Instructor: Dr. Daniela Vallega-Neu  
Email: dneu@uoregon.edu  
Office hours: T/Th 11:30-12:30 in PLC 328  
Class meets Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:00-11:20 in ED 176.

Discussion sections:  
CRN 16351 (F 10:00-10:50) and CRN 16352 (F 11:00-11:50)  
GTF: José Mendoza  
Email: jmendoz2@uoregon.edu  
Office hours: Fridays, noon-2pm in PLC 324

MORAL THEORY

Texts:  
Required:  
Recommended:  

Prerequisites: One philosophy course.

Course Description:  
This course introduces classical ethical theories from the Western tradition, which still influence ethical discourses today. We will read Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*, which is the background of contemporary virtue ethics, Kant’s *Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals*, which gives a rational foundation to ethics based on the idea of freedom, and selections from Mill’s *Utilitarianism*. We will end the trimester with an outlook on some contemporary ethical theories. Class time will consist in close readings of the primary texts, which will be interrupted by discussions regarding ethical issues related to topics such as happiness, the good, virtue, decisions, justice, habit, pleasure, responsibility, and freedom.
Requirements:
1. Two comprehensive take-home exams (3-4 pages each) 40% (20% + 20%)
2. Final term paper (6 pages) 40%
3. Participation, attendance, short assignments, quizzes 20% of the final grade

Regarding 1:
The comprehensive take-home exams consist in a number of questions you need to answer with full sentences and with precise references to the text passages to which they refer. They will also serve as preparations for the final term paper.

Regarding 2:
The final term paper needs to address at least two ethical theories discussed in class. It needs to include critical reflections and demonstrate your capacity to work closely with primary texts. The latter means that you need to always refer back to the text, paraphrase central ideas, quote important passages, and in every case, indicate your sources (book or article and page number). Use a standard citation style such as MLA, APA, or Chicago).
You may write an argumentative paper in which you defend a thesis or an exploratory/reflective paper in which you trace and compare concepts and issues. You do not need to have solutions to problems but you should be able to expose problems and dilemmas clearly. Your conclusion might either provide the concluding remarks to a thesis or standpoint you may want to take or the conclusion may give an outlook on further questions or issues that arise from what you discussed in your paper.
Write for a student who has not taken this class, which means that you have to explain main concepts and ideas you discuss prior to engaging them critically.
You will be given sample topics with guiding questions. You will be asked to write first an outline of your final paper, which you will present in your final discussion section.
Your outline should include the following:
- A short paragraph where you say what the topic of your paper will be, what problems it will address, and what authors and texts you will be dealing with. (This information should also appear in the introduction of your paper.)
- A structural outline including introduction, main part (text analysis, critical remarks, further reflections on a problem, etc.), and conclusion. Be more specific about contents of the main part by finding titles for its different parts that reflect them
- A bibliography of the texts you will be using. (This should be included in the paper as well.)

Regarding 3:
You will get participation points for valuable contributions you make to class discussions, for participating in discussion groups, for short in-class assignments, reading quizzes, and for the outline of your final paper. At the end of the term participation points will be added up and converted into grades.

Be aware that missing class often will lower your final grade.

PAPER FORMATS: All written work needs to be submitted typed, font Times New Roman 12, double-spaced with 1-inch margins.
Course Policies

1. **Handing in an assignment late** will lower your grade. Homework that is more than a week late will not be accepted, unless it was for demonstrable (documented) reasons beyond your control. **Reading quizzes cannot be made up.**

2. In order to avoid disruptions in class you are asked to avoid exiting and entering the classroom while lectures and discussions are going on.

3. **If you miss a class** it is your responsibility to keep up with the course material. Use the syllabus as a guideline.

4. The **uses of electronic devices like** laptops, cell phones, iPods, iPads, Blackberries, etc. during class is **not allowed** unless you need a specific device because of a disability. If the latter is the case, please let me know.

5. You are expected to follow the **rules of academic honesty.** Failure to do so will result in course failure (“F”).

*Plagiarism:* Plagiarism is the inclusion of someone else’s product, words, ideas, or data as one’s own work. When a student submits work for credit that includes the product, words, ideas, or data of others, the source must be acknowledged by the use of complete, accurate, and specific references, such as footnotes. By placing one’s name on work submitted for credit, one certifies the originality of all work not otherwise identified by appropriate acknowledgements. Verbatim statements by others must be enclosed by quotation marks or set off from the regular text as indented extracts.

Students will avoid being charged with plagiarism if there is acknowledgement of indebtedness. Indebtedness must be acknowledged whenever: 1) one quotes another person’s actual words or replicates all or part of another’s product; 2) one uses another person’s ideas, opinions, work, data, or theories, even if they are completely paraphrased in one’s own words; 3) one borrows facts, statistics, or other illustrative material—unless the information is common knowledge.

