challenged by ideas, questions, and points of view different than your own.)
- Ask for clarification if you are confused.
- Challenge one another but do so respectfully.
- Allow others (and yourself) to revise or clarify ideas and positions in light of new information.
- Critique ideas, not people.
- Take responsibility for the quality of the discussion.
- Build on one another's comments; work toward shared understanding.
- Try to always have your readings in front of you.

- If you are offended by anything said during discussion, acknowledge it immediately.

**DO NOT:**

- Interrupt one another—even when you are excited to respond.
- Offer opinions without supporting evidence.
- Engage in put-downs.
- Make assumptions—ask questions instead.
- Do not monopolise discussion.

If you notice patterns that are troubling or might be impeding full engagement by others, please speak to me in office or via email. Such discussions should be understood as being strictly confidential. If it is not possible to speak to me, feel free to reach out to the department chair, and academic advisor, or a trusted mentor.

### 3.4. Covid-19

Up to date information about Dalhousie's current plans and policies regarding Covid-19 can be found online at <https://www.dal.ca/covid-19-information-and-updates.html>.

#### 3.4.1. *Contingencies*

Note that **if necessary**, we may change some of the in-person meetings to online meetings. This will be announced as far in advance as possible on the course webpage under 'announcements'.

#### 3.4.1. *Congestion in the Hallway*

Try to avoid congesting within the hallways—where possible, consider travelling from class to class outdoors instead of through our various tunnels connecting university buildings. Where possible, please arrive for your class no sooner than 5 minutes before the start time.

#### 3.4.2. *Entering and Exiting the Classroom*

To help with traffic flow within classrooms, please enter and exit the room in an orderly manner. Consider filling the room from the front to the back, and exiting the room via the nearest exit to your location

#### 3.4.3. **STAY AT HOME** if you feel unwell

If you are not feeling well, please remain home. If you experience symptoms of COVID-19, including a cough (new or worsening) or a fever, you should complete a COVID-19 self-assessment and schedule a COVID-19 test through the province. You can consult the Nova Scotia public-health guidelines here: <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/symptoms-and-testing/> If you are ultimately diagnosed with COVID-19, follow all guidance you receive from Public Health.

#### 3.4.4. *Masks*

For the safety and comfort of your classmates, please wear your masks within the classroom for the time being (at least until September 30, we will discuss policies for masks in class after this date). Briefly removing or lowering your

mask while actively eating or drinking is OK, but please replace it once you are finished.

#### 3.4.5. *Mental Health Support*

If any students are struggling, and are looking for mental health support, please make sure you reach out for help. There are a variety of mental health resources and supports available for students at [www.dal.ca/mentalhealth](http://www.dal.ca/mentalhealth).

If you wish to chat with a mental health professional, same-day counselling appointments are available at the Student Health and Wellness Centre on the 2nd floor of LeMarchant Place. Appointments can be made by calling 902-494-2171 or online at: [www.dal.ca/studenthealth/bookonline](http://www.dal.ca/studenthealth/bookonline)

Students can also access free and confidential mental health counselling support 24 hours per day, 7 days a week, by calling Good2Talk at [1-833-292-3698](tel:1-833-292-3698) or by [texting GOOD2TALKNS](text:GOOD2TALKNS) to 686868.

If you are in crisis, you can always call 902-429-8167 or 1-888-429-8167 to reach the Mental Health Mobile Crisis Team, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

## 4. UNIVERSITY STATEMENTS

### 4.1. Territorial Acknowledgement:

Dalhousie University is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq. We are all Treaty people.

### 4.2. Internationalization

At Dalhousie, "[thinking and acting globally](#)" enhances the quality and impact of education, supporting learning that is "interdisciplinary, cross-cultural, global in reach, and orientated toward solving problems that extend across national borders."

### 4.3. Academic Integrity

At Dalhousie University, we are guided in all of our work by the values of [academic integrity](#): honesty, trust, fairness, responsibility and respect. As a student, you are required to demonstrate these values in all of the work you do. The University provides policies and procedures that every member of the university community is required to follow to ensure academic integrity. (Read more: [http://www.dal.ca/dept/university\\_secretariat/academic-integrity.html](http://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/academic-integrity.html))

### 4.4. Accessibility

The Student Accessibility Centre is Dalhousie's centre of expertise for matters related to student accessibility and accommodation.

