

Teaching Portfolio

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Teaching Statement

I can, luckily, pinpoint what motivated me to pursue higher education as a career path. While walking across the small campus of my undergrad institution on the first pleasant Spring day of the year, I was struck for the first time by something approximating the ideal of an educational community. Many professors had taken the fair weather as an opportunity to teach outside; as I walked past an honors class discussing Flannery O'Connor immediately next to 3D Art students soldering together a metal art installation I *saw* in a way I hadn't appreciated before a community unified around the common project of education while simultaneously diverse in their pursuits. I decided, right then, that I wanted both to be an integral part such educational activity and a member of such a community. Thankfully, teaching is a central element of my job as a philosopher. As a teacher, I draw on my own experiences as a student. My own professors fostered in me a desire to learn, apply that knowledge to diverse areas of my life, and think of *myself* as a critically thinking participant in an ongoing conversation. In light of these experiences, as a teacher I aim to (1) foster in students an appreciation for philosophy, (2) give them the tools to apply philosophical thinking in their own lives, and (3) encourage them to see *themselves* as philosophers—full participants in an ongoing conversation about human existence. Ultimately, I hope to approximate in my own classroom that brief image of educational community I encountered all those years ago.

Regarding my first goal, I employ many strategies to encourage appreciation of philosophy. For example, I use interdisciplinary resources to support and supplement philosophical discussion. When I teach the ethics of mass incarceration as part of my ethics course, I pair philosophical questions about justice with empirical studies from the CDC and Justice Department regarding crime and incarceration rates. In my introduction to philosophy course, I pair philosophical readings about free will with recent neurological studies about brain activity in decision making. This interdisciplinary approach extends beyond scientific research to include history. I find that grounding philosophical discussions in scientific and historical research makes them less abstract for students.

My second teaching goal is to give students the tools to think philosophically in their own lives. For example, I ask students to complete an "argument analysis" of an assigned reading. The students do not, at first, evaluate the argument. Instead, this first assignment centers on straightforward questions like, "What is the author's conclusion?" and "What are the author's reasons for this conclusion?" Their next short assignment is to once again reconstruct an argument but now provide one potential objection the author needs to address. The third assignment asks them, in addition, to consider how the author might address the potential objection they have raised. These assignments culminate in a short paper, which requires all the skills developed in their previous assignments. Assignments that build upon each other in this way bolster student confidence in their skills and allow me to catch problems a student is having before they become insurmountable.

Finally, I aim to foster in students a sense of themselves as active participants in their own education. This means encouraging students to see themselves as members of an ongoing

philosophical conversation about things that matter most—truth, value, and the human experience. At a practical level, I find directly engaging students in the learning process is the best way to cultivate this mindset. While lecture classes are a key component of any teacher’s repertoire, I find that undergraduates benefit greatly from an emphasis on discussing their own ideas. For many of them, a classroom conversation where they are a full participant is a new experience. This kind of approach gives students the opportunity to make the content they learn *personal* by discovering how this knowledge both addresses and challenges their own preconceptions.

Moreover, because University of Tennessee-Knoxville is the flagship state institution, I teach a wide variety of students—including those who identify as members of a minority social group and those who are first-generation college students. As such, when I teach, I incorporate readings from groups that are historically underrepresented in philosophy. For example, I intentionally craft my syllabi to include women and minority philosophers. Fostering the students’ ability to *see themselves* in the readings is both important for reaching diverse population and simply good pedagogy. For first-generation students and those who, more generally, are unfamiliar with the terminology and norms of academia, engaging with respect and presenting ideas with patience is a large step towards a pedagogy that lives up to the ideals of the liberal arts not just in *content* but also in *practice*.

In teaching philosophy, the danger is that the subject becomes *too* abstract—too difficult for the student to locate within their own experience. Letting students approach topics *through* their own ideas—via (1) an interdisciplinary approach, (2) gradual skill development, and (3) discussion heavy classes—emphasizes that philosophy can be an intensely personal endeavor.

Student Evaluations

In this section I provide my students' quantitative evaluations from academic year 2012-213 through 2019-2020. I also provide a *complete sample* of unedited qualitative answers from two recent courses where I was the primary instructor. More qualitative answers from additional courses are available upon request. The University of Tennessee has changed both quantitative and qualitative student evaluation questions three times between 2012 and 2019. This change reduced the number of questions from over 22 to only 8. To enable comparisons between the different evaluations systems, I have selected for consideration 8 of the original SAIS questions that best match the revised EOC questions. A complete set of questions from the original SAIS form are available upon request.

All UT student evaluations are on a 5 point scale (5 = excellent, 1= poor). Here is a quick summary of the top-line trends:

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
FALL	4.0	4.75	4.5	4.43	4.6	4.9	4.8	4.6
SPRING	4.5	4.45	4.5	4.47	4.68	4.5	4.68	4.7
AVERAGE:	4.25	4.6	4.5	4.45	4.64	4.7	4.74	4.65

These averages show both improvement and consistency in my teaching, especially compared with the comparative mean averages at University of Tennessee in Arts and Sciences. For example, the comparative mean average for 2012-2013 academic year in Arts and Sciences was only **3.68** while most recently in 2019-2020 the mean average was still **4.35**. Complete comparative means from before summer 2016 are available publicly on the University of Tennessee office of institutional research and assessment website more recent comparative means are available upon request.

Quantitative Evaluations

(5=Excellent, 4= Very Good, 3= Good, 2= Fair, 1= Poor, 0=Very Poor)

SAIS Quantitative Questions (Discussion Section Instructor)	Discussion section as a whole (Q1)	D.S.I.'s effectiveness in teaching material (Q4)	Explanations by D.S.I. (Q5)	Quality of questions/problems raised by D.S.I. (Q7)	D.S.I.'s enthusiasm (Q8)	Answers to students' questions (Q11)	Ability to deal with students' difficulties (Q14)	Availability of extra help when needed (Q15)
Intro to Phil. (Fa.) 2012 [section 1]	3.4	3.6	3.5	3.6	3.8	3.4	3.6	3.6
[section 2]	4.44	4.33	4.44	4.56	4.44	4.44	4.44	4.33
Intro to Phil. (Sp.) 2013 [section 1]	4.18	4.45	4.55	4.6	4.6	4.4	4.18	4.27
[section 2]	4.27	4.64	4.64	4.64	4.82	4.45	4.64	4.55
Bioethics (Fa.) 2013 [section 1]	4.6	4.7	4.6	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.5	4.4
[section 2]	4.85	4.92	4.92	4.85	5.0	5.0	5.0	4.85
Bioethics (Sp.) 2014 [section 1]	4.67	4.78	4.67	4.67	4.67	4.56	4.78	4.67
[section 2]	4.11	4.22	4.11	3.89	4.44	4.33	4.33	4.11

Total Average by Class

Intro to Phil. (Fa) 2012 [section 1]	3.6
[section 2]	4.4
Intro to Phil. (Sp) 2013 [section 1]	4.4
[section 2]	4.6
Semester Average	4.25

Bioethics (Fa.) 2013 [section 1]	4.6
[section 2]	4.9
Bioethics (Sp. 2014 [section 1]	4.7
[section 2]	4.2
Semester Average	4.6

(5=Excellent, 2= Fair, 1= Poor,
4= Very Good, 0=Very Poor)
3= Good

SAIS Quantitative Questions (Primary Instructor)	The course as a whole was (Q1)	The instructor's effectiveness in teaching the subject matter was (Q4)	Explanations by instructor were (Q7)	Instructor's ability to present alternative explanations when needed was (Q8)	Instructor's enthusiasm was (Q12)	Encouragement give students to express themselves was (Q13)	Answer to student questions were (Q14)	Availability of extra help when needed was (Q15)
Intro to Phil. (Fa.) 2014	4.5	4.67	4.67	4.83	4.17	4.58	4.58	4.33
Intro to Phil. (Sp.) 2015	4.62	4.62	4.38	4.62	4.62	4.5	4.75	4.25

Total Average by Class

Intro to Phil. (Fa.) 2014	4.5
Intro to Phil. (Sp.) 2015	4.5
Semester Average	4.5

(5=Excellent, 2= Fair, 1= Poor,
4= Very Good, 0=Very Poor)
3= Good

EOC Quantitative Questions (Primary Instructor)	The course as a whole was (Q1)	The instructor's effectiveness in teaching the subject matter was (Q4)	Explanations by instructor were (Q7)	Instructor's ability to present alternative explanations when needed was (Q8)	Instructor's enthusiasm was (Q12)	Encouragement give students to express themselves was (Q13)	Answer to student questions were (Q14)	Availability of extra help when needed was (Q15)
Intro to Phil. (Fa.) 2015	4.45	4.45	4.55	4.55	4.73	4.19	4.27	4.27
Contemporary Moral Problems (Sp.) 2016	4.44	4.44	4.22	4.44	4.56	4.67	4.56	4.44

