# Ethics & Values – Philosophy 2050 Fall 2022

Ethics & Values

The Art of Being Human:

Learning to Live with Graceful Presence

**Instructor**: Jeffrey Nielsen. Office hours – MW 4:00 to 5:00 pm; TTH 2:15 to 3:00 pm. Office: CB 411 G. My email is: [nielsjef@uvu.edu](mailto:nielsjef@uvu.edu).

**Course Description**: This course will challenge you to read critically and discuss intelligently works from the greatest minds in human history toward understanding the basis of your own ethical views and the ethical views of others. We will engage in serious reflection on issues of ethics and values as they relate to your own lives as knowledgeable, thoughtful, reflective, responsible, and respectful citizens within a global society of increasing intercultural connections. Our goal is active or engaged learning, where discussion, practice, and application will be key to success this semester. We will be developing an ethical foundation for living philosophically as authentic subjects of a whole and complete life. We will be examining what it means to be a human being from both a physical and cultural perspective. You must come prepared every class period!

**Course Objectives:** This course will be an invitation for you to recreate yourself and better understand yourself as a human being and global citizen. We will focus on understanding and appreciating approaches to living well and moral reasoning from diverse theoretical frameworks including Western, Eastern, and Indigenous cultures. By the end of the course, you should be able to understand major moral theories, be able to apply these theories to concrete ethical questions, be able to analyze and evaluate moral responses to these ethical questions and be able to create your own moral arguments in defense of your moral beliefs, while valuing cultural and ethical perspectives other than your own. Most importantly you will learn, through doing character exercises, how to be a graceful presence in all your relationships, with self, others, community, the world, and your existence in place and time.

**Names and Personal Pronouns:** If you prefer to use a name or personal pronoun other than that which the University officially uses, please let the instructor know as early in the semester as possible so as to avoid any misidentification.

**COVID-19 precautions**: Masks, vaccinations, and social distancing are not currently mandated on campus. We highly encourage you to get vaccinated. If you have concerns, please let your professor know. We will make the accommodations we need to in order for you to feel safe.

**Texts:**

Readings and handouts will be posted on Canvas with occasional links to online sources.

**Coursework**: (To earn an A, you need at least 475 points.)

For everyone:

* **Record of Character Exercises**, **to be completed daily and turned in weekly on canvas.** (100 points)
* **Self-assessment reflection paper.** (50 points)
* **Comparison paper.** (75 points)
* **Interview for comparison paper.** (25 points)

Choose from among the following options:

* **Quizzes**, **there will be a quiz almost every week on canvas**. (70 points)
* **Class attendance and participation.** (100 points).
* **Midterm Exam.** (50 points)
* **Final Exam.** (50 points)
* **Documentary learning journals based on short documentaries watched in class.** (60 points)
* **In-class ethics slam on impromptu topic.** (10 points per performance).

**Grades**: Each student needs to earn between 475 and 500 points for an A. ***On canvas ignore the percentages and only pay attention to total points***. Below is the grade for different point totals:

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| --- | --- |
| A = 475-500 points | B- = 400-420 points |
| 1. = 450-475 points | C+ = 375-400 points |
| B+ = 435-450 points | C = 350-375 points |
| B = 420-435 points | C- = 325-350 points |

**Class Schedule**: This schedule is only a road map for our class. It probably will change as we proceed, and you are responsible for being aware of any changes, which will be announced in class and posted on canvas. Please check canvas on a regular basis to stay informed. Don’t worry if we fall behind schedule. **Make sure you allow notifications on canvas!**

