**INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS (HONORS)**

**3600:120-010**

**Prof. John Huss**

**Fall 2019**

**Kolbe 205**

**1:15pm-2:30PM TuTh**

Instructor John Huss

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Office Hours TuTh by appointment (before 10:15am or after 2:30pm)

TEXTBOOKS: James Rachels, *The Elements of Moral Philosophy*, (McGraw-Hill)

Peter Singer, *One World Now: The Ethics of Globalization* (Yale UP)

**Other readings will be posted on Brightspace.**

**Course Description** (adapted from American Philosophical Association)

In this course we will read classical and contemporary writings on such matters as the nature of right and wrong, relativism, happiness, virtue, egoism, moral education, contemporary moral issues, and social policy. We will seek to answer, using critical reasoning, a series of questions about these issues as raised by the course readings. In addition, we will engage each other in sustained discussion of these issues.

**Objectives**

(1) To investigate the nature of right and wrong. Is morality a matter of personal opinion? Societal agreement? Legal or religious authority? Unchanging moral law? (2) To understand the basis and consequences of several different ethical theories. Is ethics a matter of following rules no matter what the consequences are? Or is it a matter of pursuing good consequences regardless of what the rules are? What role does reason play? Are our emotions a good guide to right action? Is ethics simply a matter of being a good person? Is it looking out for one's own interests? Or taking into account the interests of all? Who counts morally? Humans only? All humans? Other animals? Every living thing? In a global economy, how far do our moral obligations extend? (3) To develop the ability to criticize arguments. Why should we accept a given moral judgment? Can we challenge its assumptions? (4) To apply ethical theory to the solution of moral problems, particularly those stemming from globalization.

**Learning outcomes** (adapted from those provided by the American Philosophical Association)

Listed below are the outcomes a successful student will attain by the end of this course in ethics:

1. Identify and define key philosophical terms studied in the course.
2. Distinguish among the moral theories studied in the course.
3. Apply moral theories to specific moral issues.
4. Identify major points and arguments of an essay in moral philosophy.
5. Critically analyze and evaluate moral arguments.

**General Education Learning Outcomes.** Below are the six learning outcomes that all Arts and Humanities General Education courses should achieve:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of major concepts, findings, and historical perspectives in each disciplinary area.

2. Find information resources in each disciplinary area and evaluate their reliability.

3. Articulate the role of ethics in each disciplinary area.

4. Demonstrate a basic knowledge of major cultures/societies of the world including their art, history, and geography*.*

5. Use rhetorical skills in the analysis of creative works (arts and humanities) including their social, political, emotional and psychological components.

6. Demonstrate effective written and oral communication appropriate to each disciplinary area.

**Course grade**

The course grade will be determined on the basis of exam scores (300 points, 3 exams each worth 100 points), participation (50 points), and attendance record. The final grade is determined by summing the exam scores and participation score and dividing by the total points for the course (350 points). **You are allowed two unexcused absences. Each additional absence will result in a reduction in your participation grade.** (See Attendance Policy below.) This percentage is converted to a letter grade with plus/minus: A(100%-94%), A-(93%-90%), B+(89%-87%), B(86%-84%), B-(83%-80%), etc., where 60% is the lowest D- and ≤59% is F. There may occasionally be extra credit questions offered on the tests or as an outside assignment. If necessary, pop quizzes will be given to determine whether you have carefully done the assigned reading, totaling as many as 50 points depending on the number of quizzes given. **Grades will be posted on Brightspace**.

**Participation.** This class requires both **in-class** and **outside** participation.

**In-class participation**. The expectation for in-class participation is that you will come to class with the readings completed and having thought about the questions for discussion, that you will actively share your ideas and entertain the ideas of others, that you will ask questions about material you do not understand, and that you will raise objections to points with which you disagree. Toward the end of the semester I will ask you for a one-page self-evaluation of your participation.

**Outside participation**. Ethics and philosophy apply to the broader world, and participation should not be limited to the classroom. The requirement for outside participation is that each student will attend an event or lecture, or participate in an activity, that is related either to ethics or to philosophy more generally, and will provide **a 250-word written report of that participation, explaining its relationship to ethics or to philosophy**. Events on campus provide an opportunity for this form of outside participation, but there are plenty of others, on- and off-campus. **Most students find it easier to meet this requirement in the first half of the semester while there are plenty of events to choose from.** Please have your form of outside participation approved by me in advance if possible.