Total Average by Class

Intro to Phil. (Fa.) 2015	4.43
Contemporary Moral Problems. (Sp.) 2016	4.47
Semester Average	4.45

5=Strongly Agree, 4= Agree, 3= Neutral
 2= Disagree, 1= Strongly Disagree,
 0=Not Applicable)

EOC Quantitative Questions, Post-2016 Revision (Discussion Section Instructor)	The D.S.I. contributed to your understanding of course content	The D.S.I. responded to your inquiries about the course within a reasonable timeframe (i.e., 48-72 hours)	The D.S.I. created a respectful and positive learning environment	The D.S.I. was skilled at developing classroom discussion	The class discussions were well organized	The discussion/recitation materials enhanced your learning in this course	The class discussions provided an opportunity to learn from other students	The discussion components of this course contributed to your understanding of the course content.
Contemporary Moral Problems (Fa.) 2016 [section 19]	4.81	4.36	4.88	4.56	4.44	4.5	4.75	4.69
[section 18]	4.75	4.33	4.65	4.75	4.55	4.7	4.75	4.7
Intro to Phil. (Fa.) 2017 [section 1]	5.0	4.91	5	5	5	5	4.91	5
Contemporary Moral Problems (Sp.) 2018 [section 1]	4.93	4.93	5	4.93	4.8	4.73	4.93	4.8
[section 25]	4.25	4.44	4.5	4.2	4.05	4.25	4.4	4.4
Intro to Phil. (Fa.) 2018 [section 1]	4.89	4.78	4.78	4.67	4.44	4.44	4.78	4.78
[section 3]	4.9	5.0	5.0	4.9	4.8	4.9	4.9	4.9
Contemporary Moral Problems (Sp.) 2019 [section 3]	4.71	4.8	4.86	4.52	4.38	4.71	4.76	4.71

Total Average by Class

Contemporary Moral Problems (Fa.) 2016 [section 19]	4.6
[section 18]	4.6
See Below	***
Semester Average	4.64

Intro to Phil. (Fa.) 2017 [section 1]	4.9
Contemporary Moral Problems (Sp.) 2018 [section 1]	4.8
[section 25]	4.3
Semester Average	4.7

Intro to Phil. (Fa.) 2018 [section 1]	4.7
[section 3]	4.9
Contemporary Moral Problems (Sp.) 2019 [section 3]	4.7
Semester Average	4.69

5=Strongly Agree, 4= Agree, 3= Neutral

2= Disagree, 1= Strongly Disagree, 0=Not Applicable)

EOC Quantitative Questions, Post-2016 Revision (Primary Instructor)	The instructor contributed to your understanding of course content	The instructor created an atmosphere that invited you to seek additional help	The instructor responded to your inquiries about the course within a reasonable timeframe (i.e., 48-72 hours)	The instructor created a respectful and positive learning environment	The instructor provided useful feedback	The course challenged you to learn something new	The class sessions were well organized	The course materials (readings, homework, laboratories, etc.) enhanced your learning in this course.
Contemporary Moral Problems (Sp.) 2017	4.69	4.69	4.77	4.85	4.54	4.69	4.69	4.54
Bioethics (Fa) 2019 [section 7]	4.83	4.83	4.67	4.92	4.75	4.67	4.5	4.5
[section 8]	4.44	4.56	4.56	4.78	4.22	4.67	4.56	4.44
Professional Responsibility (Fa) 2019 [section 20]	5.00	5.00	4.33	5.00	4.83	4.5	4.33	4.17
[section 26]	4.64	4.64	4.23	4.5	4.79	4.57	4.07	4.29
Contemporary Moral Problems (Sp) 2020 [section 27]	4.73	4.73	4.55	4.73	4.09	4.82	4.36	4.73
[section 28]	4.8	4.7	4.1	4.9	4.3	4.8	4.7	4.7
Intro to Philosophy (Sp) 2020 [section 37]	4.82	4.82	4.9	4.91	4.73	4.73	4.73	4.55
[section 38]	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.9	4.7	4.4	4.7	4.4

Total Average by Class

See Above	***
Contemporary Moral Problems (Sp.) 2017	4.68
Semester Average	4.64

Bioethics (Fa) 2019 [section 7]	4.71
[section 8]	4.53
Professional Responsibility (Fa) 2019 [section 20]	4.7
[section 26]	4.5
Contemporary Moral Problems (Sp) 2020 [section 27]	4.6
[section 28]	4.63
Intro to Philosophy (Sp) 2020 [section 37]	4.8
[section 38]	4.7
Semester Average	4.65

Qualitative Evaluations

Bioethics (Fall 2019) [section 7]- EOC Qualitative Questions—Post-2016 Revision

Q1: Is there any additional feedback you would like to provide about the instructor (e.g., teaching style, time management, accessibility)?

- Grade faster
- You are the absolute GOAT professor. Your class has been the most enjoyable, engaging, high-yield class that I have taken at UT, hands down. I feel that I have gained an entirely new perspective on the world and now give philosophical consideration to every aspect of my life. I know think, "Why?" on nearly everything that I do and I feel that this has greatly increased my appreciation for things and helped me refine both my personal identity and my relationships with others. None of this would have been possible without a great philosophy professor, so I am very grateful to have taken your class. You have been incredibly respectful and thoughtful, have encouraged discussion in meaningful ways, and have approached your position in a way that prioritized learning, understanding, and growth rather than simply checking off boxes of topics to cover. I have often felt like my academic experience at UT as the mental equivalent of digging holes only to fill them back up, as I gained no real new insight on the world or the human experience, rather only cramming random facts/formulas to regurgitate on an exam. This class, however, has not been this way. Your future students will be lucky to have you as you have set the bar for what proper education looks like. Thank you for a wonderful semester.
- great class
- n/a
- He was the best professor I've ever had! He not only was a human being first, but made us feel like human beings over students as well. He made the effort to learn all of our names at the beginning of the semester and made small comments like "I recommend that you don't stay up all night for this paper, but if you're gonna stay up all night, make it for a fun reason!", which truly made me enjoy him as a person. He doesn't care any less than other professors about having structure, purpose, and the goal of understanding, but somehow accomplishes these things without making the process miserable. I am notorious for skipping class, and only missed this class once due to an actual family emergency. Other than that, the thought of skipping this class never crossed my mind- it was too interesting, thought provoking, and fun!
- Dr. Baker's class was a pleasantly refreshing experience with each meeting. His ability to push class discussion and explore challenging bioethical topics was appreciated. I thoroughly enjoyed all topics that was explored in class as well as his clearly-worded powerpoints.

- Dr. Baker has been a wonderful professor. You can tell he is passionate about ethical issues which helped contribute to my knowledge of the material. Even though I am an introvert and didn't contribute much to the discussions, I learned a lot and was able to broaden the way I see certain topics.
- For being the first time Dr. Baker has taught this class, he truly did an excellent job. He is very good at guiding discussions while maintaining a respectful learning environment. He allowed the students to form their own opinions on topic and then use those opinions for a productive class discussion. He relates to his students well and has a bright future in teaching philosophy. The only complaint I have is that it he takes a long time to grade papers. However, his grading is thorough and his feedback is helpful. I very much enjoyed the course and liked his teaching style.
- Took too long to grade

Q2: Is there any additional feedback you would like to provide about the course (e.g. Workload, content, technology)?

- N/A
- The 5 page papers were really hard to work through without feeling like you are rambling or providing unnecessary information. I feel like making these assignments 500 words less could really enhance others work.
- I just don't like writing, but I understand that is part of the course.
- I absolutely loved how we had weekly writings at the beginning of the week and end of the week. This made me forget I was even in a writing intensive course, as we only had two complete papers to write besides the weekly writings. I thought it was a seamless method that allowed us to stay interested without being too much that we got burned out.
- n/a
- n/a
- Please don't make us buy the textbook

Introduction to Philosophy (Spring 2020) [section 38]- EOC Qualitative Questions—Post-2016 Revision (**NOTE**: COVID-19 pandemic caused the class to move online halfway through the semester; there are new qualitative questions specifically about the online transition)

Q1: Is there any additional feedback you would like to provide about the instructor (e.g., teaching style, time management, accessibility)?