If there are aspects of the design, instruction, and/or experiences within this course (online or in-person) that result in barriers to your inclusion please contact:

- the [Student Accessibility Centre](#) (for all courses offered by Dalhousie with the exception of Truro)
- the [Student Success Centre in Truro](#) for courses offered by the Faculty of Agriculture

Your classrooms may contain accessible furniture and equipment. It is important that these items remain in place, undisturbed, so that students who require their use will be able to fully participate.

#### **4.5. Conduct in the Classroom – Culture of Respect**

Substantial and constructive dialogue on challenging issues is an important part of academic inquiry and exchange. It requires willingness to listen and tolerance of opposing points of view. Consideration of individual differences and alternative viewpoints is required of all class members, towards each other, towards instructors, and towards guest speakers. While expressions of differing perspectives are welcome and encouraged, the words and language used should remain within acceptable bounds of civility and respect.

#### **4.6. Diversity and Inclusion – [Culture of Respect](#)**

Every person at Dalhousie has a right to be respected and safe. We believe inclusiveness is fundamental to education. We stand for equality. Dalhousie is strengthened in our diversity. We are a respectful and inclusive community. We are committed to being a place where everyone feels welcome and supported, which is why our Strategic Direction prioritizes fostering a culture of diversity and inclusiveness (Strategic Priority 5.2).

#### **4.7. Code of Student Conduct**

Everyone at Dalhousie is expected to treat others with dignity and respect. The [Code of Student Conduct](#) allows Dalhousie to take disciplinary action if students don't follow this community expectation. When appropriate, violations of the code can be resolved in a reasonable and informal manner—perhaps through a restorative justice process. If an informal resolution can't be reached, or would be inappropriate, procedures exist for formal dispute resolution.

#### **4.8. Fair Dealing policy**

The Dalhousie University [Fair Dealing Policy](#) provides guidance for the limited use of copyright protected material without the risk of infringement and without having to seek the permission of copyright owners. It is intended to provide a balance between the rights of creators and the rights of users at Dalhousie.

#### **4.9. Originality Checking Software**

The course instructor may use Dalhousie's approved originality checking software and Google to check the originality of any work submitted for credit, in accordance with the [Student Submission of Assignments and Use of Originality Checking Software Policy](#). Students are free, without penalty of grade, to choose an alternative method of attesting to the authenticity of their work and must inform the instructor no later than the last day to add/drop classes of their intent to choose an alternate method.

#### **4.10. Student Use of Course Materials**

These course materials are designed for use as part of the Course Code at Dalhousie University and are the property of the instructor unless otherwise stated. Third party copyrighted materials (such as books, journal articles, music, videos, etc.) have either been licensed for use in this course or fall under an exception or limitation in Canadian Copyright law. Copying this course material for distribution (e.g., uploading to a commercial third-party website) may lead to a violation of Copyright law.

### **6. UNIVERSITY POLICIES, GUIDELINES, AND RESOURCES FOR SUPPORT**

Dalhousie courses are governed by the academic rules and regulations set forth in the [Academic Calendar](#) and the [Senate](#).

**Important student information, services and resources are available as follows:**

#### **University Policies and Programs**

- [Important Dates in the Academic Year](#) (including add/drop dates)
- [Classroom Recording Protocol](#)
- [Dalhousie Grading Practices Policy](#)
- [Grade Appeal Process](#)
- [Sexualized Violence Policy](#)
- [Scent-Free Program](#)

#### **Learning and Support Resources**

- Academic Support - Advising [Halifax](#), [Truro](#)
- [Student Health & Wellness Centre](#)
- [On Track](#) (helps you transition into university, and supports you through your first year at Dalhousie and beyond)
- [Indigenous Student Centre](#). See also: [Indigenous Connection](#).
- Elders-in-Residence: The [Elders in Residence program](#) provides students with access to First Nations elders for guidance, counsel and support. Visit the office in the [Indigenous Student Centre](#) or contact the program at [elders@dal.ca](mailto:elders@dal.ca) or 902-494-6803.
- [Black Student Advising Centre](#)
- [International Centre](#)
- [South House Sexual and Gender Resource Centre](#)
- [LGBTQ2SIA+ Collaborative](#)
- [Dalhousie Libraries](#)
- [Copyright Office](#)
- [Dalhousie Student Advocacy Service \(DSAS\)](#)
- [Dalhousie Ombudsperson](#)
- [Human Rights & Equity Services](#)
- [Writing Centre](#)
- [Study Skills/Tutoring](#)