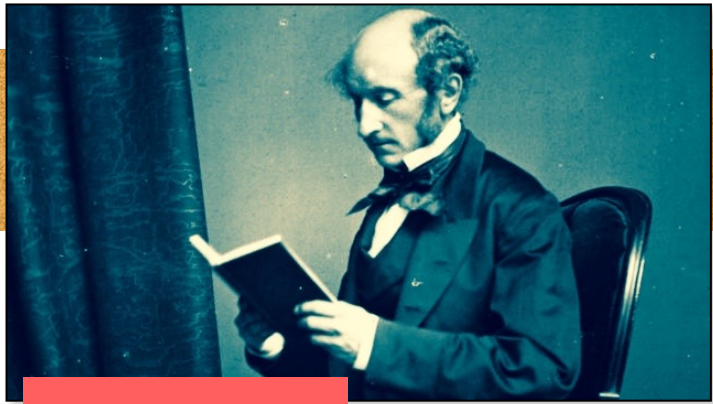


PHIL 337  
Ethics:  
Theory and Practice

Spring 2023



DRAFT

Not the official course  
outline

**Instructor:** Karen Brown  
**E-mail:** [klbrown@uvic.ca](mailto:klbrown@uvic.ca)  
**Office:** Clearihue B314  
**Office Hours:** Wednesdays  
1:30 - 3:00 p.m.

### Course Description

In this course we will work to understand four ethical traditions in Western philosophy: utilitarianism, Kantian ethics, contractarianism and virtue ethics. We will begin with a classic text in each tradition and move through contemporary attempts to critique, develop and apply these four conceptions of ethics. We will consider the problems that motivate the accounts and the reasoning that supports them. Just as importantly, we will put all of them to the test of practical application. Among the applied topics we will grapple with are aiding people in need, the treatment of non-human animals, selling and donating organs, abortion, assisted suicide, gene editing, the allocation of health care resources, the consumer lifestyle, alternative medicine and our impact on the environment. Throughout, we will be asking whether any of these approaches to ethics helps us to understand what makes an action right or wrong or helps us to answer the pressing questions of what kind of people we should be and how we ought to live our lives together.

### Texts

The four fundamental texts for the course are all classic works available in many different editions. They can be found for free online. All page references made to these works in class will be to the editions listed here and available in the UVic Bookstore.

Aristotle *Nicomachean Ethics* Translated by Joe Sachs. Hackett Publishing. 2002.

Thomas Hobbes *Leviathan* Edited by Edwin Curley. Hackett Publishing. 1994.

Immanuel Kant *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals* Edited by Lara Denis. Broadview Press. 2005.

John Stuart Mill *Utilitarianism* Second Edition. Edited by George Sher. Hackett Publishing. 2002.

All the other course readings will be available online through the Brightspace page.

### Brightspace

To access the course materials on Brightspace go to [bright.uvic.ca](http://bright.uvic.ca) and log in with your regular network ID. If you have difficulty accessing Brightspace or if a link to a particular reading is malfunctioning, please let me know by email right away so that I can take care of the problem.

# PHIL 337 Ethics: Theory and Practice

The Brightspace page contains all sorts of information you will need for the course. It's where you will find many of the course readings along with instructions for the quote and comment assignments and the essay assignment, class recordings and your grades.

Please add a photo of yourself to your Brightspace profile.

## Course Work

Exam One	25%	5 Quote & Comments	15%
Exam Two Part A—in class	15%	Essay (max. 2200 words)	30%
Part B—take home	15%		

For dates see the schedule below.

Exam One and Exam Two, Part A will be in-class exams covering material from the readings and class discussion. Exam One will include both very short answer questions and essay questions. Exam Two, Part A will be short answer questions. Exam Two, Part B will be a take-home essay exam covering material from the entire course but focusing on material covered after Exam One.

Information about the essay assignment and the quote and comment assignments, including detailed instructions and late policies, can be found on the Brightspace page. Please note that **to receive full credit for a quote and comment assignment you must participate in the class discussion the day the assignment is due.** If necessary it is possible to participate via Zoom. There is an opportunity to make up for a missed quote and comment assignment on March 28.

### Missed Exams

If you miss an exam due to an illness or exceptional circumstance contact me immediately to schedule a make-up.

### Missed Classes

If you miss class you should watch the class recording on Brightspace. On occasions when the recording fails the slides will still be posted and you should contact another student in the class to get notes to supplement the slides. Student email links are available in the Class List section of the Brightspace page.

### Academic Integrity

The University Policy on Academic Integrity (covering plagiarism, multiple submission, unauthorized use of an editor, falsifying materials, cheating and aiding others to cheat) will be enforced in this course. You are responsible for familiarizing yourself with the policy. You can find it online in the UVIC Calendar at <https://www.uvic.ca/students/academics/academic-integrity/index.php>.

If you have any doubts about what this policy requires or any questions about whether or not you are complying with it, please don't hesitate to ask me about it.