- Dr. Baker was able to talk about any given circumstance and relate it to what we were learning which was very nice.
- I think there needed to be more than just papers for grading in the course. There wasn't enough instruction for how the papers should be written, so I don't believe the grading was 100% fair.
- Jordan Baker is, without a doubt, one of the very best professors here at UTK. His conversational approach to teaching (very classically structured) is perfect for the subject matter in this course. It just so happens that I have actually taken another philosophy course that Baker was involved in. Unfortunately, I had a different TA (that is what J. Baker was at that time) for PHIL 242, but I thoroughly enjoyed that Moral Dilemmas class and feel as though I learned a ton. I had a great main professor (Dr. Feldt) and never thought it possible that there would be an even better Philosophy professor. I was wrong. Jordan Baker is one of the most enthusiastic and expressive professors/teachers/instructors that I have ever encountered. He encourages absolutely everyone in his class to speak up, to risk saying something "wrong", and to engage with the material as intimately as possible. I repeatedly stayed after class (prior to the COVID chaos) just to hear his thoughts on things or to have some things clarified for me. He always obliged and seemed very happy to do so. He even went above and beyond, helping me on a couple papers to streamline my ideas and approach.
- I love how Dr. Baker teaches thing class. He really makes me think and us my brain. He is one of the best professors I ever had!!!
- I really loved his teaching style.
- Dr. Baker was a fantastic professor. When I signed up for a philosophy class I expected them to be boring lectures, but they were not at all. Dr. Baker helped us engage with the material in a way that actually allowed me to understand and question the material.

Q2: Is there any additional feedback you would like to provide about the course (e.g. Workload, content, technology)?

- none
- I enjoyed the readings and content. It was relatable to many other topics. One of my favorite classes.

- Don't change anything. If someone wants to take a class that challenges him or her to think differently, question past assumptions, decisions, inclinations, etc., this is the class for that individual. You get out of it exactly what you put into it. Fantastic readings, excellent grade distribution (I am always in favor of quality over quantity with assignments, and the participation and paper based focus here is the best grade breakdown that I've ever had), and a professor who is itching to help you learn to love the subject matter as much as he does.
- N/A
- Weekly readings.

Q3: Is there any feedback you would like to provide about the instructor's transition of this specific course to remote/online learning?

- Class was the same as before.
- Online was difficult because it was hit or miss for my internet to be working and where I'm from I can't just go somewhere to get access to WiFi.
- He handled this as professionally and efficiently as one could hope. No gripes or complaints here.
- I thought he responded great. We picked up class like normal. I barely noticed the change.
- none
- He along with my classmates handled the transition really well.

Q4: Compared to your prior experiences during face-to-face sessions in this specific course, how did the transition to an online/remote environment impact your ability to learn the material in this specific course?

- It did not change anything.
- I definitely prefer the in-class discussions more than the online ones.
- I do not think it impacted my learning.
- Since I've just hailed his class structure and approach/attitude as being unparalleled, I was naturally disappointed that I wouldn't get to stay after class or shoot the breeze with Dr. Baker. However, he has still managed to bring his A-game despite the Zoom transition. The change/transition didn't affect the readings and trajectory for the course material in any way, so that's really good.
- Participation is a big part of the class, and with my internet not being the best it was hard for me to hear the session without it cutting in and out a lot, and I would get kicked out of

the session a lot. I kept up with online reading journals, but I'm worried my participation will be low due to my inconvenience.

- NA
- It had no impact

Sample Teaching Observations

Throughout my graduate teaching career I was observed by tenure-track professors as part of the department's graduate student assessments. These assessments are emailed to the graduate student in question and a second copy is made and filed with the department. In this section I include three assessments to provide a representative sample: one from my first academic year in the program (Spring, 2013), one from my last academic year in the program (Fall, 2018), and one from when I was teaching as the primary instructor of record (Fall, 2015). Full observational records are available upon request.

Jordan Baker

Teaching Observation Report

4/13/13

I've watched four discussions led by Jordan and each one was better than the one before it. When I first saw him, Jordan was very insecure and a little frightened, it seemed to me, about leading a philosophy discussion. He's grown in confidence, in his knowledge of how to lead a discussion, and, perhaps most importantly, in his self-confidence. At the end of the last discussion I observed, I gave the class a round of applause to congratulate them on an excellent discussion of the problem of evil. The students in that class get some of the credit for the quality of that discussion, of course, but not all the credit. Jordan has created an atmosphere in which the students are comfortable with talking and want to discuss; they even talk *with each other* instead of taking turns going back-and-forth with Jordan.

The first of Jordan's discussions that I observed this semester was about the difference between Camus' absurd world and the world in which everything happens for a reason, which Jordan named the "reasonable world." Jordan had written the two names on different sections of the whiteboard before class began. After a couple of announcements, he gave a nice 5-minute "mini-lecture" in which he reminded the students of what I'd said in lecture about the two ideas and a little about each. Then he asked the class, "which of these two worlds would you prefer to live in and why?" That got the ball rolling and the discussion moved smoothly from there. One question I'd have liked to see raised in this discussion was, If the ways of God are "beyond our finding out or our comprehension" (as many of our students are wont to say), does that land us back in the absurd world?

The second class was on the problem of evil. It also began with a 5-minute mini-lecture that served nicely as a way to get everyone reminded of the issue and started on the same page. Both classes uncovered a variety of opinions and reasons in the students, but this one featured students questioning each others' views about a rather sensitive issue in a respectful, yet challenging way. It also featured some pretty original (for intro students) comments about the problem and about other students' responses to it.

I very much like the 5-minute mini-lectures that Jordan gives at the beginning of class. They serve to remind and focus the students, and to kick off discussion. The ones I saw were quite good and they were effective with the students. Jordan has developed a rather nice way to encourage those who haven't spoken to participate – appending a question addressed to the class with "preferably from someone who hasn't talked so far" – and that worked. Twelve of the 16 students present participated despite the sensitive topics for these students. Moreover, the classes were not just students expressing their opinions; Jordan has learned to probe, push and evaluate student comments in a supportive, non-threatening way. In the second class, he used his own Christian convictions very effectively, giving students permission to believe, to question and to examine their ideas. You don't have to have answers to all the philosophical conundrums to be a person of faith.

Jordan has made more progress as a discussion leader this year than any of the other five TAs working with me and he is now one of the top two discussion leaders in that group. He is developing into a first-rate discussion leader and that's a big part of being an effective teacher. (Numerical score 8 . . . any first-year TA has "room for improvement in some areas.") If he can do the philosophy, Jordan will become a very good teacher of philosophy.

John Hardwig

John Hardwig

11/30

Jordan, this was another stellar discussion section (like last fall's observation). You're a gifted and dedicated and assiduous teacher. I learned a lot from watching you teach. Bravo and keep it up!

As always, Jordan is warm, inviting, encouraging, high energy without being maniacal and thus stressful.

Jordan on David Frank on value-laden science.

What is a value laden science and

What kinds of disagreement come up in this kind of science?

(typical student silence in wake of question posed, then they got going. Jordan uses the board to document brainstorm session)

Examples: invasive species biology, medicine, poli sci*, psychology (as therapeutic), anthropology...

"couldn't you argue all science?" (from student, followed up by a number of people)

Moving on to distinction between epistemic and practical/value-laden objectives.

Is it good/okay for a science to have the latter kind of aim?

Student suggestion: it's necessary, as the case of medical research shows. Consider need to think about harm in the side effects of drugs, etc.

Student suggestion: need to think holistically to understand impact. Zebra mussels. Can't *understand* without considering other values. Unity of value?

Maybe humans are an invasive species! The practice of domestication? If humans are made in god's image... this seems significant. How exactly? Teasing this out.

The conversation trended towards trying to say what's bad about invasiveness. Jordan pushed them to say why it's bad or irresponsible of us.

Something about the fact that we have the power to change ecosystems...

Comparison to cock fighting. It's on you even if you're not the one who "did" it.

Intrinsic value of other life forms. Why do we care more about tigers than beetles? We can relate ..

(note; the conversation is getting a bit lost in terms of the philosophical purpose. Jordan is trying to pull out of them their own biases and preconceptions about good and bad in the conceptual area. This is all well and good as long as it's deliberate. One thing I think you could work on is not spending too much time on particular steps in a brainstorming process that can be predicted to run on indefinitely.)

In final two minutes, wrapping up: thinking back to Socrates, tying it in with Frank. "Have you thought about what's good? Have you thought about how the answer to this question impacts the other questions you're asking?"

Critical reasoning is useful. But also, when you do critical reasoning in any field, think about value. Because it's gonna be there. You're gonna bring value to the table no matter what you do, so it's important to do it carefully and well. "

Lovely and very inspiring end to this course! Student overheard packing up her bag: "I learned *so much* in this course. I'm gonna miss it!" well done Jordan!

