

## Phil 2: Individual Morality and Social Justice

TuTh 8–9:30 in 160 Kroeber

Website: <http://sophos.berkeley.edu/kolodny/11SPhil2.htm>

### Instructor:

Niko Kolodny, [kolodny@berkeley.edu](mailto:kolodny@berkeley.edu)

For office hours, see: <http://sophos.berkeley.edu/kolodny>

### Graduate Student Instructors:

Katie Mantoan, <http://philosophy.berkeley.edu/people/detail/255>

Erich Matthes, <http://philosophy.berkeley.edu/people/detail/178>

### Description:

We will survey the basic questions of moral and political philosophy, as well as some classic attempts to answer them. We will ask, among other things: What is the morally right thing for me to do? Why should I do it? Is there a fact of the matter what it is, or does it just depend on my feelings or upbringing? Why should I do what the government tells me to? Why should I tolerate alien moral beliefs and practices? We may read, among others: Plato, Aristotle, Hobbes, Locke, Hume, Bentham, Mill, and Nietzsche.

### Requirements:

1. Attendance at lecture and section.
2. For each lecture, download the handout from the course website, and bring either a paper copy or a laptop to lecture. (If you would like to have a paper copy for lecture, but find it a hardship to print one out beforehand, let us know.) Each handout will end with a set of “Review Questions.” Listening to the lecture and doing the assigned reading should be enough to enable you to answer these. (However, simply reading the handout will *not* be enough.)
3. Section participation: 15%.
4. Three 3-page papers: 20% each.  
*You will have the option of re-writing one of your papers, provided that the original paper got a D or higher. The grade on the re-write will replace the grade for the original paper.*
5. Final exam: 25%. Open book, open note, etc. Every question on the final will be a “Review Question.” So, if you come to lecture, do the reading, and make a habit of writing out the answers to these questions, you will be fully prepared for the final.

### Notes:

- These requirements are **requirements**. They must be fulfilled to pass the course.
- GSI’s will not comment on the rewrite or final exam, but will be available to discuss them in person.
- Requirements may be **reduced** if enrollment is high.

### Readings:

You have two options:

1. Either buy a reader at Copy Central, 2560 Bancroft Way...
2. ... or access the readings online, either by following the link, or, when there is no link, going to the “Resources” tab on the course’s bSpace page.

## Introduction

### January 18: What is philosophy? What is moral and political philosophy?

Jim Pryor's Guidelines on (1) Reading Philosophy

(<http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/reading.html>)

and (2) Writing Philosophy

(<http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html>)

## Part I: Individual Morality

### The content of morality: What is the morally right thing for me to do?

#### January 20: Utilitarianism

Bentham, *Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, Ch. I–IV, XIII

(<http://www.utilitarianism.com/jeremy-bentham/index.html>)

#### January 25: Objections to hedonism

Bentham, *Rationale of Reward*, Book III, Ch. 1, paragraph 8 only

(<http://www.laits.utexas.edu/poltheory/bentham/rr/rr.b03.c01.html#c01p08>)

Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*, pp. 42–45

#### January 27: Objections to aggregation

Smart, *An Outline of a System of Utilitarian Ethics*, Ch. 10

**First paper topic announced**

**No class February 1, 3**

#### February 8: Objections to aggregation

Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, sections 4, 5, 27

**First paper due**

#### February 10: Objections to consequentialism

Singer, "Famine, Affluence, and Morality" in *Philosophy & Public Affairs*

(<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2265052>)

Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*, pp. 28–33

#### February 15: The abortion debate

Thomson, "A Defense of Abortion"

(<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2265091>)

### *The authority of morality: Why should I do the morally right thing?*

#### February 17: Morality as a constituent of living well

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book I

(<http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/nicomachaen.html>)

**February 22 and 24: Morality as a means to staying alive**

Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Ch. 6, 11 (paragraphs 1 and 2 only), 13–15, 17

(<http://oregonstate.edu/instruct/phl302/texts/hobbes/leviathan-contents.html>)

**March 1: Morality as a deforming illusion**

Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, First Essay

(<http://records.viu.ca/~johnstoi/Nietzsche/genealogy1.htm>)

*The objectivity of morality: Is there any fact of the matter  
what the morally right thing is?*

**March 3: Does it depend on God?**

Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, Book II, Ch. 2 (sections 4 and 6 only)

(<http://www.lonang.com/exlibris/locke/>)

Plato, *Euthyphro*

(<http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/euthyphro.html>)

**Second paper topic announced**

**March 8: Is it relative to my culture? To my personal values?**

Harman, "What is Moral Relativism?"

