

**WESTERN UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
Undergraduate Course Outline 2021-22**

**Phil 2700F (650):
An Introduction to Ethics and Value Theory**

**Fall 2021
Asynchronous**

**Instructor: Dr. Ryan Robb
Office: Stevenson Hall, rm 4149 and Zoom
Office Hours: Wednesdays 2:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
on Zoom, or by appointment
e-mail: rrobb@uwo.ca**

DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to the attempts by scholars to understand whether, and the degree to which, humans can/should be held responsible for their actions. Do humans have ethical duties and responsibilities toward one another or themselves? If so, what are the foundations of those ethical duties, and what do they demand? Our survey of the scholarly responses to these questions will be separated in two parts: First a review of prominent positions on meta-ethics, followed by a survey of the five dominant ethical theories.

TEXTS

Wilfrid J. Waluchow, *The Dimensions of Ethics; An Introduction to Ethical Theory*. (Broadview Press, 2003).

H. Geirsson and M.R. Holmgren, *Ethical Theory: A Concise Anthology*. 3rd ed. (Broadview Press, 2018).

OBJECTIVES

The primary goal of this course is to introduce students to and/or build upon a set of standard philosophical skills. Using the readings, lectures, and essay assignments this course will help students to identify what it is that makes the set of reasons that support the conclusions of an argument either convincing or implausible by requiring them to formulate well-reasoned responses to the arguments made in the readings, elaborated in lectures.

The secondary goal of this course is to introduce students to the historically dominant discussions of ethical concerns undertaken by philosophers. Their understanding of those discussions will be assessed on the mid-term and final exams.

REQUIREMENTS

15% - Mid-Term Exam

25% - Final Exam

50% - two 1100 – 1300 word essays, worth 30% each

AUDIT

Students wishing to audit the course should consult with the instructor prior to or during the first week of classes.

LATE PENALTIES

Essays An essay will be considered late if it is not submitted to OWL by the time specified on the assignment description. Late essays will be penalized at a rate of **five** percentage points per day (weekends included), to a maximum of 10 days (or 50%), at which point a grade of 0 will be entered.

Exams The Mid-Term Exam will use the Tests and Quizzes function on OWL. If an exam is only partially completed by the time specified, the completed portion will be graded, and the incomplete portion will receive 0. If an exam is missed, a grade of 0 will automatically be recorded.

DUE DATES

- Essays**
1. Friday Oct. 22nd at 11:55 p.m.
 2. Friday Nov. 26th at 11:55 p.m.

Mid-Term Exam Wednesday Oct. 6th from 9 a.m. Tuesday Oct 13th at 11:55 p.m.

Final Exam December Exam Period, at a time and place set by the Office of the Registrar

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY POLICIES

The **Department of Philosophy Policies** which govern the conduct, standards, and expectations for student participation in Philosophy courses is available in the Undergraduate section of the Department of Philosophy website at <http://uwo.ca/philosophy/undergraduate/policies.html>.

It is your responsibility to understand the policies set out by the Senate and the Department of Philosophy, and thus ignorance of these policies cannot be used as grounds of appeal.

ACCOMMODATION

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted,

EVALUATION OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

At least three days prior to the deadline for withdrawal from a course without academic penalty, students will receive assessment of work accounting for at least 15% of their final grade. For 3000-