

Huron University College

Department of Philosophy

Philosophy 1250F

'Right and Wrong'

Professor: Dr. Steve D'Arcy
Course Time & Location: Tuesdays 12:30-2:30pm;
Thursdays 12:30-1:30pm, in Huron Room W12
E-mail Address: sdarcy@huron.uwo.ca
Telephone: (519) 438-7224 ext. 606
Web Site: <http://sdarcy.edublogs.org>
1st Term Office Hours: Mondays and Tuesdays, from
2:30pm to 4:30pm (Huron, Room A303)



Course Description

In this wide-ranging introduction, we explore moral philosophy, first, by taking a close look at the classical contribution of Plato, with special emphasis on the figure of Socrates in the Platonic dialogues, and second, by surveying a range of leading theories of value, obligation, and moral objectivity.

Our readings (both classical and contemporary) and our frequent class discussions should help us to gain insight into ourselves, our values and commitments, and the implications of our status as moral agents and as citizens. We will also work to improve our ability to articulate, critically assess and rationally defend our own convictions concerning moral and political questions.

The classes will include lectures, but also substantial discussion of the readings. Regular class attendance is crucial for success on the Final Examination.

Required Readings

1. **Plato, *Great Dialogues of Plato*, trans. W.H.D. Rouse** (Signet Classics). Available at the Bookstore
2. **Wilfrid J. Waluchow, *The Dimensions of Ethics: An Introduction to Ethical Theory*** (Broadview, 2003). Available at the Bookstore
3. **Martin Luther King, Jr., *Letter from Birmingham Jail***. Available at: <http://sdarcy.edublogs.org/files/2008/08/letter-from-birmingham-jail.pdf>

Grade Components

1. **Pre-Essay Assignment**
Worth 10% of final grade
Due no later than beginning of class, 9 October; details to be announced
2. **Major Essay**
Worth 40% of final grade
Due no later than the beginning of class, 11 November; 2,000 words in length
3. **Final Examination**
Worth 50% of final grade
Written as scheduled during the December exam period

Prerequisite Information

Students are responsible for ensuring that they have successfully completed all course prerequisites. Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Policy on Accommodation for Medical Absences

For all work in this course, a student who is unable to complete the assigned work for a medical reason must present documentation indicating that the student was seriously affected by illness and could not reasonably be expected to meet his/her academic responsibilities. Huron students should take their medical documentation to the Academic Counsellor, Academic Services Centre at Huron University College, together with a Request for Relief specifying the nature of the accommodation requested. Documentation for non-Huron students must be submitted as soon as possible to the student's Faculty Dean's office. The request and documentation will be assessed and appropriate accommodation will be determined by the Dean's office in consultation with the instructor. Academic accommodation will be granted **ONLY** where the documentation indicates that the onset, duration and severity of the illness are such that the student could not reasonably be expected to complete his/her academic responsibilities. The UWO Student Medical Certificate (SMC)

(https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/medical_document.pdf) and Request for Relief (<http://www.huronuc.ca/pdf/AcademicCounsellingRequestforReliefFormMar08.pdf>) are available at the Student Centre Website (<https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm>), the Huron University College Academic Counselling website (http://www.huronuc.ca/faculty_arts_social_science/academic_counselling/) or from the Academic Services Centre at Huron.

Policy on Accommodation for Non-Medical Absences

Documentation and a request for relief must be submitted to the Academic Services Centre in advance in order for accommodation for non-medical absences from tests and examinations to be considered.

All written submissions, in the absence of medical accommodation, will receive a deduction of 2% of the assignment grade, per weekday, after the deadline. Work submitted after the last day of class, without a medical accommodation, will not receive a grade.

Technology

It is not appropriate to use technology (such as, but not limited, to laptops, PDAs, cell phones) in the classroom for non-classroom activities. Such activity is disruptive and is distracting to other students and to the instructor, and can inhibit learning. Students are expected to respect the classroom environment and to refrain from inappropriate use of technology and other electronic devices in class.

Statement on Academic Offences

Plagiarism: Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf> .