**Policies**

Individual meetings. Each student will meet with me one-on-one or in a small group for 5-10 minutes at the beginning of the semester so that we may discuss your interests and goals and how this course relates to them.

Electronic communication during class. Sending and receiving text messages, email correspondence, tweeting, voice messaging, P2P game-playing, and other forms of electronic communication have apparently overtaken us as biological urges. If you need to relieve these or any other urges, please leave the room and return when you are finished. Do not engage in any of these activities in the classroom.

Attendance. This class is based on reading, discussion, and writing. Because we will all be learning from one another, attendance is mandatory. **You are allowed two unexcused absences. Each additional unexcused absence will result in a reduction in your participation grade.** Any special circumstances regarding attendance should be mentioned during our initial individual meeting.

Reading. The reading in this class is absolutely vital and it is mandatory that you complete the assigned readings before setting foot in the classroom. I expect you to take notes on the readings (in the margins or in a notebook) and to come to class ready to ask questions and to participate in discussion. If necessary, pop quizzes will be given to determine whether you have carefully done the assigned reading, totaling as many as 50 points depending on the number of quizzes given. Usually I will simply ask about some vocabulary item that appears in that day’s reading.

Handouts. If a handout is given to students, consider it part of the day's lecture. If a student misses class on such days, he or she is responsible for the material but should *not* expect the professor to supply the handouts.

Exams. Exams are based on the readings, lecture, and discussion. Expect them to be challenging but fair.

Make-Up Exams are given only under certain conditions and only with prior approval of the instructor.

Tutoring is available in the Tutoring Center in Bierce Library.

Withdrawals: The University’s withdrawal deadlines are as follows:

**Sept. 8** Last day to drop without WD appearing on your academic record (withdraw

via Zipline—no signature required)

**Oct. 13** Last day to withdraw. WD will appear on student’s academic record (withdraw via Zipline—no signature required). No withdrawals permitted after this date.

Incompletes: A grade of incomplete indicates that a student has done passing work but for reasons beyond his/her control, e.g., a serious medical problem, cannot complete all of the required work. The INC must be removed no later than the end of the following semester or it converts to an F. Before an INC is assigned, the student and the instructor must sign a statement indicating the reason for the INC, the specific work to be completed, and a reasonable deadline for removing the INC. A request to do additional work for the course or the pressures of a normal academic workload are not sufficient reasons to give an INC.

**ACADEMIC HONOR**

I have a zero tolerance policy on cheating and plagiarism. Plagiarism or cheating on any assignment will result in a “0” on that assignment and notification of Student Judicial Affairs. From UA’s Student Code of Conduct (<http://www.uakron.edu/ogc/UniversityRules/pdf/41-01.pdf>):

(1) Academic misconduct is any activity that compromises the academic integrity of the student and university, and undermines the educational process. Academic misconduct includes but is not limited to:

(a) Cheating, including but not limited to:

(i) Use of unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations.

(ii) Submitting substantially the same work to satisfy requirements for one course or academic requirement that has been submitted in satisfaction of requirements for another course or academic requirement, without permission of the faculty member of the course for which the work is being submitted or supervising authority for the academic requirement.

(iii) Use of sources prohibited by the faculty member in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments.

(iv) Inappropriate acquisition and/or improper distribution of tests or other academic materials without the permission of the faculty member.

(v) Engaging in any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course syllabus or during class discussion….

(b) Plagiarism, including but not limited to:

(i) Intentional or unintentional representation of ideas or works of another author or creator in whole or in part as the student’s own without properly citing the original source for those ideas or works.

(ii) The use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

**Plagiarism**

I am indebted to The University of Akron Department of Anthropology for the following discussion of plagiarism:

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged borrowing of information, wording, organization, or ideas from another person. Whether the original source is public (e.g., a newspaper, book, journal article or a webpage) or private (e.g., a classmate's paper), you need to indicate your indebtedness to it. Where you repeat the exact language of your source, you must treat the borrowed material as a quotation and place it within quotation marks. For short papers or assignments, do not quote at all. By merely changing a few words or the word order or by paraphrasing, you do not avoid plagiarism. In all cases, you should cite your source. There is nothing wrong in acknowledging an intellectual debt to a source. The penalty for plagiarism on an assignment is a grade of zero for that assignment. More extensive plagiarism will result in a course grade of "F" and the filing of charges of Academic Misconduct. For further information on the University’s policies, see the “Academic Misconduct” section (pg. 45) in the Undergraduate Bulletin.

