Kalamazoo College
Philosophy 105: Ethics
Fall 2018 Syllabus

Instructor: Lars Enden, Ph.D.
Class Location: ???
Class Hours: MWF 9:40-10:55 a.m.

Email: lenden@kzoo.edu
Office Location: Humphrey House 202
Office Hours: MW 1:20-2:20 p.m. (or by appt.)

Course Description

We will mostly be engaged in two separate but related projects. For the first project, we will consider the difficult question “How should we live our lives?” To do this, we will explore many of the most important problems in moral philosophy and many of the most important solutions that have been offered to those problems. For the second project, we will learn and practice distinctly philosophical skills, which include understanding, criticizing, developing and presenting arguments. To do this, we will think hard about our own beliefs and the beliefs of others, engage in open debate, and develop arguments to support our own views.

Required Texts


Important: You may use older editions of this book.


Important: You may not use older editions of this book.

Graded Work

1. Reading Questions (40% of final grade)

For every class period when reading is assigned there are reading questions available on Moodle. Responses to these questions must be typed and delivered in person to class. So, if you are not in class, you will not be allowed to turn them in. In addition, you can update your answers during class by writing on your printed answers. Any updated answers can earn back up to half of the points lost on your original answers. Your answers to the reading questions must be your own original work. Do not look up answers online or in any other source besides the textbooks. Looking up answers in other sources is considered cheating. The point of these reading questions is not necessarily to get the answer right but to help you focus on what you are reading. What I am looking for is an honest attempt to understand the reading and to think through the issues. There will be a total of 23 reading questions, but your lowest 3 scores will be dropped for final grades. So, only 20 of them count for your final grade. Each reading question assignment is worth 10 points, which is 2% of your final grade.
2. **Exams (30% of final grade)**

There will be 3 exams designed to test the knowledge and skills you have gained throughout the term. The exams are *not* cumulative; however, some earlier content will be relevant to later exams. Each exam is worth 50 points, which is 10% of your final grade.

3. **Philosophical Reflections (18% of final grade)**

At least once (and sometimes twice) during each class (except for review and exam days), we will take a few minutes to write down some ideas about a particular question. These are graded as pass/fail. These will help you focus your attention, work through your ideas, and test your understanding. There will be 30 philosophical reflections overall; they are graded as Pass/Fail; and they are each worth 3 points, which is 0.6% of your final grade.

4. **Participation (12% of final grade)**

Every class period, 2 points are available for participation. 1 point is for attendance—showing up on time and staying until the end, and the other point is for engagement—being present and active in all classroom activities. The easiest way to lose your engagement point each day is the use your phone during class. Each participation point is worth 0.2% of your final grade.

**Final Grading Scale**

- 465+ points = A
- 450+ points = A-
- 435+ points = B+
- 415+ points = B
- 400+ points = B-
- 400+ points = C+
- 385+ points = C
- 365+ points = C-
- 350+ points = D+
- 300+ points = D

**Disability Accommodations**

If you have disability that requires accommodation, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can work together with the college to develop appropriate accommodations. Please see https://www.kzoo.edu/student-life/students-with-disabilities/

**Classroom Policies**

1. **Electronic Devices**

   All laptops, cell phones, etc. must be silenced and stored away before class begins. A cell phone in your lap is not properly stored. If I see you using any electronic device at any time during class, you will automatically lose your engagement point for the day. I may or may not inform you of this fact.
2. **Absences and Late Work**

If you are not in class (no matter what the reason might be), then you lose all participation points for the day, you cannot do the philosophical reflections exercise(s) for the day, and you cannot turn in your reading questions. However, there is a way to make up missed work. First, you must inform me before class begins that you will miss the class. Second, you must meet with me in office hours no more than a week after the missed class. In my office, I will review what you missed; and I will give you the opportunity to update your reading questions and to do the philosophical reflections exercise(s). In addition, philosophy department policy requires that I drop your grade one full letter if you miss more than 3 days of class. Do not miss this class unless you absolutely have no choice!

3. **Respect**

We will be discussing some delicate issues in this class; you may have strong opinions about them, and some of your peers may not agree with you. However, it is important that everyone feels that they are welcome to contribute to the conversation. In philosophy, we criticize ideas; we do not criticize people. Any student who acts in a disrespectful manner will simply be asked to leave.

4. **Academic Honesty**

This course operates under the College Honor System. That means: we treat each other with respect, we nurture independent thought, we take responsibility for personal behavior, and we accept environmental responsibility. Academic honesty is a critical part of our value system at K. When you borrow an idea, express the idea in your own words, thus thinking it through and making it your own, and acknowledge the source of the idea in a note, or, in certain situations, use the exact words of the source in quotation marks and acknowledge with a note. Ideas raised in class are part of the public domain and, therefore, sources of the ideas need not be acknowledged. If you are ever in doubt about this, you must ask. For the full policy, see https://reason.kzoo.edu/studev/policies/dishonest/

**General Advice**

Take your education seriously. You will probably only get one chance at college; don't waste it.

The ultimate key to success in this class is attendance and participation. Do not miss class unless you absolutely have to, and, while you are in class, pay attention, take good notes, ask questions, and contribute to the discussions.

Most of the reading is difficult. Please do not give up on it just because you don’t understand it right away. Just keep reading even if you are not sure you understand it. You probably understand more than you think, and you will get better at reading difficult texts the more you practice it. The reading questions in this class are worth more than anything else precisely because I want to encourage you to work hard at understanding what you are reading. It will not always be easy, but do not give up. Just keep going.
# Course Schedule

**RTD** = The Right Thing to Do  
**EMP** = The Elements of Moral Philosophy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Introductions  
Syllabus  
September 10 | The Basics of Arguments  
**RTD 2**  
September 12 | Relativism  
**EMP 2**  
September 14 |
| Starvation  
**RTD 18**  
September 17 | Ethical Egoism  
**EMP 5**  
September 19 | Civil Disobedience  
**RTD 32**  
September 21 |
| Social Contract Theory  
**EMP 6**  
September 24 | Animals  
**RTD 16**  
September 26 | Utilitarianism  
**EMP 7**  
September 28 |
| Hedonism  
**EMP 8**  
September 1 | Review for Exam 1  
Exam 1  
September 3 | Exam 1  
September 5 |
| Divine Command Theory  
**EMP 4**  
September 8 | Natural Law Theory  
**RTD 7**  
September 10 | Fall Break—No Class  
October 12 |
| Abortion I  
**RTD 13**  
October 15 | Abortion II  
**RTD 14**  
October 17 | The Categorical Imperative  
**EMP 9**  
October 19 |
| Drugs  
**RTD 27**  
October 22 | Respect  
**EMP 10**  
October 24 | Capital Punishment  
**RTD 21**  
October 26 |
| **Review for Exam 2**  
October 29 | **Exam 2**  
November 2 | Feminism  
**EMP 11**  
November 3 |
| Choice Feminism  
**RTD 35**  
November 5 | Ethics of Care  
**RTD 11**  
November 7 | Euthanasia  
**RTD 37 & 38**  
November 9 |
| Virtue Ethics  
**EMP 12**  
November 12 | Torture  
**RTD 26**  
November 14 | **Review for Exam 3**  
November 16 |

Exam 3 will occur during our final exam period: Monday, November 19\textsuperscript{th}, 6:30-9:00 p.m.