



**UCDAVIS**

**ECS 188 – Spring 2025**

**[Week 5]**

# NATURALISM AND VIRTUE

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e.g., courage

Balance

e.g., recklessness

Necessity

Purpose / Function

e.g., cowardiness

**mean**

(moderation)

excess

(vice)

Intrinsic

(good for / for-itself / predicatively)

Extrinsic

deficiency

(vice)

Innate

Norm  
(natural)

Nature

Reasons

# Why Vote?

**Subjective**

(belief)

**Objective**

(belief)

Hedon

Evolutionary

freedom  
(human condition)

Flourishing

Eudaimonia

Pleasure

What should I **do**?  
(Ends)

**Value**  
(what is a good life?)

What should I **be**?  
(Means)

Virtue

Avoidance of Pain

behavior

Survival

fittest

fact  
(what is a good?)

Character

Practical Wisdom

Excellence

telos

**Happiness**, then, is *an activity of soul in accordance with virtue*,  
and if there be more than one virtue,  
in accordance with the best and most complete.

**Virtue**, then, is a state of **character** concerned with choice, lying in a mean—  
i.e., the mean relative to us—this being determined by a rational principle,  
and by that principle by which the person of **practical wisdom** would determine it.

**Virtue**, then, is a **mean** between two vices,  
the one of excess and the other of deficiency.

**Pleasure** completes the activity, not as the state does, but as an end that supervenes—  
like the bloom of youth on those in the flower of their age.

We become **just** by doing **just acts**,  
temperate by doing temperate acts, brave by doing brave acts.

Aristotle  
[Nicomachean Ethics I.7; II.6; II.6; X.4; II.1]