

## Phil 2, First Paper Assignment

**Maximum Length:** No more than three pages, double spaced, 12-point font, one-inch margins

**Due:** Monday, September 25, by 9:10am (before the lecture starts). Please hand in your paper, in person, to your GSI. *Please see the syllabus for other relevant policies.*

**Request:** We would like to circulate to the rest of the class a few papers, *with the authors' names removed*. These will be used as examples, both of things done especially well and of common mistakes. We would be grateful if you would allow us to do this. Everyone will benefit from it, most of all the students whose papers are used as examples. However, if you do *not* feel comfortable with this, then *please say so at the top of your paper*.

### **Topic:**

Can a pure utilitarian, such as Bentham, accept the following “Promising Principle”?

*Promising Principle:* If one makes a promise, then one is morally required to keep it.

Why or why not?

### **It may help to think about the following:**

- *Which features* of pure utilitarianism, if any, present obstacles to accepting the Promising Principle?
- Which features, if any, present the *most important* obstacles? For example, is there some feature of pure utilitarianism such that, no matter how much the other features are changed, the resulting theory will conflict with the Promising Principle?