



Inspiring Excellence

**HUM 103: ETHICS AND CULTURE**  
**Spring 2022**  
**FINAL TAKE-HOME EXAM**

- (1) Please complete one question from each of the three sections below according to the instructions;
- (2) All answers must be **double-spaced** and typed in Times Roman 12 font;
- (3) This is an open-book examination. You can consult your course readings, lectures, and class notes to write your answers. You can, but do not have to, consult outside materials;
- (4) You will be graded on your mastery of the course materials, and your own independent and critical thinking. Please **provide citations for any texts that you quote** from the readings or outside source. ***I am interested in your views and answers, written in your own words;***
- (5) Any evidence of plagiarism from readings, outside sources, or other student answers will be penalized;
- (6) The Take-home examination will have to be submitted by 11:30 p.m. **on Saturday, 23 April 2022 in the Turnitin software.** Note that Turnitin won't accept any submission at any time after this deadline.

**SECTION I: Answer One (1) of the following questions (1200-1500 words) (40 points)**

1. Using Immanuel Kant's first version of the "categorical imperative," explain in detail why *cheating in an examination* would be considered a violation of a perfect duty. First, begin by explaining the meaning of a categorical imperative as opposed to a hypothetical imperative. Second, discuss in detail why Kant regards the categorical imperative as a "good without qualification." Third, state and explain Kant's first formulation of the categorical imperative. Next, briefly discuss the distinction between perfect duty and imperfect duty in Kant's formulation. Finally, provide **a detailed account** of the Kantian moral test (using the first formulation of the categorical imperative) to show why cheating in an examination would constitute a violation of a perfect duty.
2. Friedrich Nietzsche states: "So let us give voice to this new demand – we need a critique of moral values, the value of these values should itself, for once, be examined..." Explain Nietzsche's critique of morality by discussing his views of the historical shift from master morality to slave morality. Begin by discussing Nietzsche's argument that morals are historically constituted (as solutions to past struggles between different moral systems) rather than innate, pre-given, or universal. Next, explain the differences between master/higher morality and slave/herd morality, and provide some examples of each. Next, provide a detailed explanation of the slave revolt in morality. In other words, explain his idea of the "inversion" or "transvaluation" of values, and its relation to the concept of *ressentiment*. Next, explain why Nietzsche considers the higher or "master" morality to be instances of life-affirming values. Finally, briefly discuss Nietzsche's criticisms of the *descriptive* and *normative components* of mainstream (religious and secular) morality.

**SECTION II: Answer One (1) of the following questions (1200-1500 words) (40 points)**

3. Some people argue that everyone is an egoist. What do they mean by this? Does this mean that egoism is the basis for all ethics? If human nature compels us all to be egoist, does this mean that human beings are necessarily hedonist? In other words, explain the statement that "Not all egoists are hedonists and not all hedonists are egoists." Begin by clearly

distinguishing between hedonism and egoism. Next, discuss the different conceptions of hedonism (e.g., of Aristippus and Epicurus), as well as the different conceptions of egoism (psychological and ethical). In the final part of the essay, discuss Thomas Hobbes's view of human nature and its relationship to the state of nature and social contract theory. End with a brief discussion of Locke's criticism of the views of Hobbes.

4. The British philosopher Jeremy Bentham is considered the founder of the modern school of utilitarianism. Explain his principle of utility, and briefly discuss the main components of his *hedonic calculus* as a quantitative measurement for calculating utility as a way of evaluating the ethical consequences of our actions. Bentham's young protégé John Stuart Mill was also a strong proponent of utilitarianism. Discuss the main differences in their understanding of utilitarianism, and explain Mill sought to rescue the theory of utilitarianism from the charge of a "pig philosophy." Finally, provide a detailed explanation of how an *act utilitarian* solution would differ from a *rule utilitarian* solution to the following ethical dilemma:

*Three men are dying in the same hospital, one of heart disease, the second of kidney disease, the third of liver disease. A fourth man visits the hospital's blood transfusion unit to donate a pint of blood. He is also known to be healthy in all respects; he has no relatives, and no close friends. The doctor knows about the circumstances of all four men, and when giving the healthy blood donor his initial blood test injects him with a fatal drug. The blood donor's healthy organs are then used to replace the diseased organs of the other three men, all of whom have dependent families.*

### SECTION III: Answer **One (1)** of the following questions (600-800 words) (20 points)

5. *A journalist from local newspaper arrives at the scene of a drowning where he sees divers recovering the lifeless body of a five-year old boy to the shore where his distraught family is gathered. While the family members are grieving openly, the journalist takes several photographs of the lifeless body of the young boy. Upon requests of family members of boy, the journalist promises not to publish the photos in the newspaper. When he goes back to the office, the editor argues in favor of publishing the photos, noting that it could serve as warning to the readers about the dangers of swimming in that lake without supervision. Also, such a photo might win a prize for the journalist and newspaper. On the other hand, publishing the photographs in the newspaper would violate journalist's promise to the family members and cause them additional grief.*

Should the journalist submit the photos of the lifeless boy to the paper for publication in order to promote the greater or public good but, in the process, violate their trust and invade the family's right to privacy? Discuss this moral dilemma from the utilitarian, Kantian, **and** egoist perspective, respectively. Which perspective would you agree with, and why?

6. *According to a news article of **The Daily Star** (October 18, 2020), "Dhaka, one of the most polluted cities in the world, ranked worst in the Air Quality Index (AQI) this year, 2020. It had a score of 188 and the air was classified as unhealthy". In another article of **The Daily Star** (November 26, 2019), it was estimated the main sources of air pollution are the smog from brick kilns, smoke from unfit vehicles, and dust generated from public and private constructions sites, including those of the mega projects undertaken by the government. Brick kilns were identified as the single largest source of air pollution in Dhaka city, with 50 percent of the total pollution attributed to those in the same article. Some have also suggested banning the use of brick kilns in or near the city.*

As a responsible and moral citizen of this country, how would you propose to address the problem of air pollution in Dhaka city? What are the main ethical questions raised by the above scenario? How would you seek to resolve the ethical dilemmas raised by increased air pollution in the city? Discuss how pollution can be considered as a morally wrong activity from the utilitarian, Kantian **and** egoist perspectives, but for different reasons. Which perspective would you agree with, and why?

*Best Wishes for your Success!*