Plagiarism is an academic offence and will be treated as such. Students who are in doubt as to the nature of this offence should consult their instructor, Department Chair or the Dean, as well as the *Huron University College Statement on Plagiarism*, available at the reference desk in the HUC Library and at <http://www.huronuc.on.ca/pdf/FASSonPlagiarism.pdf>. In addition, students may seek guidance from a variety of current style manuals available at the Reference Desk in the HUC Library. Information about these resources can be found at: http://www.huronuc.ca/library/research_guides_and_handouts/.

Plagiarism Detection Software

All required papers (or assignments) may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Support Services

Students in the Department of Philosophy requiring academic counselling concerning courses and modules in Philosophy should see the Chair, Department of Philosophy, Dr. David Conter.

Other academic services such as academic counselling, community-based learning, career development, writing services, cross-cultural services, international opportunities are available through the Academic Services Centre: West Wing, Huron University College, and http://huronuc.ca/faculty_arts_social_science/academic_counselling/.

Course-related Resources

The following web site directs students to resources related to this course:

<http://sdarcy.edublogs.org>

See also the WebCT course site, to which assignments must be submitted:

<http://webct.uwo.ca/>

Tentative Schedule of Readings:

4 September: Introduction to the Course

- *Reading: Syllabus*

9 September: What is Justice? Cephalus and Polemarchus

- *Reading: Plato, The Republic, Book I*

11 September: What is Justice? Thrasymachus v. Socrates

- *Reading: Plato, The Republic, Book I*

16 September: What is Justice? Glaucon and Adeimantus

- *Reading: Plato, The Republic, Book II*

18 September: What is Justice? The Socratic Approach

- *Reading: Plato, The Republic, Book II*

23 September: A Closer Look at Socrates

- *Reading: Plato, The Apology*

25 September: The “Gadfly” Role and Democracy

- *Reading: Plato, The Apology*

30 September: Legal Obligation and Wrongful Conviction

- *Reading: Plato, The Crito*

- 2 October: Positive Law and Natural Law**
 ➤ *Reading:* King, *Letter from Birmingham Jail* (see course web site)
- 7 October: Dimensions of Ethical Theory**
 ➤ *Reading:* Waluchow, Chapter One
- 9 October: Some Basics of Ethical Theory * * * Assignment Due * * ***
 ➤ *Reading:* Waluchow, Chapter Two
- 14 October: Varieties of, and Arguments for, Relativism**
 ➤ *Reading:* Waluchow, Chapter Three
- 16 October: Arguments Against Relativism**
 ➤ *Reading:* Waluchow, Chapter Three
- 21 October: Divine Commnad Theories**
 ➤ *Reading:* Waluchow, Chapter Four
- 23 October: Natural Law Theories**
 ➤ *Reading:* Waluchow, Chapter Four
- 28 October: The Social Contract – Hobbes**
 ➤ *Reading:* Waluchow, Chapter Five
- 30 October: The Social Contract – Gauthier and the Prisoner's Dilemma**
 ➤ *Reading:* Waluchow, Chapter Five
- 4 November: Act Utilitarianism**
 ➤ *Reading:* Waluchow, Chapter Six
- 6 November: Rule Utilitarianism**
 ➤ *Reading:* Waluchow, Chapter Six
- 11 November: Deontology – Kant * * * Essay Due * * ***
 ➤ *Reading:* Waluchow, Chapter Seven
- 13 November: Kant's Strict Duty v. Ross's “Prima Facie Duty”**
 ➤ *Reading:* Waluchow, Chapter Eight
- 18 November: Aristotle's Virtue Ethics**
 ➤ *Reading:* Waluchow, Chapter Nine
- 20 November: Strengths and Weaknesses of Aristotelian Virtue Theory**
 ➤ *Reading:* Waluchow, Chapter Nine
- 25 November: Feminist Ethics**
 ➤ *Reading:* Waluchow, Chapter Ten
- 27 November: Relation Between Feminist Ethics and “Traditional” Ethics**
 ➤ *Reading:* Waluchow, Chapter Ten
- 2 December: Exam Preparation Question and Answer Period**