

PHIL 2790 Moral Philosophy

Instructor: Robert Shaver, 458 University College, 474-9109,
robert.shaver@umanitoba.ca, office hours by Zoom appointment (I'm almost always free
MWF 11:30-12:20).

Texts: Henry Sidgwick, *The Methods of Ethics*; John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (revised edition); Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork to the Metaphysic of Morals*. All should be available at the bookstore. Kant and Sidgwick are also available electronically—Kant (Paton translation) through the library catalogue, Sidgwick easily on the web (e.g., at gutenberg.org). We'll also read C. L. Stevenson, "The Emotive Meaning of Ethical Terms," *Mind* 46, 1937, 14-31; W. D. Ross, *The Right and the Good*, pp. 16-41; T. M. Scanlon, *What We Owe to Each Other*, pp. 229-41; and (possibly) a selection from Nietzsche. Stevenson and Ross are available electronically through the library catalogue (Ross is also on the web); I'll post Scanlon and Nietzsche on UMLearn. (Rawls is available through the library catalogue, but it's clunky to get to and there is limited access, so it may be best to buy it.)

Sidgwick readings: Book I chapters I, III; Book II chapter I; Book III chapters XI, XIII, XIV; Book IV chapters I, II.

Rawls readings: sections 1-4, 11-13, 15-16, 21-26, 29, 67.

Kant readings: chapters 1-2.

This course is an introduction to normative ethics - utilitarianism, egoism, contractarianism, and deontology. It is the usual preparation for 3760.

Classes will be in the scheduled slots over Zoom. I'll post notes on UMLearn before class. These notes will be what I would ordinarily put on the board. They're often not self-explanatory, and won't substitute for being in class. You'll sometimes need to be looking at these notes during class. My aim is to make the class as close as possible to the experience of taking it in the ordinary way, in-person.

For Zoom, I'm hoping everyone can use both audio and visual. If it keeps crashing (as it might), we can go to audio-only, or with just me on visual. For participation, you can either raise your hand (hit Participants at the bottom centre, then Raise Hand on the far right bottom) or just unmute and speak—we'll see which works better. We won't use the Chat function, but I will use the Whiteboard. Expect some screw-ups, from my internet or from yours or from Zoom.

I'll email Zoom meeting numbers and passwords before the first class. You don't need a Zoom account.

Normally, the class proceeds by my putting an argument on the board and explaining it, with the rest of the class being discussion of it (by you—I'll clarify things, but I'll mainly

be a referee). I'm planning on the same with Zoom. Things went as they ordinarily would when I finished the term on Zoom last March and April.

Evaluation: First term: (1) a portion of a paper (2 paragraphs, exposition and objection) (15%, Oct 16); (2) a portion of a paper (exposition, objection, optional second objection or reply) (15%, Nov 16); for (1) and (2), I'll give possible questions ahead, then I'll choose one of the questions and give you 24 hours to submit; (3) one full paper (1000 words max.) (20%, Dec 14). I'll give full comments on (1) and (3); for (2), I'll just give a mark and a brief explanation for it.

Second term: (4) two portions of a paper (exposition, objection, optional second objection or reply) (15% each); I'll give possible questions ahead, then choose one of the questions and give you 24 hours to submit; (5) a full paper (1000 words max.) (20%).

Good writing skills are mandatory; no poorly written paper will do well, regardless of content.

Participation can help but not hurt mark.

In the second term, I will (if you wish) comment on 1 rough draft.

Marking scale: A+: 90-100; A: 80-89; B+ 75-79; B: 70-74; C+: 65-69; C 60-64; D: 50-59; F: 0-49 (an F paper gets a 35%).

Plagiarism and cheating are serious offences. Note the statements in section 8 of the General Academic Regulations and Requirements and the Academic Integrity section of the Arts website. The common penalty in Arts for plagiarism in a written assignment, test, or exam is F on the paper and F for the course. For the most serious acts of plagiarism, such as the purchase of an essay or cheating on a test or exam, the penalty can also include suspension for a period of up to 5 years from registration in courses taught in a particular department in Arts or from all courses taught in this Faculty. The Faculty also reserves the right to submit student work that is suspected of being plagiarised to Internet sites designed to detect plagiarism.