(<http://www.oxfordscholarship.com/oso/private/content/philosophy/9780198238041/p018.html>)

**March 10: Is it relative to my culture? To my personal values?**

Williams, *Morality: An Introduction*, "Interlude: Relativism"

**March 15: Is it relative to my culture? To my personal values?**

Ayer, *Language, Truth, and Logic*, Ch. 6

(<http://www.archive.org/details/AlfredAyer>)

**Second paper due**

**Part II: Social Justice**

**Authority and obedience: When, if ever, am I obligated to do what the state says? Why?**

**March 17 and 29: Hobbes's social contract**

Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Ch. 18–21 (and review Ch. 13–15, 17)

(<http://oregonstate.edu/instruct/phl302/texts/hobbes/leviathan-contents.html>)

**March 31: Locke's social contract**

Locke, *Second Treatise*, Book II, Ch. 2–4, 7–9, 19 (sections 211–228 only)

(<http://www.lonang.com/exlibris/locke/>)

*The Declaration of Independence*

(<http://www.ushistory.org/declaration/document/index.htm>)

**Third paper topic announced March 31**

**No class April 5 and 7**

**April 12: Hume's criticism of the social contract**

Hume, "Of the Original Contract"

(<http://www.constitution.org/dh/origcont.htm>)

**April 14: Why obey the majority?**

Wollheim, "A Paradox in the Theory of Democracy"

**Toleration: When, if ever, should we permit beliefs and practices that we find imprudent, offensive, or immoral? Why?**

**April 19: Mill on liberty**

Mill, *On Liberty*, Ch. I–II

(<http://www.bartleby.com/130/>)

**Third paper due**

**April 21: Mill on liberty**

Mill, *On Liberty*, Ch. III–IV

(<http://www.bartleby.com/130/>)

**April 26: The abortion debate revisited**

Thomson, "Abortion"

(<http://bostonreview.net/BR20.3/thomson.html>)

**April 28: Conclusion**

**Review**

**May 3: Practice for the final**

**May 5: Optional re-write due**

**Final Exam: Thursday, May 12, 7–10PM**

**Course Policies:**

*Extensions:*

Plan ahead. You may request extensions from your GSI *up until 72 hours* before papers are due. After then, extensions will be granted *only for medical and family emergencies*.

*Submitting Work:*

*Papers must be submitted, on paper, by you, to your GSI, in class, by 8:10AM, before the lecture starts.* Papers submitted later will lose *one step* (e.g., B+ to B) *immediately* and then an *additional step every 24 hours*. If you cannot come to lecture on the due date, you may request to make other arrangements with your GSI, so long as you do so well before the deadline. Whatever the circumstances, you are responsible for ensuring that your GSI gets your paper. Forgotten or unopenable attachments, bounced or lost emails, and so on, are your responsibility.

*"Re-grading":*

You are strongly encouraged to discuss grades and comments on papers with your GSI or me. However, *grades on particular papers and exams will not be changed under any circumstances.* While there is no perfect system, selective "re-grading" at students' request only makes things worse. "Second" grades are likely to be less accurate and less fair than "first" grades. This is because, among other things, the GSI does not have access to other papers for purposes of comparison, the student will inevitably supply additional input (clarifications, explanations, etc.) that the original paper did not, and there are certain biases of self-selection.

The only exception, to which none of these concerns apply, is a suspected arithmetical or recording error in your final course grade. Please do not hesitate to bring this to your GSI's or my attention.

*Academic Dishonesty:*

"Any test, paper or report submitted by you and that bears your name is presumed to be your own original work that has not previously been submitted for credit in another course unless you obtain prior written approval to do so from your instructor.

—Report of the Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism Subcommittee, June 18, 2004.

You are expected to be familiar with the definitions of academic dishonesty in the Code of Student Conduct, which can be found here:

<http://students.berkeley.edu/osl/sja.asp?id=1143&rcol=1201>.

*Plagiarism and cheating will be penalized, at a minimum, by an "F" on the paper or exam in question. It may also, depending on its seriousness, result in an "F" in the course as a whole and a report to Student Judicial Affairs.*

*Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:*

If you have an official accommodation letter from the Disabled Students' Program that is relevant to this course, please notify both me and your GSI at a reasonable time. We will do whatever we can to help.