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| Date | Topics | Readings  Please do the readings at the start of the week to ensure better class discussions. All readings found on canvas or at designated websites. | Assignments  All assignments, quizzes, papers, and character exercise reports, are due on Saturdays and on canvas unless otherwise stated in class or on the syllabus. |
| Week One  M Aug 22  W Aug 24  F Aug 26 | Introduce ethics and values as **the Art of Being Human: Living with graceful presence in each moment** (learning how to pay attention and to live well in your own body)  Review Syllabus  Discuss the obstacles to living with graceful presence | Possible character exercises **on canvas**  Prof Nielsen’s essay on living a beautiful life (on **Medium**)  Commencement address by David Foster Wallace **on canvas**  Sample of Michel de Montaigne’s aphorisms **on canvas** | First Quiz (on syllabus comprehension)  Choose character exercises to practice for next week |
| Week Two  M Aug 29  W Aug 31  F Sept 2 | Commitment to aspire to greatness of truth, beauty, and goodness  Ethics Slam | Read Plato’s ***Apology*** at classics.mit.edu  See reading guide to the ***Apology*** on **canvas** | Second Quiz  Character Exercise Report due |
| Week Three  **M Sept 5 (Holiday)**  W Sept 7  F Sept 9 | Graceful Presence: care for one’s body  Ethics Slam | See readings **on canvas** | Character Exercise Report due |
| Week Four  M Sept 12  W Sept 14  F Sept 16 | Graceful Presence: care for one’s emotions/feelings; care for one’s thoughts; care for one’s desires  Ethics Slam | ***The Dart Discourse***, by Buddha, **on canvas**  Selections from Marcus Aurelius’ ***Meditations***, (Books One, Five, and Twelve) found at classics.mit.edu and **on canvas**  ***The Enchiridion*** from Epictetus, found at classics.mit.edu and **on canvas** | Third Quiz  Character Exercise Report due |
| Week Five  M Sept 19  W Sept 21  F Sept 23 | Graceful Presence: care for the moment & engage life with love  Ethics Slam | Reading from Prof Nielsen **on canvas**  Mo Tzu on Universal Love **on canvas**  Golden Rule Handout **on canvas** | Fourth Quiz  Character Exercise Report due  Short self-assessment paper Due (2-3 pages) |
| Week Six  M Sept 26  W Sept 28  F Sept 30 | Ethics Awareness Week | Attend sessions | Character Exercise Report due  Additional Point Opportunities |
| Week Seven  M Oct 3  W Oct 5  F Oct 7 | Review the six cares of graceful presence  Ethics Slam | See readings **on canvas** | Fifth Quiz  Character Exercise Report due |
| Week Eight  M Oct 10  W Oct 12  F Oct 14 **(Fall Break)** | Midterm Exam Review | Study Guide **on canvas** | Midterm Exam |

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| Week Nine  M Oct 17  W Oct 19  F Oct 21 | Graceful Presence: love of self & others  Ethics Slam | Excerpts from Rousseau, Aristotle, and Nietzsche, **on canvas**  Excerpts from Kierkegaard **on canvas**  Some writings on forgiveness **on canvas** | Sixth Quiz  Character Exercise Report due |
| Week Ten  M Oct 24  W Oct 26  F Oct 28 | Register to Vote!  Graceful Presence: love of community  Ethics Slam | Excerpts from Aristotle **on canvas**  ***From Cruelty to Goodness***, by Phillip Hallie, **on canvas** | Seventh Quiz  Character Exercise Report due |
| Week Eleven  M Oct 31  W Nov 2  F Nov 4 | Graceful Presence: love of world & love of place  Ethics Slam | ***The Land Ethic*** by Aldo Leopold, **on canvas**  Selections from Native American philosophers **on canvas** | Eighth Quiz  Character Exercise Report due  Interview for comparison paper due |
| Week Twelve  M Nov 7  W Nov 9  F Nov 11 | Graceful Presence: love of time  Ethics Slam  VOTE on the 8th! | Selections from Viktor Frankl, Kierkegaard, and Nietzsche **on canvas** | Ninth Quiz  Character Exercise Report due |
| Week Thirteen  M Nov 14  W Nov 16  F Nov 18 | Moral Reasoning: the basics | Handouts and readings **on canvas** | Tenth Quiz  Character Exercise Report due |
| Week Fourteen  M Nov 21  W Nov 23  F Nov 25 | **THANKSGIVING BREAK** | **THANKSGIVING BREAK** | **THANKSGIVING BREAK** |
| Week Fifteen  M Nov 28  W Nov 30  F Dec 2 | Moral Reasoning: Justice & Animals  Ethics Slam | Handouts and readings **on canvas** | Extra Credit Quiz |
| Week Sixteen  M Dec 5  W Dec 7  F Dec 9 | **Examining a few questions and how different cultures might respond**  *Is it ever okay to gossip, criticize, or flatter others?*  *Is it ever okay to retaliate against others who have harmed you?*  *Is it ever permissible to lie?*  *Do animals have rights?*  *Is it ever okay to break a promise or to lie?*  *Do I have an obligation to be healthy?*  *Is it wrong to make as much money as I can?*  *Do I have any obligations to future generations?*  *Do I have any obligations to the poor in my community? In the world?*  *When, if ever, is it okay to end another’s life (abortion, capital punishment, euthanasia)?* | Readings & handouts **on canvas** | Comparison paper Due (5-7 pages)  Final Character Exercise Report due for extra credit |
| TBA Dec 12 – 17 | FINAL | EXAM | Final Exam (open on canvas all final’s week) |

**Resources for Students**

***You are the most important thing in this class, and your wellbeing matters to me!***Whether you are feeling distress, hopelessness, or disruption, or simply not knowing where to turn for support, these services are intended to provide back up for you in navigating any number of tough situations—and, ultimately, work closely together to ensure the safety of students, faculty, and staff.

