ETHICS
Winter Term, 2012

Instructor: Max Gabriel Cherem
Humphrey House, 202
Office phone: 337-7077

Course Description:

Ethics is a sub-field of philosophy with rather lofty goals. It claims to be the study of what is valuable, what people have practical reason to do, and what is right and wrong. This course starts by directly engaging with two standard attempts to question the field of ethics: amoralism and relativism. After grappling with these challenges we then survey the main ethical frameworks found throughout the philosophical tradition: contractarianism, virtue ethics, utilitarianism and deontology. We will read a variety of classical texts in these traditions with readings from Hobbes, Aristotle, Mill and Kant as well as more contemporary authors in these traditions such as Gauthier, Nussbaum, Singer and Wood. The course is designed to demonstrate why ethics matters, to expose students to a variety of ethical frameworks and to equip them with the conceptual resources to think critically about each framework.

(Syllabi to be posted soon)