

# Phil 170

## Ethical Theory

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### Required Books (available at the Stanford Bookstore):

Immanuel Kant, *Ethical Philosophy*, containing *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785) and *Metaphysical Principles of Virtue* (1797), translated by James Ellington. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1983.  
Christine M. Korsgaard, *Creating the Kingdom of Ends*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1996.  
John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2001.

In addition, asterisked (\*) readings are available in a Reader which can be purchased from Copyamerica, 344 California Av., ph. 566-0344.

### Sources of Additional and Recommended Readings (will be available on reserve in Tanner Library):

John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1978.  
Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason* (1788), Translated by Lewis White Beck. Indianapolis: Macmillan Library of Liberal Arts, 1956.  
Immanuel Kant, *Lectures on Ethics* (1775-1780), drawn from the notes of Theodore Brauer, Gottlieb Kutzner, and Christian Mrongovious by Paul Menzer and translated by Louis Infield in 1930. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1980.  
Immanuel Kant, *Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone* (1793), translated by Theodore M. Greene and Hoyt H. Hudson. New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1960.  
Immanuel Kant, *Political Writings* (1784-1797), translated by H.B. Nisbet and edited by Hans Reiss. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press: 1991.  
Barbara Herman, *The Practice of Moral Judgment*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1993.  
Thomas E. Hill, Jr., *Autonomy and Self-Respect*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1991.  
Thomas E. Hill, Jr., *Dignity and Practical Reason in Kant's Moral Theory*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992.  
Christine Korsgaard, "The Normativity of Instrumental Reason," in Garrett Cullity and Berys Gaut, eds., *Ethics and Practical Reason* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 215-254.  
Onora O'Neill, *Constructions of Reason: Explorations of Kant's Practical Philosophy*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1989.  
H.J. Paton, *The Categorical Imperative: A Study in Kant's Moral Philosophy*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971.

### Written Assignments:

There will be three graded written assignments: two 4-5 page papers and a final examination (scheduled for Wednesday June 14, 8:30-11:30 a.m.). The papers are due on Wednesday, May 10 and Wednesday, June 7. Topics for the papers will be assigned, but you will have some choice among them. You may be able to write on a topic of your own design, but you will need to get the topic approved by your Teaching Fellow at least a week before the submission deadline. For the final examination, I will hand out a set of questions in advance, some of which will appear on the actual exam.

In addition there will be a weekly ungraded written requirement: (1) Four times during the quarter you are to turn in a brief (1 typed page) “response paper” based on the assigned readings; these must be turned in at the beginning of the class period in which the reading is to be discussed, but it is up to you to decide in which weeks to submit these papers and you don’t need to tell us your plan in advance. These are designed, among other things, to get you accustomed to writing philosophy papers, so you are encouraged to start writing them as early as possible. (2) For the remaining five weeks of the quarter you are required to submit a question or a comment based on the readings or lectures of the week; these are due to your TA (or to be posted on your section’s website) before your section meeting for that week.

### Grading Policies:

In order to pass the course you must complete all of the written work and regularly attend lectures and sections. Those who receive a grade of C+ or below on the first longer paper may rewrite the paper if they wish to try for a higher grade (the average of the original grade and the rewrite grade will count towards the final grade). If you want to rewrite a paper that received a B- or above, please discuss your circumstances with your Teaching Assistant before you begin a rewrite. Rewrites must be turned in no later than Wednesday, June 7 (the due date for the second paper). If you need more time to work on a paper, you should request an extension from your Teaching Assistant before the day on which the work is due. Papers handed in late without an extension will be marked down 1/3 of a grade per day, including the first weekend. The three main written assignments (the two papers and the exam) will count approximately equally; but your grade can be lowered significantly by poor attendance at sections and it can be improved by any of the following: (i) active participation in class discussions; (ii) consistently strong response papers; (iii) noticeable improvement in your work during the course of the quarter; (iv) a particularly stunning performance on one of the main assignments.

The weekly responses will be graded on a credit/no credit basis. An unacceptable response paper may count as an acceptable comment, so if you start writing the response papers early enough in the quarter, you can try again the following week without losing any credit. The weekly responses will count towards 10% of your grade as follows:

- A+ = more than 4 acceptable response papers and at least 5 acceptable questions/comments (extra credit)
- A = 4 acceptable response papers and 5 acceptable questions/comments
- A- = 4 acceptable response papers and 4 acceptable questions/comments
- B = 4 acceptable response papers and 3 acceptable questions/comments
- C = 4 acceptable response papers and 2 acceptable questions/comments
- D+ = 4 acceptable response papers and 1 acceptable question/comment
- D = 4 acceptable response papers and no acceptable questions/comments
- no credit = fewer than 4 acceptable response papers

### Topics, Reading Assignments, and Recommended Readings:

Please do the reading at least once before the meeting at which it will be discussed. Readings for this course are usually not long but they are fairly difficult. You may find it helpful to read the material at least once before it is discussed in lecture and at least once afterwards.

