



ARTS3366

Contemporary Debates in Moral and Political Philosophy

Term Three // 2020

Staff Contact Details

Convenors

Name	Email	Availability	Location	Phone
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School Contact Information

School of Humanities and Languages

Location: School Office, Morven Brown Building, Level 2, Room 258

Opening Hours: Monday – Friday, 9am – 5pm

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Course Details

Credit Points 6

Summary of the Course

Human beings are evaluators: we praise and blame, take things to be good and bad, and think of ways that we, and the world we live in, could be better than they currently are. This course examines the nature of value by taking up key topics in contemporary moral and political philosophy. Are values a function of human desires, choices, and affective states – or do they obtain independently of such affective responses and attitudes? Do we create or discover the values that govern our moral and political communities? What are freedom, sovereignty, autonomy and public reason as ethical and political ideals? Are moral and political communities properly restricted to human beings, or should they include non-human animals? Why do we value democratic government and how do we make it work under current social, technological and economic conditions? Do we need to rethink democracy and community if we are to offer viable ethical and political responses to climate change? These are the sorts of questions explored in this advanced course, through focused engagement with key debates in contemporary moral and political philosophy. Precise topics and areas may vary from year to year.

Course Learning Outcomes

1. Awareness of some of the central philosophical debates in moral theory.
2. The ability to engage critically with historical and contemporary texts in moral theory.
3. The ability to assess the merits and weakness of moral arguments.
4. The ability to recognize and understand the metaphysical and epistemological underpinnings of various moral theories.
5. The ability to compose clear and insightful analytical essays.
6. The ability to communicate complex ideas in conversation clearly and succinctly.

Teaching Strategies

Please refer to the information in Moodle

Assessment

Assessment Tasks

Assessment Task	Weight	Due Date	Student Learning Outcomes Assessed
Final Essay	60%	4/12/2020 11:00PM	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Critical Reading Exercise	30%	07/10/2020 02:00PM	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Study Part Discussion Forum Posts	10%	Not Applicable	1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Assessment Details

Assessment 1: Final Essay

Details:

3000 words. A focussed research essay on a topic of the student's choosing, vetted by the instructor.

Feedback via written comments and a mark.

Assessment 2: Critical Reading Exercise

Details:

1200 word essay, critically analysing one of the readings prior to our having discussed it as a class, drawing on what you have learned in the course so far.

Feedback via individual comments and a mark.

Assessment 3: Study Partner Discussion Forum Posts

Details:

Study partner discussion forum posts (50–75 words). Students are to meet with a study partner five times over the course of the term to discuss one of the readings, prior to our having discussed it as a class, and write a short post for the discussion forum. For each discussion forum post, both study partners receive a mark (each post out of 2%).

Feedback via general discussion and responses on the discussion forum. Individual feedback available upon request.

Attendance Requirements

Please note that lecture recordings are not available for this course. Students are strongly encouraged to attend all classes and contact the Course Authority to make alternative arrangements for classes missed.

Course Schedule

Date	Type	Content
Week 1: 14 September - 18 September	Reading	Tuesday: G.E.M. Anscombe 'Modern Moral Philosophy'
	Reading	Wednesday: Michael Stocker 'The Schizophrenia of Modern Ethical Theories' Bernard Williams 'Morality, the Peculiar Institution'
Week 2: 21 September - 25 September	Reading	Tuesday: Rosalind Hursthouse <i>On Virtue Ethics</i> chapters 1-2
	Reading	Wednesday: Rosalind Hursthouse <i>On Virtue Ethics</i> chapter 3
Week 3: 28 September - 2 October	Reading	Tuesday: Rosalind Hursthouse <i>On Virtue Ethics</i> chapters 4-5
	Reading	Wednesday: Rosalind Hursthouse <i>On Virtue Ethics</i> chapters 6-7
Week 4: 5 October - 9 October	Reading	Tuesday: Review Hursthouse [no new reading]
	Reading	Wednesday: Julia Annas <i>Intelligent Virtue</i> chapters 2-3
	Assessment	Critical Reading Exercise Due
Week 5: 12 October - 16 October	Reading	Tuesday: Julia Annas <i>Intelligent Virtue</i> chapters 4-5
	Reading	Wednesday: Julia Annas <i>Intelligent Virtue</i> chapters 7-8
Week 7: 26 October - 30 October	Reading	Tuesday: Julia Annas <i>Intelligent Virtue</i> chapter 9
	Reading	Wednesday: Review Annas [no new reading]
Week 8: 2 November - 6 November	Reading	Tuesday: John Doris <i>Lack of Character</i>
	Reading	Wednesday: John Doris <i>Lack of Character</i>
Week 9: 9 November - 13 November	Reading	Tuesday: Gopal Sreenivasan 'Errors about Errors: Virtue Theory and Trait Attribution'
	Reading	Wednesday: Rachana Kamtekar 'Situationism and Virtue Ethics on the Content of our Character'
Week 10: 16 November -	Reading	Tuesday:

20 November		Susan Wolf 'Moral Saints'
	Reading	Wednesday: Review [no new reading]

Resources

Prescribed Resources

Rosalind Hursthouse *On Virtue Ethics* Oxford University Press, 1999

Julia Annas *Intelligent Virtue* Oxford University Press, 2011

Recommended Resources

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy entries:

Virtue Ethics: <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ethics-virtue/>

Empirical Approaches to Moral Character: <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/moral-character-empirical/>

Moral Character: <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/moral-character/>

Course Evaluation and Development

Please come talk to the course convenor about any issues having to do with course administration, and be sure to fill out your My Experience survey at the end -- all feedback is instrumental to developing and improving the course.

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Turnitin Submission

If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au. Support hours are 8:00am – 10:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am – 5:00pm on weekends (365 days a year). If you are unable to submit your assignment due to a fault with Turnitin you may apply for an extension, but you must retain your ticket number from External Support (along with any other relevant documents) to include as evidence to support your extension application. If you email External Support you will automatically receive a ticket number, but if you telephone you will need to specifically ask for one. Turnitin also provides updates on their system status on Twitter.

Generally, assessment tasks must be submitted electronically via either Turnitin or a Moodle assignment. In instances where this is not possible, it will be stated on your course's Moodle site with alternative submission details.

For information on how to submit assignments online via Moodle: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/how-submit-assignment-moodle>

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

Copying: using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This also applies to images, art and design projects, as well as presentations where someone presents another's ideas or words without credit.

Inappropriate paraphrasing: changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original structure and information without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's ideas or words without credit. It also applies to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without referencing and a student's own analysis to bring the material together.

Collusion: working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student before the due date, or for the purpose of them plagiarising at any time, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person's academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing academic work.

Inappropriate citation: Citing sources which have not been read, without acknowledging the "secondary" source from which knowledge of them has been obtained.

Duplication ("self-plagiarism"): submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another university.

Correct referencing practices:

- Paraphrasing, summarising, essay writing and time management
- Appropriate use of and attribution for a range of materials including text, images, formulae and concepts.

Individual assistance is available on request from The Learning Centre (<http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/>). Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study and one of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting and proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items.

UNSW Library also has the ELISE tool available to assist you with your study at UNSW. ELISE is designed to introduce new students to studying at UNSW but it can also be a great refresher during your study.

Completing the ELISE tutorial and quiz will enable you to:

- analyse topics, plan responses and organise research for academic writing and other assessment tasks
- effectively and efficiently find appropriate information sources and evaluate relevance to your needs
- use and manage information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose better manage your time
- understand your rights and responsibilities as a student at UNSW be aware of plagiarism, copyright, UNSW Student Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of UNSW ICT Resources Policy
- be aware of the standards of behaviour expected of everyone in the UNSW community
- locate services and information about UNSW and UNSW Library

Some of these areas will be familiar to you, others will be new. Gaining a solid understanding of all the related aspects of ELISE will help you make the most of your studies at UNSW.

(<http://subjectguides.library.unsw.edu.au/elise/aboutelise>)

Academic Information

For essential student information relating to:

- requests for extension;
- late submissions guidelines;
- review of marks;
- UNSW Health and Safety policies;
- Examination procedures;
- Special consideration in the event of illness or misadventure;
- Student equity and disability;
- And other essential academic information, see:

<https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/protocols-guidelines/>

Image Credit

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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Bedegal people who are the traditional custodians of the lands on which UNSW Kensington campus is located.