* [Coordinated Access to Resources and Education](https://www.uvu.edu/studentcare/) (CARE for basic needs insecurity) - [care@uvu.edu](mailto:care@uvu.edu)
* [Ombuds](https://www.uvu.edu/ombuds/)/Conflict Resolution - Talatou Maiga, 801-863-7237, [talatoua@uvu.edu](mailto:talatoua@uvu.edu)
* [Crisis Services/Suicide Prevention](https://www.uvu.edu/studenthealth/psych/crisis.html), J.C. Graham, 801-863-8876, [grahamjc@uvu.edu](mailto:grahamjc@uvu.edu)
* [Student Health Services](https://www.uvu.edu/studenthealth/) (Medical & Therapy) - Bill Erb, 801-863-8876, [erbbi@uvu.edu](mailto:erbbi@uvu.edu)
* [Student Rights and Accountability (Student Conduct)](https://www.uvu.edu/studentresponsibilities/) - Maren Turnidge, 801-863-8952, [marent@uvu.edu](mailto:marent@uvu.edu)
* [Behavior Assessment Team](https://www.uvu.edu/studentlife/bat/) - Ashley Larsen, 801-863-8665, [alarsen@uvu.edu](mailto:alarsen@uvu.edu)
* All [Report and Support](https://www.uvu.edu/reportandsupport/) Resources
* **To report non-emergency concerns 24/7 on a tip line call x1234 (801-863-1234)**
* Online reports of student concerns or student misconduct can be submitted here: <https://www.uvu.edu/studentresponsibilities/report.php>

Reports to the tip line and online form can be made anonymously

*Never hesitate to call* [*Campus Police*](https://www.uvu.edu/police/) ***x5555 (801-863-5555)*** *if a student is displaying violent, aggressive, or physically harmful behavior*.

**When in doubt, reach out! To the Dean of Students office, SL 201, 801-863-8311,** [deanofstudents@uvu.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@uvu.edu)**.**

Here is a link to more resources if you are experiencing any food, housing, health, or safety issues.

<https://www.uvu.edu/studentcare/>

**Suicide prevention resources**

If you or someone you know is struggling with thoughts of suicide, call 988 to connect with the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline/p>

**Crisis Hotlines**

* Huntsman Mental Health Institute Crisis Line: 801-587-3000
* SafeUT Crisis Line: 833-372-3388
* 988 Suicide and Crisis LifeLine at 988
* Trevor Project Hotline for LGBTQ teens: 1-866-488-7386

**Online resources**

* NAMI Utah: [namiut.org](http://www.namiut.org/)
* SafeUT: [safeut.org](https://safeut.org/)
* Suicide Prevention Lifeline: [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/)
* Utah chapter, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention: <https://afsp.org/chapter/utah>

**Warning signs of suicide**

* Talking about wanting to die
* Looking for a way to kill oneself
* Talking about feeling hopeless or having no purpose
* Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain
* Talking about being a burden to others
* Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs
* Acting anxious, agitated or recklessly
* Sleeping too little or too much
* Withdrawing or feeling isolated
* Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge
* Displaying extreme mood swings

The more of these signs a person shows, the greater the risk. Warning signs are associated with suicide but may not be what causes a suicide.

*Information from the*[*American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.*](http://afsp.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/recommendations.pdf)

**What to do if you see warning signs of suicide**

* Do not leave the person alone
* Remove any firearms, alcohol, drugs or sharp objects that could be used in a suicide attempt
* Call the U.S. National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-TALK (8255)
* Take the person to an emergency room or seek help from a medical or mental health professional

*Information from the*[*American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.*](http://afsp.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/recommendations.pdf)

**Voter Registration Information**:

I want to encourage you to register to vote in your home state. You can find information about your state’s registration requirements here: <https://www.rockthevote.org>

If you are a resident of the state of Utah, you can register here: <https://vote.utah.gov>