Readings are listed by lecture meetings. Please note that the schedule is approximate and tentative.

### Weeks 1-3: Utilitarianism

- 4/5 Introduction
- 4/10 Bentham and the Objections to Utilitarianism: *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, chs. 1-4.\*  
Mill on Higher Pleasures and the Objections to Utilitarianism: *Utilitarianism*, chapters I and II, pp. 1-26.
- 4/12 Actions and Rules: *Utilitarianism*, chapter II, continued  
Rawls, "Two Concepts of Rules." \*
- 4/17 Utilitarianism and Moral Motivation: *Utilitarianism*, chapter III, pp. 27-34.  
The Proof of the Principle of Utility: *Utilitarianism*, chapter IV, pp.35-41.  
Taurek, "Should the Numbers Count?" \*
- 4/19 Utilitarianism and Justice: *Utilitarianism*, chapter V, pp. 42-64.

### Weeks 4-10: Kantianism

- 4/24 Introduction: Korsgaard, "An Introduction to the Ethical, Political, and Religious Thought of Kant."  
Grounding for The Metaphysics of Morals, Preface, pp. 1-5.  
*Lectures on Ethics*, pp. 1-3. \*  
The Argument of *Grounding I: Grounding for The Metaphysics of Morals*, First Section, pp. 7-17.
- 4/26 The Argument of *Grounding I*, continued: *Grounding*, First Section, continued  
Korsgaard, "Kant's Analysis of Obligation: The Argument of *Groundwork I*."  
Recommended:  
Korsgaard, "Two Distinctions in Goodness."
- 5/1 The Argument of *Grounding I*, continued: *Grounding*, First Section, continued  
Korsgaard, "Kant's Analysis of Obligation: The Argument of *Groundwork I*," continued.  
Recommended:  
Herman, "On the Value of Acting from the Motive of Duty."
- 5/3 Maxims and Imperatives: *Grounding*, Second Section, pp. 19-29.
- 5/8 Maxims and Imperatives: *Grounding*, continued, Second Section, pp. 19-29, continued.  
Recommended:  
Korsgaard, "The Normativity of Instrumental Reason," in Cullity and Gaut.  
The Formula of Universal Law: *Grounding*, Second Section, pp. 29-35.
- 5/10 The Formula of Universal Law, continued: *Grounding*, Second Section, pp. 29-35, continued.  
Korsgaard, "Kant's Formula of Universal Law."

FIRST PAPER DUE WEDNESDAY, MAY 10

- 5/15 The Formula of Universal Law, continued: *Grounding*, Second Section, pp. 29-35, continued.  
Korsgaard, "Kant's Formula of Universal Law," continued  
Recommended:  
*Lectures on Ethics*, pp. 42-45.  
O'Neill, "Consistency in Action."  
Herman, "Mutual Aid and Respect for Persons."

- 5/17 The Formula of Humanity and Kant's Theory of Value: *Grounding*, Second Section, pp. 35-48.  
Korsgaard, "Kant's Formula of Humanity."
- 5/22 The Formula of Humanity, continued: *Grounding*, Second Section, pp. 35-48, continued.  
Korsgaard, "Kant's Formula of Humanity," continued  
*Metaphysical Principles of Virtue*, pp. 42-46, 50-53, 77-85, 90-93, 108-111.
- 5/24 The Formula of Humanity, continued: *Grounding*, Second Section, pp. 35-48, continued.  
Korsgaard, "Kant's Formula of Humanity," continued  
Korsgaard, "The Right to Lie: Kant on Dealing with Evil."  
O'Neill, "Between Consenting Adults," pp. 118-122. \*
- 5/29 Holiday: NO CLASS
- 5/31 The Formula of Humanity, continued: *Grounding*, Second Section, pp. 35-48, continued.  
Korsgaard, "Kant's Formula of Humanity," continued  
Hill, "Autonomy and Benevolent Lies." \*
- 6/5 The Foundation of Morality: *Grounding*, Third Section, pp. 49-62.  
Korsgaard, "Morality as Freedom": Part I: "Law as Freedom."
- 6/7 Free Will, Responsibility, and the Two Standpoints: *Grounding*, Third Section, pp. 51-62.  
Korsgaard, "Morality as Freedom."  
Korsgaard, "Creating the Kingdom of Ends: Reciprocity and Responsibility in Personal Relations."

SECOND PAPER DUE WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7

- 6/14 FINAL EXAM (8:30-11:30)