Kristina Gehrman

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Jordan,

Thanks for the opportunity to observe you teach on Nov. 2.

Here's a brief report (in addition to the numerical assessment attached):

I visited Jordan's intro class on Nov. 2. I arrived about 5 minutes early. Jordan was present at the front of the class and had already some outline material on the board. He chatted with students before class. Class started promptly. There were about 14 present at the start of class. There were about 20 present by ten minutes into class. The ag campus location clearly prevents students from arriving on time. The topic was free will and in particular a canonical essay by Van Inwagen. Jordan clearly and skillfully set up the main issues, architecture, distinctions and arguments of the essay. He pitched the material at just the right level for intro students. He asked students general questions and several got involved in answering. A few were clearly quite engaged by the issues and the class and had clearly done the reading carefully, etc. All students were attentive and respectful. They seemed to have positive regard for Jordan as their instructor. My only suggestion would be to buttress the presentation with some concrete examples illustrating what is at stake in these philosophical matters in a way that intro students can sink their teeth into. Jordan is doing a good job getting the bright students engaged, but with some more concrete examples drawing their attention to the stakes he might get more involved. Overall, Jordan seems to be doing very good work and will no doubt only improve as he gains more experience in the classroom.

David

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David A. Reidy, J.D., Ph.D.
Professor, Philosophy
Adjunct Professor, Political Science
Distinguished Humanities Professor, College of Arts and Sciences
University of Tennessee

Sample Syllabi

This section contains several sample syllabi, the first five are from classes that I have taught as the primary instructor, whether post-doc lecturer or graduate student. The most recent classes are provided first. Please note that I have two different syllabi for “Professional Responsibility” because my 2020 version of that class is online and partially asynchronous, whereas the earlier version is standard in-person. It seemed beneficial to provide the contrast between these two teaching styles. The last two are hypothetical advanced undergrad classes that I would be interested in teaching. The first syllabus is complete, with class schedule and university policies included; the others just have the course description, brief assignment details, and reading lists. Complete versions of these edited syllabi are available upon request. They are listed as follows:

Previously Taught

- Professional Responsibility (Online Version) [complete syllabus].....20
- Intro to Philosophy [edited].....28
- Contemporary Moral Problems [edited].....31
- Bioethics [edited].....34
- Professional Responsibility (In-person Version) [edited].....37

Potential Classes

- Issues in Philosophy of Action.....40
- Metaphysics of Nature.....42
- Ethical Naturalism(s).....44

Professional Responsibility

Philosophy 244
Fall, 2020

Instructor:

Dr. Jordan Baker
jbaker53@utk.edu

Zoom Office Hours:

By appointment (just send me an email!), I will respond within 24hrs unless it is Saturday.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Ethics is the part of philosophy that asks fundamental questions about issues of **value and morality** in order to understand how to live better. "Professional Responsibility" is the part of ethics that applies this understanding to questions that arise in the context of work. How you answer these questions depends on how you understand the role ethics plays within the workplace. Moreover, we can ask, "are some answers better than others?" To engage with these questions is to consider the issue from a philosophical perspective. That is what we will do in this course. We will start with some discussions about work and values and how they relate to personal happiness, as well as issues of society and justice. We will then spend the remainder of the semester looking at various examples of ethical issues within a variety of professions and related issues. Through our discussions, we will figure out both what others have to say on these matters, but what we ourselves believe.

The general aim of this course is to introduce some issues that occur at the intersection of professional life and morality, it also fulfills the "Oral Communication" requirement, as such many of your assignments will involve presentations to the class. This course, like all philosophy courses, will challenge and cultivate your ability to read, write, think, and speak. We will assume for the purposes of this course that equally intelligent, well-meaning people can sincerely disagree about questions of right and wrong, and we will endeavor to understand how we as members of a pluralistic society can do so in helpful and responsible ways.

Course Setup

Due to the continue risk of COVID-19, I have decided that it is *my* professional responsibility to make this this class entirely online and mostly asynchronous. The only synchronous element is the weekly Zoom meeting.

The class consists in a variety of readings, assignments, and discussions. These serve to clarify the material, connect it to its philosophical background, and challenge the authors and ourselves in our moral perspectives. There will also be presentations, which serve as opportunities to practice oral communication and presentation skills, and exercise moral reasoning.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Students will acquire and demonstrate a basic knowledge related to one definition of professional responsibility and the role that values can play within the workplace.
2. Students will demonstrate familiarity with general ethical perspectives.
3. Students will demonstrate the ability to identify and explain the role that moral theory can play in addressing common issues that occur in the workplace.
4. Students will demonstrate the ability to explain where disagreements about the proper course of action come from and then engage in civil discussion about those disagreements.
5. Students will gain the ability to better articulate their own moral views and understanding of the role of values in the workplace.

REQUIRED TEXT:

(1) All PDF readings will be posted to Canvas.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Reading Response. (10% in total): After each reading is completed, you will submit a very short writing assignment, which raises one question you had about the reading and raises one point of interests. These should demonstrate that the material has been read with care.

Ethical Theory Exam (15%): This exam tests the main theories and concepts from Module 1 of the course. Questions are a combination of multiple choice and essay-based.

CASE-STUDY Analysis (15% in total): These relate to the various categories of professions and course topics. Analyze the cases according to the relevant stakeholders, interest, and social conditions, using the provided framework. Each analysis should be at least 200 words.

First Presentation — PowerPoint Practice (2-4min) (5%): Design and present a PowerPoint presentation based on the design principles detailed in

David Philips' video entitled "How to Avoid Death by Powerpoint", it can be about any topic that interests you!

Second Presentation—Case Study Analysis (7 to 10 mins) (10%): Design and present a presentation that analyzes one of several cases I provide you with. Much like your written case studies, you should identify stakeholders, identify the conflict, and suggest what the ethically right action should be and *why* you think this is the correct

Final Presentation Outline (5%): Develop a written outline for the second presentation (see below).

Final Presentation— Original Case Study (8-12min) (15%): Identify a code of ethics that is relevant to the profession of your choice, and find a relevant case of moral conflict. Evaluate the conflict based on the code of ethics, and then provide a meta-analysis of the success of the code of ethics in addressing the conflict.

Final Reading & Course Reflection (15%)— In this final reflection, instead of merely raising some questions or an important point I would like you to do two things: (1) reflect on your experience in the class as a whole, and (2) reflect on the final reading of the course. Is it applicable to your own life/career path? About 1000 words.

Zoom Discussion Participation (10%): Our zoom discussions will be the primary place for participation.

GRADING:

94-100: A	87-89: B+	77-79: C+	67-69: D+	0-59: F
90-93: A-	84-86: B	74-76: C	64-66: D	
	80-83: B-	70-73: C-	60-63: D-	

A-level grade: the student has not only met, but consistently exceeded the expectations set out for a B-level grade. ***This means that meeting the stated requirements alone does not entitle one to an A-level grade.***

B-level grade: the student has attended and come prepared to every class discussion. They have participated in class discussions regularly by contributing quality comments and questions. They have completed and submitted every assignment on time and in accordance with all of the requirements. In general, the student is engaged and demonstrates a suitable understanding of the material.

C-level grade: the student has fallen short in any or some of the aspects that are required for a B-level grade.

D-level grade: the student has fallen significantly short in the aspects that are required for a B-level grade to an extent that does not warrant a C-level grade.

F-level grade: the student has not met the minimum requirements of the course

LATE ASSIGNMENT POLICY: There is a **24 hour** “grace period” for all major assignments. This does **NOT** include **presentations** or **reading response**. After that 24hr period, all assignments that are turned in will be subject to a full-letter grade penalty.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Students with documented disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the University of Tennessee Office of Disability Services (<http://ods.utk.edu>) Speak with me if your disability is undocumented, and I will do my best to help. Please know that I’m more than happy to accommodate in anyway that I can.