**Information for Utah Voters:**

**Date of Election: 11/08/2022   
Election Deadlines:  
If you're registering by mail, your voter registration must be received by 10/28/2022.  
If you're registering in person, your voter registration must be received by 11/08/2022.  
The deadline to register to vote online is 10/28/2022.  
Every registered vote in Utah gets a ballot mailed to them.  
If you're returning your completed ballot by mail, it must be postmarked by 11/07/2022.  
If you're returning your completed ballot by hand, it must be received by 8:00 pm 11/08/2022.**

**Title IX Syllabus Statement**:

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a civil rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veteran’s status or genetic information. If you or someone you know has experienced or experiences harassment or sexual assault including, dating and domestic violence, stalking or sexual exploitation, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office for Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, BA-203, (801) 863-7999. Please be aware that all faculty members and university employees are considered “Responsible Employees” and are required to report incidents of sexual misconduct and relationship violence and thus cannot guarantee confidentiality. Please know that you can seek confidential resources at UVU Student Health Services, SC-221, (801) 863-8876.

Please visit <https://www.uvu.edu/equityandtitleix/> for more information.

**Religious Accommodations Syllabus Statement:**

UVU values and acknowledges a wide range of faiths and religions as part of our student body, and as such provides accommodations for students. Religious belief includes the student's faith or conscience as well as the student's participation in an organized activity conducted under the auspices of the student's religious tradition or religious organization. The accommodations include reasonable student absences from scheduled examinations or academic requirements if they create an undue hardship for sincerely held religious beliefs. For this to occur, the student must provide a written notice to the instructor of the course for which the student seeks said accommodation prior to the event.

<https://www.uvu.edu/ethics/reflectioncenter/>

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY**: Academic dishonesty, in any form, will not be tolerated. Students are expected to adhere to the academic standards outlined in the Student Rights and Responsibilities Code, especially Article II, Section B. Academic dishonesty includes (but is not limited to) disclosing or obtaining exam information from other students, using notes during exams, signing another student’s name or having another student sign your name, and all forms of plagiarism. Students guilty of academic dishonesty will receive grade E for the course. In fairness to all students and to uphold the integrity of education at UVU, there are no exceptions to this policy. See: <https://www.uvu.edu/writingcenter/docs/handouts/avoidingplagiarism.pdf>

**STUDENTS WHO NEED ACCOMMODATIONS** because of a disability may contact the UVU Accessibility Services Department (ASD), located on the Orem Campus in LC 312. To schedule an appointment or to speak with a counselor, call the ASD office at 801-863-8747. Deaf/Hard of Hearing individuals, email [nicole.hemmingsen@uvu.edu](https://owa.uvu.edu/owa/redir.aspx?C=9cwlqQuBJkiiF2QEsCbr3U5k_SJLrtIIdsONuP9Il1ug46qvuKQCXHf9VdiD7JhocyMW3KqfsPo.&URL=mailto%3anicole.hemmingsen%40uvu.edu) or text 385-208-2677. If accommodations are necessary, faculty should be made aware of these needs as soon as possible.

**Academic Tutoring**—Humanities and Social Sciences Lab: Offers academic assistance in all areas of study, including research and writing. Located in Room LA-015; contact by email (tutoring@uvu.edu) or phone (801-863-5376), and find on the web at http://www.uvu.edu/academictutoring/. Services are free to all UVU students, and are available in both face-to-face and online tutoring sessions on a first-come/first- served basis. While tutors will not complete or correct homework for you or help you on take-home tests or quizzes, they will help you understand and reinforce concepts that you are learning in your classes.

Prerequisite(s): ENGL 1010; ENGL 2010/ENGL 2020 highly recommended

Official Course Description: Challenges students to (1) explore and clarify their values; (2) critically read works of philosophy, literature, religion, and history toward understanding the basis of their ethical views; and (3) read, study, research, discuss, and write about difficult ethical issues. Focuses on issues of good vs. evil, justice vs. injustice, equality vs. inequality, and the necessity of defining and examining happiness and values. Engages students in serious reflection on issues of ethics and values as they relate to the students' own lives.

**Objectives**

1. Demonstrate knowledge of several different theories of ethics, and contemporary ethical issues.
2. Demonstrate ability to critically read works of philosophy, literature, religion, and history toward understanding the basis of their ethical views.
3. Clearly articulate and rationally support their own ethical views and positions.
4. Demonstrate the ability to interrelate knowledgably, reflectively, responsibly, and respectfully with a society of increasing intercultural connections.