Fair warning: Plagiarism is generally pretty easy for instructors to spot.

**Help and support**

Please feel free to make use of my office hours if you have any questions or concerns, or would like to discuss ethics. You may also email me and I will ordinarily respond within 24 hours unless I am out of town. Besides me, there are plenty of other places to turn for support at Akron, and I encourage you to make use of these resources, most of which are included in the cost of your tuition.

**Non-traditional students.** Visit Adult Focus, Adult Learner Services, Schrank Hall North 260, 330-972 5793, www.uakron.edu/uaaf. Here students 25 years or older assist other such students with the transition to University life.

**Off-Campus Student Services.** Visit http://www.uakron.edu/offcampus/, 152 Student Union Building or Front Desk, First Floor, Simmons Hall, 330-972-5500

**Counseling.** Personal and confidential counseling and support services are offered through the Counseling, Testing, and Career Center, Simmons Hall 306, 330-972-7082, http://www.uakron.edu/counseling/

**Disability services.** If you have, or think you may have, a learning, physical, or psychological disability, visit the Office of Accessibility, which provides support services for students with disabilities. They are located in Simmons Hall 105, 330-972-7928, TTY/TDD 330-972-5764. I will gladly work with the Office of Accessibility to accommodate student disabilities.

**Financial aid.** Visit the Office of Student Financial Aid (grants, loans, scholarship, and work-study), Simmons Hall 202, 330-972-7032, www.uakron.edu/finaid

**Office of Multicultural Development** provides support services and peer mentoring primarily for students of color, but all students are welcome to use their services. Simmons Hall 124, 330-972-6769, www.uakron.edu/omd. One way that all students can get involved with multicultural development on campus is to attend the events and lectures of Rethinking Race each February. See <http://www.uakron.edu/race> for a list of speakers and events.

**College Reading and Study Skills Lab** provides professional diagnosis and assistance with study skills. Polsky 342, 330-972-7046, http://www.uakron.edu/summitcollege/future-students/tutoring-study-tips/study-skills-lab.dot

**Tutorial services.** Academic support and peer tutoring for General Education courses is available in the Tutorial Services, Bierce Library, Ground Floor, 330-972-6552, http://www.uakron.edu/tutoring/subject-tutoring/index.dot

**Veterans.** Military Services Center is located in Simmons Hall 213. Their number is 330-972-7838, or visit them on the web at http://www.uakron.edu/veterans/

**Writing skills.** There are two campus resources available for improving your writing skills. Basic Writing, 2010:042, is a class providing intensive practice in basic composition skills. There is also Bierce Writing Commons on campus where professional writing tutors can provide feedback on your writing and suggestions for how to improve it. The Writing Commons has two locations: Bierce Library 68 (tel. 330-972-6548) and Polsky 303 (tel. 330-972-7046). Their URL is http://www.uakron.edu/summitcollege/current-students/tutoring-study-tips/writing-lab.dot

**Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment**

The University of Akron is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination, including sexual violence and sexual harassment. This includes instances of attempted and/or completed sexual assault, domestic and dating violence, gender-based stalking, and sexual harassment.  If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences sexual violence or sexual harassment, know that you are not alone. Help is available, regardless of when the violence or harassment occurred, and even if the person who did this is not a student, faculty or staff member.

Confidential help is available. If you wish to speak to a professional, in confidence, please contact:

* Rape Crisis Center – [www.rccmsc.org](http://www.rccmsc.org/) – 24 Hour Hotline: 877-906-RAPE Office Located in the Student Recreation and Wellness Center 246 and the office number is: 330-972-6328
* University Counseling and Testing Center – [uakron.edu/counseling](http://www.uakron.edu/counseling) 330-972-7082
* University Health Services – [uakron.edu/healthservices](http://www.uakron.edu/healthservices) 330-972-7808

Please know the majority of other University of Akron employees, including faculty members, are considered to be “responsible employees” under the law and are required to report sexual harassment and sexual violence. If you tell me about a situation, I will be required to report it to the Title IX Coordinator and possibly the police.  You will still have options about how your case will be handled, including whether or not you wish to pursue a law enforcement or complaint process. You have a range of options available and we want to ensure you have access to the resources you need.

Additional information, resources, support and the University of Akron protocols for responding to sexual violence are available at [uakron.edu/Title-IX](http://www.uakron.edu/Title-IX).

**SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND EXAMS**

**Complete all reading before coming to class on the day listed.**

*NOTE: During the course of the semester, I sometimes come across a reading superior to what is on the syllabus. I reserve the right to substitute a better reading for a worse one and will give as much advance notice as I can.*

**Tues., Aug. 27** Introduction

**SOCRATIC ETHICS**

Plato, *Euthyphro*, in *Trial and Death of Socrates*

**Thurs., Aug. 29** Plato, *Euthyphro* (continued)

**WHAT IS MORALITY?**

**Tues., Sept. 3** Rachels, Preface, Ch. 1: What is Morality?

**CULTURAL RELATIVISM**

**Thurs., Sept. 5** Rachels, Ch. 2: The Challenge of Cultural Relativism

**DIVINE COMMAND THEORY AND NATURAL LAW THEORY**

**Tues., Sept. 10** Rachels, Ch. 4: Does Morality Depend on Religion?

**Thurs., Sept. 12** Locke, “Our Rights in a State of Nature” <Brightspace>

**PSYCHOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL EGOISM**

**Tues., Sept. 17** Rachels, Ch. 5: Ethical Egoism

**Thurs., Sept. 19 Review for Exam 1**

**Tues., Sept. 24 EXAM 1**

**Thurs., Sept. 26 Special guest: filmmaker Loch Phillipps**

**Loch will be presenting clips of his work in the Student Union Theater on**

**Thursday evening as part of Diversity Week**

**READING TBA**

**Tues., Oct. 1 IN-CLASS EXERCISE: TROLLEY PROBLEMS**

**UTILITARIANISM vs. KANTIANISM**

**Thurs., Oct. 3** Rachels, Ch. 7: The Utilitarian Approach

**Tues., Oct. 8** Rachels, Ch. 8: The Debate Over Utilitarianism

**Thurs., Oct. 10** Sandel, “What Matters is the Motive: Immanuel Kant,” p. 103-129 only <Brightspace>Read “Sandel, What Matters is the Motive: Immanuel Kant, Questions and Vocabulary.” Think about the questions that apply to pages 103-129 and be sure to familiarize yourself with any unfamiliar vocabulary. Be prepared to discuss in class.

**Tues., Oct. 15** Read “Sandel, What Matters is the Motive: Immanuel Kant, Questions and Vocabulary.” Think about the questions that apply to pages 129-139 and be sure to familiarize yourself with any unfamiliar vocabulary. Be prepared to discuss in class.

**Thurs., Oct. 17 Review for Exam 2**

**Tues., Oct. 22 EXAM 2**

**Thurs., Oct. 24** Singer, “Ethics and Intuitions” <Brightspace>, p. 331-342 only

Read “Questions for Thought” and be prepared to discuss in class.

**Tues., Oct. 29** Singer, “Ethics and Intuitions” <Brightspace>, p. 342-352.

Read “Questions for Thought” and be prepared to discuss in class.

**CONTEMPORARY MORAL PROBLEMS**

**Euthanasia**

**Thurs., Oct. 31** Rachels, “Active and Passive Euthanasia,” <Brightspace>

AMA, CEJA 88 <Brightspace>

Please read Questions for Thought <Brightspace> before doing the readings and be ready to discuss in class.

**Globalization**

**Tues., Nov. 5**

Singer, *One World Now*, “Preface,” p. vii-x; “Ch. 1, A Changing World,” p. 1-15;

“Ch. 2, One Atmosphere,” p. 16-40 only

**Read questions for thought and vocabulary and come to class prepared for**

**discussion.**

**Thurs., Nov. 7** Singer, *One World Now*, “Ch. 2, One Atmosphere,” p. 40-68; “Ch. 3, One Economy,” p. 69-84 only

**Read questions for thought and vocabulary and come to class prepared for**

**discussion.**

**Tues., Nov. 12 Reading TBA**

**Thurs., Nov. 14 Reading TBA**

**Tues., Nov. 19** Singer, *One World Now*, “Ch. 3, One Economy,” p. 84-121 only

**Read questions for thought and vocabulary and come to class prepared for discussion.**

**Tues., Nov. 26 Guest speaker: Katie Medlock**

**Thurs., Nov. 29 THANKSGIVING BREAK**

**Tues., Dec. 4 Review for Exam 3**

**Thurs. Dec. 6 Exam 3**