Unauthorized collaboration with others on papers or projects can inadvertently lead to a charge of plagiarism. If in doubt, consult the instructor or seek assistance from the staff of Academic Learning Services (68 PLC, 346-3226). In addition, it is plagiarism to submit as your own any academic exercise prepared totally or in part by another person, even if that person is acting as a tutor or editor (and ends up substantially producing part of the work).

*Fabrication:* Fabrication is the intentional use of information that the author has invented when he or she states or implies otherwise, or the falsification of research or other findings with the intent to deceive.

Examples include, but are not limited to: 1) citing information not taken from the source indicated; 2) listing sources in a reference not used in the academic exercise; 3) inventing data or source information for research or other academic exercises.
Cheating: Cheating is an act of deception by which a student misrepresents or misleadingly demonstrates that he or she has mastered information on an academic exercise that he or she has not mastered, including the giving or receiving of unauthorized help in an academic exercise.

Examples include but are not limited to: 1) copying from another student’s work; 2) collaborating without authority or allowing another student to copy one’s work in a test situation; 3) using the course textbook or other material not authorized for use during a test; 4) using unauthorized material during a test; for example, notes, formula lists, cues on a computer, photographs, symbolic representations, and notes written on clothing; 5) resubmitting substantially the same work that was produced for another assignment without the knowledge and permission of the instructor; 6) taking a test for someone else or permitting someone else to take a test for you.

Grade Rubric:
A: Well written, clear, organized, no errors in comprehension, no major omissions in explanations, and evidence of independent thought or good criticisms.
B: Well written, mostly clear and organized; few errors in comprehension, some omissions in explanations, and evidence of some independent thought or passable criticisms.
C: Some general understanding of the material, but many errors in English, and often weak phrasing; or major omissions in explanations of the text and major errors in understanding the text; lack of order, and not enough understanding of the text for formulating relevant criticisms.
D: Faint understanding of the material, or lack of effort in understanding texts. Paper is either written in poor English, unclear, or disorganized, or it is way too short and sketchy.
F: Paper demonstrates no understanding of the material or misses completely the subject it was supposed to be about.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week One
Tu., Sept. 27: Introduction to the course.
Th., Sept. 29: Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics* [NE], Book I: Happiness and Being-at-work; Chapters 1-5, 7.

Week Two
Tu., October 4: Continuation Book I Chapters 8-10, 13.
Th., October 6: Aristotle, NE, Book II: Virtue and the Mean, Chapters 1-9.

Week Three
Tu., October 11: Aristotle, NE, Book III: Responsibility (choice and deliberation)
   Chapter 1-5.
Th., October 13: Aristotle, NE, Book VI: Virtues of Thinking, Chapters 1-11.
Week Four
Tu., October 18: Aristotle, NE, Book VIII, Chapters 1-3: Friendship; and Book X: Pleasure and Happiness, Chapters 4-8.

[Assignment of comprehensive take-home exam!]
Th., October 20: NO CLASS

Week Five
Tu., October 25: Kant, Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals [FMM], Preface; First Section (Good Will), pp.3-13. [First take-home exam due!]
Th., October 27: Kant, FMM, First Section (Duty), pp.13-22.

Week Six
Tu., November 1: Kant, FMM, Second Section (The Categorical Imperative; hypothetical imperatives), pp.22-33.
Th., November 3: Second Section, pp.33-43.

Week Seven
Tu., November 8: Kant, FMM, Second Section (Humanity as end in itself), pp.43-57.
Th., November 10: Second Section, pp.57-63 (Autonomy and Heteronomy of the Will); Third Section (Freedom), pp.63-70.

Week Eight
Tu., November 15: Continuation (Freedom), pp.71-82.

[Assignment of second comprehensive take-home exam.]
Th., November 17: Mill, Utilitarianism, Chapters I and II. [Reading quiz.]

Week Nine
Tu., November 22: Mill, Utilitarianism, Chapters III and IV. [Take-home exam due!]
[Read the assigned texts for next week!]
Th., November 24: THANKSGIVING (NO CLASS)

Week Ten
Tu., November 29: John Dewey, “Three Independent Factors in Morals.” [Reading quiz]
Th., December 1: Virginia Held, “Feminist Transformations of Moral Theory.” [Reading quiz]
Friday Dec. 2 Discussion section: Outline of final paper due. Peer reviews.

FINAL PAPERS DUE Tuesday, December 6th at 4:00 pm in the Philosophy Department.
Submit a hard copy with a cover page containing your name, the professor’s and GTF’s name, course number and the title of the course and the title of the paper. Leave the paper in a designated box that you will find at the front desk of the Philosophy Department.