PLAGIARISM: Plagiarism will not be tolerated in this course. Any assignment that involves any plagiarism whatsoever will receive a ‘0’, and may result in the student failing this course. Students are responsible for knowing what counts as plagiarism under the University's definition. Please see UTK's Honor Statement here:

http://catalog.utk.edu/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=470#hono_stat

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Day	Date	Type	Assignment
Module 0: What is “Professional Responsibility”?			
W	8/19	Watch	<i>Intro video (on Canvas)</i>
		Read	“Philosophy, Ethics, and the Meaning of Life” (PDF)
		Read	“The Professional” edited from “What is it to be a professional?”- Martin, Clancy, et al.
F	8/21	Join	Live Zoom Discussion (@class time)
Module 1: Happiness, Ethical Theory, and the Meaning of Life			
M	8/24	Read	“Nicomachean Ethics” by Aristotle [read pp. 1-9]
		Submit	Reading Response
W	8/26	Read	“Nicomachean Ethics” by Aristotle [pp. 10-19]
		Watch	<i>Virtue Ethics—Overview (on Canvas)</i>

		Submit	Reading Response
F	8/28	Join	Live Zoom Discussion (@class time)
M	8/31	Read	"Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals", Immanuel Kant [edited]
		Read	[READING GUIDE] for "Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals", Jordan Baker
		Submit	Reading Response
W	9/2	Read	"Utilitarianism" by J.S. Mill [edited]
		Watch	<i>Two Responses to Virtue Ethics—Overview</i> (on Canvas)
		Submit	Reading Response
F	9/4	Join	Live Zoom Discussion (@class time)
Module 2: Theories of Justice, Society, and Meaningful Work			
M	9/7	Read	"Justice as Fairness: A Restatement" by John Rawls. [Edited for Phil. 244]
		Submit	Reading Response
		Watch	David Philips' "How to Avoid Death by PowerPoint"
W	9/9	Read	"Five Faces of Oppression" by Iris Marion Young [edited]
		Submit	Reading Response
		Watch	<i>Theories of Justice—Overview</i>
F	9/11	Join	Live Zoom Discussion (@class time)
M	9/14	Submit	First Presentation (PowerPoint Practice)
		Read	"Meaningful Work: Rethinking Professional Ethics" by Mike W. Martin [edited]
		Watch	Dan Ariely's "What Makes Us Feel Good About Our Work?"
		Submit	Reading Response
W	9/16	Read	"Just Work" by Russell Muirhead [edited]
		Watch	What is Work?—An Overview
		Submit	Reading Response
F	9/18	Join	Live Zoom Discussion (@class time)
		Note	Ethical Theory Midterm is Available

Module 3: Client Rights and Professional Obligations			
M	9/21	Submit	Ethical Theory Exam
		Read	"What is Stakeholder Theory?" [Edited]
		Submit	Reading Response
W	9/23	Read	Michael D. Bayles, "The Professional—Client Relationship"
		Submit	Reading Response
		Watch	Gordon Kangas' "Giving Presentations Worth Listening To"
F	9/25	Join	Live Zoom Discussion (@class time)
Module 4: Integrity, Loyalty, and Trust			
M	9/28	Read	Chesire Calhoun, "Standing for Something"
		Submit	Reading Response
W	9/30	Read	Ronald Duska, "Whistleblowing and Employee Loyalty"
		Submit	Reading Response
F	10/2	Join	Live Zoom Discussion (@class time)
		Submit	Case Analysis
M	10/5	Read	Sissela Bok's "The Limits of Confidentiality"
		Submit	Reading Response
W	10/7	Read	Alan Donagan, "Justifying Legal Practice in the Adversary System: A Look at Confidentiality"
		Watch	<i>Integrity vs. Loyalty, is Trust the Solution?—an overview of some ideas in Module 4</i>
		Submit	Reading Response
F	10/9	Join	Live Zoom Discussion (@class time)
		Submit	Case Analysis
M	10/12	Read	Joseph Ellin, "Special Professional Morality and the Duty of Veracity"
		Submit	Reading Response
W	10/14	Read	Burton Leiser, "Truth in the Marketplace"
		Submit	Reading Response
F	10/16	Join	Live Zoom Discussion (@class time)

Module 5: Some Professions Considered: Business, Accounting, Medicine, and Journalism			
M	10/19	Submit	Second Presentation (Case Study)
		Read	Richard T. De George, "Ethical Issues for Accountants"
		Submit	Reading Response
W	10/21	Read	Kenneth Arrow, "Social Responsibility and Economic Efficiency"
		Watch	<i>Applied Ethics—An overview</i>
		Submit	Reading Response
F	10/23	Join	Live Zoom Discussion (@class time)
		Submit	Case Analysis
M	10/26	Read	Samuel Gorovitz' "Good Doctors"
		Submit	Reading Response
W	10/28	Read	John Davis' "Conscientious Refusal and a Doctor's Right to Quit"
		Watch	<i>Bioethics—An overview</i>
		Submit	Reading Response
F	10/30	Join	Live Zoom Discussion (@class time)
		Submit	Case Analysis
M	11/2	Read	Carrie Figdor's "Trust Me: News, Credibility Deficits, and Balance"
		Submit	Reading Response
W	11/4	Read	Rachel Smolkin's "Off the Sidelines."
		Submit	Reading Response
F	11/6	Join	Live Zoom Discussion (@class time)
		Submit	Case Analysis
Module 6: Professionals and Social Ethics			
M	11/9	Submit	Final Presentation Outline
		Read	"Altruism: The Intuitive Issue," Thomas Nagel
		Submit	Reading Response
W	11/11	Read	"The Singer Solution to World Poverty", Peter Singer
		Watch	<i>Altruism, Charity, and Responsibility—An overview</i>
		Submit	Reading Response
F	11/13	Join	Live Zoom Discussion (@class time)
		Submit	Case Analysis

M	11/16	Read	Amy Gutmann's "Must Public Policy Be Color Blind?"
		Submit	Reading Response
W	11/18	Read	David Luban's "Lawyers as Upholders of Human Dignity"
		Submit	Reading Response
F	11/20	Join	Live Zoom Discussion (@class time)
		Submit	Case Analysis
Final Module: The Dangers of Elitism, Arrogance, and Ignorance			
M	11/23	Read	"The Inner Ring", C.S. Lewis
		Watch	<i>Ethics, Professions, and Happiness--A Course Wrap-up</i> (canvas)
		Submit	Final Reading Reflection
W	11/25		NO CLASS DAY
	12/2 to 12/9	Exam Week	Final Presentation (due during exam week, exact date TBA)

INTRO TO PHILOSOPHY

Philosophy 101
Spring 2020

DESCRIPTION

Life brings with it some difficult and important questions: “Why am I here?”, “What is worth spending my life pursuing?”, “How can I know what is true?”, “What is right and wrong?”, and many more. Over time, whether we realize it or not, we acquire answers from our parents, our friends, our culture, our nation, our religion, and our own investigations. Philosophy is the academic discipline that (1) teaches us to examine our answers to these questions and (2) attempts through careful reasoning to evaluate them. This class serves as an introduction to the basic methods and questions of western philosophy. It will be structured as a topical survey of some of those fundamental questions. We will read and engage with a variety of philosophic texts (both ancient and contemporary) to learn the skills of philosophical reasoning and then, through discussion and writing, learn how to utilize those skills.

These issues are difficult; and deciding what to think about them is not obvious (at least not to me!). Hence, the class will be run ‘seminar-style’ – emphasizing student involvement and discussion. I will encourage you, through class discussion and written work, to develop your own critical perspective on the material.

REQUIREMENTS AND POLICIES

Participation (10%): Since this class is run seminar style participation is an important part of your grade. Students will be graded both on their verbal participation in class as well as their general engagement with the material. **Do not be shy about sharing your thoughts**; even ideas that seem silly or ill-formed to you may be just what we need to explore further.

Writing (90%):

SHORT PAPERS (55% in total)- Students will write **three papers**. The first is worth **15%** of your final grade, the second and third are worth **20%** each.

TERM PAPER ABSTRACT (10%)- Students will, in late April, turn in an abstract that explains their final paper topic and gives an outline of their argument.

TERM PAPER (25%)– Students will turn in a final term paper that presents an argument of theirs concerning any of the topics we’ve discussed this semester and then defend their argument against potential objections.

REQUIRED TEXTS

I will be providing PDFs of our readings throughout the semester, it is your responsibility to download and carefully read the text before the class period where the that text will be discussed.

READINGS

What is philosophy and where did it come from?

- Plato, *Trial and Death of Socrates*, “Apology”

First question: “What is Good?”

- Aristotle, “Books I and II”, from *Nicomachean Ethics*
- J.S. Mill, “What Utilitarianism Is” from *Utilitarianism*
- Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals* [excerpt]
- Patrick Lin, *Wired*, “The Robot Car of Tomorrow May Just Be Programed to Hit You.” **(Online)**

Second question: “What is True?”

- Bertrand Russell, “Appearance and Reality” from *The Problems of Philosophy*.
- Linda Zagzebski, “Chapter 1” from *On Epistemology*
- Thi Nguyen, “Trust as an Unquestioning Attitude”
- Regina Rini, “Fake News and Partisan Epistemology”

Third question: “What is Beautiful?”