# PHIL 337 Ethics: Theory and Practice

## Grading

Grades for the course will be assigned using the Uvic Undergraduate Grading Scale:

Percentage	Grade
90 - 100	A+
85 - 89	A
80 - 84	A-
77 - 79	B+
73 - 76	B
70 - 72	B-
65 - 69	C+
60 - 64	C
50 - 59	D
Below 50	N or F

A+, A, or A- is earned by work which is technically **superior**, shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of an A+ offers original insight and/or goes beyond course expectations.

B+, B, or B- is earned by work that indicates **good** comprehension of the course material, good command of the skills needed to work with it, and full engagement with the course requirements and activities. A B+ represents a more complex understanding and/or application.

C+ or C is earned by work that indicates an **adequate** comprehension of the course material and the skills needed to work with the course material and that indicates the student has met the basic requirements for completing assigned work and/or participating in class activities.

D is earned by work that indicates **minimal** command of the course materials and/or minimal participation in class activities that is worthy of course credit toward the degree.

N indicates that the course requirements were not completed.

## Course Schedule

**Q/C** indicates that a quote and comment assignment is due in class that day.

	January 10	Introduction
Consequentialism	January 11	Griffin "Utilitarian accounts: state of mind or state of the world"
	January 13	Mill <i>Utilitarianism</i> , Chapter II
	January 17	Mill <i>Utilitarianism</i> , Chapter IV
	January 18 <b>Q/C</b>	Smith "Against Homeopathy — A Utilitarian Perspective"
	January 20	Williams from <i>Utilitarianism: For and Against</i>
	January 24	Mill <i>Utilitarianism</i> , Chapter V
	January 25	Morgan-Knapp & Goodman "Consequentialism, Climate Harm and Individual Obligations"
	January 27 <b>Q/C</b>	Norcross "Great Harms from Small Benefits Grow: How Death can be Outweighed by Headaches"
Contractarianism	January 31	Hobbes <i>Leviathan</i> , Part I, Chapter XIII
	February 1	Hobbes <i>Leviathan</i> , Part I, Chapters XIV and XV
	February 3 <b>Q/C</b>	Murray "Genetic Meddling and Organ Sales"
	February 7	Bognar "Fair Innings"
	February 8	Dimock "Why All Feminists Should Be Contractarians"

**February 10**

**EXAM ONE**

# PHIL 337 Ethics: Theory and Practice

## Course Schedule *continued*

Virtue Ethics

February 14	Aristotle <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , Book I
February 15	Aristotle <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , Books II & III
February 17	Aristotle <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , Book VI, Ch. 5 — Book VII, Ch. 10
Reading Break — February 20 through February 24	
February 28, March 1	Hursthouse "Virtue Theory and Abortion"
March 3	Gambrel and Cafaro "The Virtue of Simplicity"
March 7 <b>Q/C</b>	Annas "Applying Virtue to Ethics"
March 8	Dillon "Feminist Virtue Ethics"

Kantian Ethics

March 10,14	Kant <i>Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals</i> , First Section
March 15	Kant <i>Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals</i> , Second Section
March 17 <b>Q/C</b>	Gunderson "A Kantian View of Suicide and End of Life Treatment"
March 21	Williams "The Social Creation of Morality and Complicity in Collective Harms: A Kantian Account"
March 22	Skidmore "Duties to Animals: The Failure of Kant's Moral Theory"
March 24	O'Neill "Between Consenting Adults"
March 28 <b>Q/C</b> makeup	Thomson "The Trolley Problem"

Combinations

<b>March 29</b>	Rowlands "Contractarianism and Animal Rights" <b>ESSAY</b> initial due date 12:30 p.m.
March 31	Rowlands <i>continued</i>
<b>April 4</b>	Temkin "Thinking about the Needy, Justice, and International Organizations" Part One (pp.352-365) <b>ESSAY</b> final due date 5:00 pm

**April 5** **EXAM TWO — PART A** in class

**April 11 due at 8 p.m.** **EXAM TWO — PART B** take home

### Territory Acknowledgement

The University of Victoria acknowledges with respect the Lekwungen-speaking peoples on whose traditional territory the University of Victoria stands, and the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

### Equity

Uvic is committed to promoting, providing and protecting a positive, supportive and safe learning and working environment for all its members. Information about Uvic policies on human rights, equity, discrimination and harassment are available at <https://www.uvic.ca/calendar/future/undergrad/index.php#/policy/HkQ0pzdAN> If you have any particular concerns about equity in our course please don't hesitate to contact me.

## **Religious Accommodation**

Information regarding accommodation of religious can be located in the UVIC Calendar at <https://www.uvic.ca/calendar/future/undergrad/index.php#/policy/r1q0gofdN?bc=true&bcCurrent=10%20-%20Accommodation%20of%20Religious%20Observance&bcGroup=Undergraduate%20Academic%20Regulations&bcltemType=policies>

## **Intellectual property of materials on the LMS website**

Please note that all assignments for this course and all materials posted to the LMS website are the intellectual property of myself and the University of Victoria. Do not circulate this material or post it to note-sharing sites without my permission. Posting course materials to note-sharing sites or otherwise circulating course materials without the permission of your instructor violates the Policy on Academic Integrity (<http://web.uvic.ca/calendar/FACS/UnIn/UARe/PoAcl.html>). Any evidence you are circulating materials without permission will be referred to the Chair of the Philosophy Department for investigation.