- Denis Dutton, “Aesthetic Universals” from *The Routledge Companion to Aesthetics*, 2nd
- Jennifer A. McMahon, “Beauty” from *The Routledge Companion to Aesthetics*, 2nd ed.
- Thi Nguyen, “The Aesthetics of Rock Climbing” [ONLINE]
- Ian O’Loughlin and Kate McCallum, “The Aesthetics of Theory Selection and the Logics of Art”

Fourth question: “What **‘is’**?”

- Amie L. Thomasson, “Research Problems and Methods in Metaphysics” [excerpt]
- Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *On the Ultimate Origination of Things* [excerpt]
- Peter Van Inwagen, “The Mystery of Metaphysical Freedom” in *Metaphysics: The Big Questions*.
- Harry Frankfurt, “Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person”
- Adrian Bardon, “A Brief History of the Philosophy of Time”
- Albert Einstein, “Relativity” [excerpt]

- Theodore Sider, *Four Dimensionalism: An Ontology of Persistence and Time*, “The Four Dimensional Picture”
- Barbra Montero “What is the Physical?”
- Thomas Nagel, “On Death” from *Mortal Questions*
- Plato, “Phaedo” from *Trial and Death of Socrates*

CONTEMPORARY MORAL PROBLEMS

Philosophy 252
Spring 2020

DESCRIPTION

“What is the right thing to do?” “How should I live a good life?” These two questions are some of the most important and deepest we will ask in our lives. Moral disagreements happen when people give *different answers* to those questions. For example, I might think that it is always wrong to torture people, even if you could get life-saving information from them. You might think that sometimes it is right to torture people, as long as the information we get is worth it. You and I have different answers to the question “what is the right thing to do?,” therefore we have a moral problem. Moral problems happen *whenever* you have groups of people—in culture, in society, or even in families. Since we inevitably face such moral difficulties the question we must ask ourselves is: “how do we discover the correct answer?”

This course aims to do three things: 1) introduce you to the basics of moral reasoning, moral theories, and moral concepts, 2) together investigate several contemporary moral problems and the arguments surrounding them, and finally 3) challenge you to respectfully and rationally articulate, in assignments and discussion, your answers to these moral problems and *why* you believe that they are the correct answers.

The point of this course is **not** to make you a more moral person—I am just a teacher, not a counselor, priest, or family member. Instead, I hope to give you the mental tools to work towards the correct conclusion (whatever it might be) on your own. In other words, this class attempts to increase your *understanding* of the moral landscape. If you take this class seriously, I think this understanding will equip you with tools to become more thoughtful, careful, and charitable in your own moral disagreements. My hope is that this will, in the long run, allow you to flourish as human beings.

REQUIREMENTS AND POLICIES

Engaged Participation (15%): This class is a hybrid- part lecture and part discussion. As such, participation is a crucial element. **Do not be shy about sharing your thoughts**; even ideas that seem silly or ill-formed to you may be just what we need to explore further.

For students who are shy about sharing their thoughts in class, I have an optional reflection journal on our canvas site. Regular updates to this journal that pose questions or critical reflections will be counted as alternative participation.

Writing (90%):

ARGUMENT ANALYSIS PAPERS (55% in total)- Students will write **three papers**. The first and second are worth **15%** of your final grade, and the third are worth **20%**.

TERM PAPER ABSTRACT (10%)- Students will, in late April, turn in an abstract that explains their final paper topic and gives an outline of their argument.

TERM PAPER (25%)– Students will turn in a final term paper that presents an argument of theirs concerning any of the topics or authors we’ve discussed this semester and then defend their argument against potential objections.

REQUIRED TEXTS

I will be providing PDFs of our readings throughout the semester, it is your responsibility to download and carefully read the text **before** the class period where it is assigned.

Moral Theory: Consequentialism, Virtue Ethics, and Kantian Deontology

- Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, [excerpt]
- John Stuart Mill, “What Utilitarianism is,” in *Utilitarianism*, [excerpt]
- Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, [excerpt]

Moral Reasoning

- Tom Regan, “An Introduction to Moral Reasoning”
- John Rawls, “Outline of a Decision Procedure for Ethics”

Obligations to Family and Friends

- Jane English, “What do Grown Children Owe Their Parents?”
- Jessica Isserow, “On Having Bad Persons as Friends”
- Katherine Hawley, “Partiality and Prejudice in Trusting”

Trust, Filter Bubbles, and Fake News

- C. Thi Nguyen, “Echo Chambers and Epistemic Bubbles”
- Regina Rini, “Fake News and Partisan Epistemology”

Pornography and Free Speech

- C. Thi Nguyen & Bekka Williams, “Moral Outrage Porn”
- Catharine A. MacKinnon, “Pornography, Civil Rights, and Speech”

Abortion

- Judith Jarvis Thomson, “A Defense of Abortion,” *Philosophy and Public Affairs*,
- Perry Hendricks, “Even if the Fetus is Not a Person Abortion is Immoral—The Impairment Argument”

Animal Ethics and Ethical Consumption

- Allister Norcross, “Puppies, Pigs, and People: Eating Meat and Marginal Cases”
- Mary Ann Warren, “Human and Animal Rights Compared”

Global Poverty

- Peter Singer, “Famine, Affluence, and Morality”
- Onora O’Neill, “A Kantian Approach to World Hunger”

Social Groups, Sexism, and Oppression

- Iris Marion Young, “Five Faces of Oppression”
- Marilyn Frye, “Oppression” from *The Politics of Reality*
- C. Thi Nguyen & Matthew Sthrol “Cultural Appropriation and The Intimacy of Groups”

Justice: An Introduction

- John Rawls, “Justice as Fairness: A Restatement” [excerpt]
- Norman Daniels, “Justice, Health, and Health Care”
- Stefan Bernard Baumrin, “Why There is No Right to Health Care”

Justice: Protest and Civil Disobedience

- John Rawls, “The Justification for Civil Disobedience”
- Martin Luther King, Jr., “Letter from Birmingham Jail”

BIOETHICS

Philosophy 345 (section 008)
Fall 2019

DESCRIPTION

Issues of life, death, and medical care have always been morally loaded. The rapid development of medical technologies in the 21st century—and biological sciences more generally—have pushed these concerns to the forefront of society. We only need to look at the debate currently raging in the United States regarding healthcare to see how moral, legal, and biological issues are closely connected. In response to these developments the field of *bioethics*—unheard of 50 years ago—has developed to think carefully about the issues that arise in these value-laden topics.

Bioethics is a field of applied ethics, this means that it stands with one foot in the abstract theorizing of moral philosophy and the other foot firmly planted in the messy circumstances of the world as we find it. The goal of the bioethicist is to bring these two “worlds” together to better understand how we—as medical professionals, researchers, and fellow citizens—*should act*. Of course, answers are difficult to establish in ethics, but we can make much progress by attempting to *clarify the questions*. A bioethicist’s job is to make it manifestly clear what is morally, legally, and medically at stake in any given case. This understanding can then serve as the basis for informed policymaking, professional standards, and individual choices.

In this class, I ask you to take up the role of bioethicist. To learn how to think carefully about the difficult ethical questions that surround medical practices and the biological sciences. We will start by learning about some particularly useful ethical theories, as well relevant aspects of the legal system, and then move into discussions centered on: the right to care, informed consent, end of life issues, privacy and confidentiality, reproductive health, cultural sensitivity, and medical research. To engage these issues, we will make frequent use of past cases. This course does not presuppose previous experience with philosophy and is aimed at providing skills and outcomes that would benefit those interested in careers in healthcare, research, or public policy.

REQUIRED TEXTS

(1) Jones, Gary E., and Joseph P. Demarco. *Bioethics in Context: Moral, Legal, and Social Perspectives*. Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2016.

(2) I will provide other readings/case studies electronically through Canvas, usually as PDFs.

CLASS REQUIREMENTS

Participation (10%): This class is a hybrid: part lecture and part discussion. As such, participation is a crucial element. **Do not be shy about sharing your thoughts;**

even ideas that seem silly or ill-formed to you may be just what we need to explore further.

EXAM (15%): Following our early discussions about ethical theory and the American legal context, you will take an in-class exam over this material.

WEEKLY CASE ANALYSIS (20%): Most weeks during the semester, you will be asked to engage in a short two-part writing assignment. Detailed instructions and prompts for each week's assignment will be found on Canvas. **The first part should be submitted prior to reading/discussing the material for that week, and thus they are due on Canvas at the start of the week. The second part will include focused reflection on your original thoughts (i.e. what you submit at the start of the week) in light of the particular arguments and discussion from the week's course material and will be due by the end of the week.**

PAPERS (35%)- Twice during the semester, you are required to write a paper over an assigned topic related to the course material. The first paper will ask you to engage the broader concern of justice in the distribution of healthcare resources, and the second will ask you to engage a narrower applied topic *of your choice*.

FINAL CASE STUDY PROJECT (20%): Rather than having a final exam for the course, you will work in groups (typically 4 students) to conduct an ethical analysis of a case *of your choosing* that engages a pressing bioethical issue. Group member may have different (and perhaps dramatically different) views of the issue or conclusions regarding the issue, this assignment requires you to engage in a process of deliberation to identify what seems to be an acceptable consensus in light of these disagreements.

READINGS

Ethical Theory & US Law

- THEORY: Consequentialism, *Chapter 1 (pp. 25-38)*
- THEORY: "Deontology," *Chapter 1 (pp. 38-49)*
- THEORY: "Alternative Approaches," *Chapter 1 (pp. 49-64)*
- LAW: "The US Legal System" Chapter 2 (pp. 73-84)

Justice, Health Care, and Equal Opportunity

- "Justice & the Right to Care," Chapter 3 (pp. 85-98)

Treatment and Beneficence

- "The Duty to Treat," Chapter 4

- Dan Brock, “Conscientious Refusal by Physicians and Pharmacists: Who is obligated to do what, and why?” (**PDF**)

Informed Consent and Patient Autonomy

- “Informed Consent,” Chapter 5
- “Informed Refusal and Discontinuing Treatment,” Chapter 6

Cultural Difference and Medical Communication

- “Cultural Competency,” Chapter 9

Privacy, Confidentiality and Trust

- “Privacy and Confidentiality,” Chapter 8

Moral Status, Research, and Reproduction

- “Issues in Human Reproduction,” Chapter 10
- “Animal Research,” from *The Unheeded Cry*
- “Medical Research,” Chapter 12

Mental Illness, Organ Transplants, and other Institutional Exceptions

- “Mental Illness,” Chapter 11
- “Transplantation Ethics,” Chapter 13

Professional Responsibility

Philosophy 244 (section 20)
Fall, 2019

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Should you always “do your job”? Should doctors ever lie to their patients? Should you always expose problematic or harmful activities within your, or other, companies? How you answer these questions depends on how you understand the role ethics plays within the workplace. Moreover, we can ask, are some answers better than others? To engage with these questions is to consider these issues from a philosophical perspective. That is what we will do in this course. We will start with some discussions about work and values, and then engage with four ethical views that can help in addressing questions of values in the workplace. We will then spend the remainder of the semester looking at various examples of ethical issues within a variety of professions. Through our discussions, we will figure out both what others have to say on these matters, but what we ourselves believe.

The general aim of this course is to introduce some issues that occur at the intersection of professional life and morality, it also fulfills the “Oral Communication” requirement, as such many of your assignments will involve presentations to the class. This course, like all philosophy courses, will challenge and cultivate your ability to read, write, think, and speak. We will assume for the purposes of this course that equally intelligent, well-meaning people can sincerely disagree about questions of right and wrong, and we will endeavor to understand how we as members of a pluralistic society can do so in helpful and responsible ways.

REQUIRED TEXT:

- (1) Martin, Vaught, Solomon, eds. *Ethics Across the Professions* (copies are available at the UTK bookstore).
- (2) Additional PDF readings will be posted to Canvas.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

ETHICAL THEORY EXAM (15%): Following our early discussions about values in the workplace and moral theory, you will take an in-class exam over this material, as it is central for thinking about various issues later in the course and developing your own understanding of professional responsibility.

CASE-STUDY PRESENTATIONS (35%): Three times during the semester, you will be required to make a presentation to the class that offers a moral argument for how to properly respond to a given case.

GROUP PRESENTATION (15%): Early in the semester you will be placed into a group with the aim of, by the end of the semester as a group, developing a case study that you can use to critically discuss the Code of Professional Conduct for a particular profession.

DAILY READING QUIZZES (10%): To help facilitate discussion and to make sure that everyone is coming to class having spent time with the reading for the day, **starting after the moral theory exam there will be an extremely short reading quiz for each class on the course's Canvas site that must be completed prior to the start of class.**

TAKE-HOME FINAL (15%): There will be no final exam in this course, as you will instead have a **take-home final where you will be required to write at least 800 words offering a moral analysis of a particular case that I will provide you with (basically, a written version of the case-study presentations).**

PARTICIPATION (10%): The remaining **10%** of your grade will be determined by course participation.

Readings:

Values, Professional Roles, and Ethical Theory

- Susan Wolf, “The Meaning of Lives” **(PDF)**
- Mike Martin, “Meaningful Work” **(PDF)**
- J. S. Mill, “*From Utilitarianism* (pp. 82-86)
- Immanuel Kant, “The Metaphysics of Morals . . .” (pp. 69-76)
- Aristotle, “On the Good Life” (pp. 54-57)

Client Rights and Professional Obligations

- Michael, Bayles, “The Professional-Client Relationship (pp. 97-105)
- Moneroe Freedman, “Solicitation of Clients” (pp. 118-129)
- Julie Cantor & Ken Baum, “The Limits of Conscientious . . .” (pp. 130-135)

Truth, Lies, and Deception

- Joseph Ellin, “Special Professional Morality and the . . .” (pp. 166-175)
- Sissela Bok, “Lying and Lies to the Sick and Dying (pp. 181-192)

Privacy, Secrecy, and Trust

- Mary Beth Armstrong, “Confidentiality” (pp. 227-234)
- Alan Donagan, “Justifying Legal Practice in the . . .” (pp. 253-259)
- Burton Leiser, “Truth in the Marketplace” (pp. 213-221)

Integrity and Loyalty

- Ronald Duska, “Whistleblowing and Employee Loyalty” (pp. 294-298)
- Chesire Calhoun, “Standing for Something” (pp. 301-304)

Justice, and Social Responsibility

- “Conceptions of Justice” (pp. 375-382)
- Kenneth Arrow, “Social Responsibility . . .” (pp. 382-386)
- Peter Singer, “What Should a Billionaire Give . . .” (pp. 352-359)
- Rachel Smolkin, “Off the Sidelines” (pp. 369-373)

Conflicts of Interest and Government Regulation

- Richard T. De George, “Ethical Issues for Accountants” (pp. 398-400)
- David Orentlicher & Lois Snyder, “Can Assisted Suicide . . .” (pp. 417- 422)

ISSUES IN PHILOSOPHY OF ACTION

Philosophy 500

Spring 20xx

DESCRIPTION

A person is subject to many events, some of those events are actions of hers, while others are not. My raising my arm, giving a lecture, and playing piano are all actions of mine, while my tripping over a log, dozing off while reading, and sneezing are not. What is it, then, that *makes* an event count as an action?

This is one of the most fundamental questions in philosophy of action and, as simple as it seems, a *host* of other issues depend on how we decide to answer. Issues of metaphysical freedom, the nature of agents/agency, moral responsibility, and control *all* depend on our understanding of action. As such, philosophy of action is a uniquely situated sub-discipline of metaphysics that investigates the *intersection* of issues that span traditional metaphysics, philosophy of science, value theory, and ethics.

This course serves as an advanced introduction to the issues and question of philosophy of action; broadly construed. We will start by framing the development of contemporary philosophy of action and then proceed to explore several diverse topics. Of course, for a discipline as broad and interconnected as philosophy of action we cannot hope to be comprehensive; but we will develop a solid understanding of the most central questions, with a special eye to how debates concerning freedom and responsibility are connected to debates concerning causal or noncausal rational explanation.

READINGS

Historical Precedents for Contemporary Philosophy of Action

- Sadis, “One Fell Swoop” *Journal of the Philosophy of History*.
- D’Ora and Sadis, “From Anticausalism to Causalism and Back” in *Reasons and Causes: Causalism and Anticausalism in Philosophy of Action*.
- Anscombe, *Intentions* [excerpts]
- Meldin, *Free Action* [excerpts]
- Davidson, “Reasons and Causes”

Causalism vs. Noncausalism

- Ginet. “In Defense of a Non-Causal Account of Reasons Explanations.”
 - “Reason Explanation: Further Defense of a Non-causal Account.”
- Clarke, “Because she wanted to”
- McCann, *The Works of Agency* [excerpts]
- Sehon. “Deviant Causal Chains and the Irreducibility of Teleological Explanation.”
- Mele. “Teleological Explanations of Action: Anticausalism vs Causalism”

Free Action

- Van Inwagen, *An Essay on Free Will* [excerpts]
- Kane, *The Significance of Free Will* [excerpts]
- Pereboom. *Free Will, Agency, and Meaning in Life*. [excerpts]
- Fischer, “Semi-compatibilism”
- O’Connor “Freedom with a Human Face”
- Palmer. *Libertarian Free Will: Contemporary Debates* [excerpts]

Issues of Responsibility

- Watson “Free Will and the Concept of a Person”
 - *Agency and Answerability: Selected Essays* [excerpts]
- Wolf. “Responsibility, Moral and Otherwise”
 - “Character and Responsibility”
- Sartorio. *Causation and Free Will* [excerpts]
- McKenna. “Free Will Debate and Basic Desert”
 - “Further Reflections on The Free Will Debate and Basic Desert: A Reply to Nelkin and Pereboom.”
- Nelkin. “Desert, Free Will, and Our Moral Responsibility”

METAPHYSICS OF NATURE

Philosophy 450

Spring 20xx

DESCRIPTION

Most of the time we move through life thinking that we understand the world and our place within it. Questions such as, “What is the world *really* like?” never cross our mind. Scientific discoveries, however, often challenge the commonsense features of our experience leaving our understanding of the world unsettled. Questions like “What are actions?” “Do we have free will?” “Am I nothing over and above my body?” “What is time?” have all been touched on by our scientific methods in ways that are often unexpected and perhaps disorientating. Wilfred Sellars famously called this a tension between the “manifest image” of ourselves and the “scientific image.” What are we then to make of this apparent conflict? Must one image “win” over the other or can we find a way to resolve the tension peaceably?

In this class we will explore the metaphysical foundation of important, yet scientifically contested, concepts that inform our experience of the world around us. We will do this with an eye towards using the resources of *philosophy* to clarify the following two questions: “what is at stake in these apparent conflicts?” and “can these conflicts be resolved?” This will, I hope, allow us to more deeply appreciate the interconnectedness of metaphysical and scientific questions. These issues are difficult; and deciding what to think about them is not obvious (at least not to me!). Hence, the class will be run ‘seminar-style’ – emphasizing student involvement and discussion. I will encourage you, through class discussion and written work, to develop your own critical perspective on the material.

READINGS

Metaphysics and Methodology

- Amie L. Thomasson “Research Problems and Methods in Metaphysics”
- E.J. Lowe, *A Survey of Metaphysics* [excerpt]
- James Ladyman, Ross, *Everything Must Go* [excerpt]
- Wilfred Sellars, “Philosophy and the Scientific Image of Man ”

Minds, Brains, and Neuroscience

- Jaegwon Kim, “Introduction” from *Philosophy of Mind*
- Tylor Burge, “Modest Dualism”
- Philip Goff, “Grounding, Essence, and the Knowledge Argument”
- Berit Brogaard, “The Status of Consciousness in Nature”

Agency, Actions, and Psychology: Causalism vs Non-causalism

- Donald Davidson, “Actions, Reasons, and Causes”
- Scott Sehon, “The Causal Theory of Action and the Commitments of Common Sense Psychology”

- Alfred Mele, “Teleological Explanations of Actions: Anticausalism versus Causalism”
- Carl Ginet, “In Defense of a Non-Causal Account of Reasons Explanations.”

Agency, Action, and Psychology: The Problem of Free Will

- Robert Kane, “Libertarianism” in *Four Views on Free Will*
- John Martin Fischer, “Compatibilism” in *Four Views on Free Will*
- Benjamin Libet, “Do We Have Free Will?”
- Alfred Mele, “Libet on Free Will: Readiness Potentials, Decisions, and Awareness”
- Peter Van Inwagen “The Mystery of Metaphysical Freedom”
- Timothy O’Connor, “Freedom with a Human Face”

Emergent Properties and the Special Sciences

- Brain P. McLaughlin, “The Rise and Fall of British Emergentism”
- David Chalmers, “Strong and Weak Emergence”
- Elanor Taylor, “Collapsing Emergence”
- Umut Baysan and Jessica Wilson, “Must Strong Emergence Collapse?”

Fundamental Properties and the Laws of Nature

- Alexander Bird, “The Dispositionalist Conception of Laws”
- Angelo Cei and Steven French, “Getting Away From Governance: Structuralist Approach to Laws and Symmetries”
- Barbra Montero “What is the Physical?”
- Tim Maudlin, “Distilling Metaphysics from Quantum Physics”

Physics and the Arrow of Time

- Adrian Bardon, “A Brief History of the Philosophy of Time”
- Albert Einstein, “Relativity” [excerpt]
- J. M. E. McTaggart, “The Unreality of Time”
- Craig Callender, “Shedding Light on Time”
- Craig Callender, “Time Lost, Time Regained”

ETHICAL NATURALISM(S)

Philosophy 450/550

Spring 20xx

DESCRIPTION

The thought, often attributed to David Hume, that “facts” and “values” are metaphysically distinct set the research agenda for much of ethics in western analytic philosophy. Since the first half of the 20th century, however, there has been a sustained challenge to this thought. The constellation of views that have raised this challenge sometimes goes by the name “ethical naturalism,” which broadly captures all theories that try to explain ethics by appealing to natural facts. Unfortunately, the label “naturalism” can be used to describe a wide range of views, including (i.) views that reduce ethical content to “purely physical” facts, and (ii.) views that claim that values and norms are, in themselves, part of the natural world. Under some definitions, the scope of “ethical naturalism” excludes *only* those views that appeal directly to *un-natural* or *super-natural* explanations (such as divine commands, Platonic forms, or Moorean simples).

In this course, we will *begin* to chart a path through this complex theoretical territory by looking more closely at theories like (ii.)—that is, views that claim values are themselves features of the natural world. One intriguing feature of these views is that they often interact with related topics in metaphysics and philosophy of mind. As such, we will divide the course into three main parts: (1.) we will examine the underlying issues in 20th century meta-ethics, which set the stage for the development of ethical naturalism; (2.) we will take a detour into philosophy of mind to consider how ethical naturalism might be metaphysically grounded; and (3.) we will examine, in detail, various attempts to craft a plausible naturalistic ethical theory, paying special attention to neo-Aristotelian efforts. Finally, as an addendum, (4.) we will consider two objections to ethical naturalism in general—ideological critique and the “pragmatic” objection.

These issues are difficult; and deciding what to think about them is not obvious (at least not to me!). Hence, the class will be run ‘seminar-style’—emphasizing student involvement and discussion. I will encourage you to develop your own critical perspective on the material through class discussion and written work.

REQUIRED TEXTS

In this course we will be reading both classic and contemporary texts to explore our topic. You are required to purchase two texts:

- (1.) Bernard Williams, *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*
- (2.) Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*.

I will be providing PDFs of all additional readings which can be accessed through our Canvas site throughout the semester.

READINGS

I. Background: 20th Century Meta-ethics—Positivism, Empiricism, and Reduction

- Williams, *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*
- Moore, *Principia Ethica* [Chapters 1 and 2]
- Mackie, *Inventing Right and Wrong* [excerpts]
- Anscombe, “On Brute Facts”
- Putnam, “Bernard Williams and the Absolute Conception of the World” in *Renewing Philosophy*
- Quine, “Two Dogmas of Empiricism”
- Putnam, *The Collapse of the Fact-Value Dichotomy*
- Foot, “Moral Beliefs”
- Foot, “Moral Arguments”
- Anscombe, “Practical Inference”

II. Metaphysics of Ethical Naturalism: Mind, Value, and Darwinian Dilemmas

- Street, “A Darwinian Dilemma for Realist Theories of Value”
- FitzPatrick, “Debunking Evolutionary Debunking of Ethical Realism”
- Chalmers, “Facing up to the Problem of Consciousness”
- Montero, “Post-Physicalism”
- Burge, “Cartesian Error and the Objectivity of Perception”
- Burge, “Self and Constitutive Norms”.
- Kitcher, “Two Normative Roles for Self-Consciousness

III. Ethical Naturalism(s)

- Railton, “Moral Realism”
- Foot, *Natural Goodness*
- Thompson, “The Representation of Life”
- Lawrence, “Human Good and Human Function”
- Lawrence, “The Rationality of Morality”
- McDowell, “Two Sorts of Naturalism”

IV. “Do we even need to do this?”: On Ideology and the Pragmatic Objection

- Haslanger, “Ideology, Generics, and Common Ground”
- Haslanger, “The Normal, The Natural, and the Good: Generics and Ideology”
- Rawls, “The Independence of Moral Theory”
- Rawls, “Outline of a Decision Procedure for Ethics
- Anscombe, “Modern Moral Philosophy”

Teaching Awards, Certificates, and Service

- (1) *John Hardwig Excellence in Teaching Award* (2019)
- (2) Ethics Bowl Volunteer—Judge, high school liaison, moderator, general volunteer: (2016-2020)
- (3) *Best Practices in Teaching Certificate* (Spring, 2013)