

PHILOSOPHY 190, ETHICS AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Ethics and Star Trek

1. Understand the historical and philosophical bases of ethical decision-making and social responsibility.

Students will study ethical decision-making and social responsibility by examining ethical theories from Socrates through 20th century philosophers, such as Jean Paul Sartre. They will explicitly learn the major theories of ethics: Virtue ethics, Deontology, and Utilitarianism, theories that provide the bases for ethical decision-making and social responsibility. They will demonstrate this understanding through their written work and oral discussion in small groups.

2. Use independent thinking, critical analysis, and reasoned inquiry when assessing personal, professional, and society issues

Students will learn to use these skills by studying fallacies, which they will then identify in a Star Trek episode and/or a philosophical reading. Once they identify a fallacy, they are required to explain how it occurs in the episode and/or reading. They will also use independent thinking, critical analysis, and reasoned inquiry in small group discussion and in their three required papers. It is also expected that they display these skills in class participation.

3. Demonstrate the ability to make personal and professional decisions by applying knowledge and skills obtained from the study of ethics and theories of social responsibility

Students are required to do 8 hours of volunteer work at a local non-profit organization, such as Habitat for Humanity, the Humane Society, a soup kitchen, or a nursing home. They will have to write a short paper about their experiences.

4. Articulate how their ethical framework and understanding of social responsibility shape their actions.

Half of each paper a student submits must discuss how the topic they have chosen affects them personally. Thus, if the student is writing about justice, they must discuss how their understanding of justice has or will influence their actions.

Dr. Judith Barad

Syllabus
Phil 190, Ethics and Star Trek

GENERAL DESCRIPTION AND APPROACH

This Foundational Studies course in the Ethics and Social Responsibility category is an introduction to some classical ethical theories. It is unique in that the discussion of these theories is linked to *Star Trek* episodes from the first four series to motivate, illuminate, and elucidate traditional ethical topics. By studying the elements of the *Star Trek* universe, we can better appreciate our own world and the presuppositions which govern it. Most people are so close to the conceptual presuppositions of their culture that they cannot see them. The highest virtue of science fiction genre lies in its capacity to vividly bring to life alternative worldviews and thus to provide us with the conceptual distance which we need in order to more accurately and more deeply understand ourselves. By showing us our ethical presuppositions and the philosophical bases of ethical decision-making and social responsibility **(LO 1)**, the course will emphasize critical thinking objectives. **(FSO 2)** It will help us to examine our own beliefs and values, which shape our actions. **(LO 4, FSO 8)** Attentive viewing of a *Star Trek* episode compels us to examine ethical concepts that our ordinary presuppositions would otherwise dismiss. In this course we will study competing ethical theories, issues of justice, and the relation between religion and ethics. We will study these ethical topics, in part, by examining episodes from *Star Trek* and by considering how those episodes provide us with the vision and understanding we need in order to make better ethical decisions and be more socially responsible. During this course, students should foster in themselves that pattern of thought which reflects and incorporates an appreciation of how ethical principles can apply to our everyday lives and advance our understanding of ethical issues

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Understand the historical and philosophical bases of ethical decision-making and social responsibility;
- Use independent thinking, critical analysis, and reasoned inquiry when assessing personal, professional, and societal issues;
- Demonstrate the ability to make personal and professional decisions by applying knowledge and skills obtained from the study of ethics and theories of social responsibility; and
- Articulate how their ethical framework and understanding of social responsibility shape their actions.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES OF THE FOUNDATIONAL STUDIES PROGRAM

- Critically evaluate the ideas of others;
- Apply knowledge and skills within and across the fundamental ways of knowing;
- Demonstrate the skills for effective citizenship and stewardship;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the ethical implications of decisions and actions;
- Express themselves effectively, professional, and persuasively both orally and in writing.

SKILL AND LEARNING REQUIREMENTS

Every Foundational Studies designated course must assist students in developing and improving their critical thinking, information literacy, and written communication skills. In this course, you will complete assignments that will help you to develop these skills through your quizzes, papers, midterm paper, final paper, as well as in oral participation. For the midterm paper and the final paper you will have the opportunity to write drafts of each paper, receive feedback, make changes, and submit a final draft. In regard to information literacy, there are suggestions for further reading at the end of each chapter. In regard to critical thinking, students will be taught to actively and skillfully conceptualize, apply, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information generated by observation, experience, reflection, reasoning or communication as a guide to belief and action. As a course in the Ethics and Social Responsibility category, students will also **apply what they are learning to real world scenarios**. Students will also have **opportunities for experiential learning or community engagement**.

APPLICATION: The assignments in Philosophy 190 (readings, discussions, and papers) will allow you to meet these goals as well as the specific goals of the class. The readings and Star Trek episodes course will help you understand the historical and philosophical bases of ethical decision-making and social responsibility. **(LO 1)**. Discussions and other class activities will help you use independent thinking, critical analysis, and reasoned inquiry when assessing personal, professional, and societal issues. **(LO 2)** The required writing will allow you to demonstrate your ability to make personal and professional decisions by applying knowledge and skills obtained from the study of ethics and theories of social responsibility **(FO 3)**. The writing will also help you articulate how an ethical framework and understanding of social responsibility shapes one's actions. **(FO 4)** The most general goal, however, is to allow the readings and discussion to expand your ideas, to challenge your thinking, to create new experiences, to enlarge your perceptions, and to enrich your life. **(FS Syllabus)**

FUTHER INFORMATION: For information about the Foundational Studies program—specifically the “Sycamore Standard,” academic freedom and the rights and

responsibilities of students with disabilities—consult the Foundational Studies website (<http://www.indstate.edu/gened/newfoundationalstudiesprogram.htm>) (FS Syllabus)

COURSE CONTENT

TEXTBOOKS

The Ethics of Star Trek by Judith Barad (Harper-Collins)

Prof pack available at Goetz Printing Center, 16 S. 9th Street (on the southwest corner of Wabash and 9th)

OFFICE HOURS AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Office: Root Hall, A-138C Email: Judith.Barad@indstate.edu

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday—8:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Office Phone: 237-3102. You should call me with any questions you have about our class work, assignments or personal concerns about your progress in the course. If I am not in my office, please leave your name, telephone number and the best time to reach you.

TEACHING METHOD

This is a lecture course in which participation is expected. Your communication skills will be sharpened by using **independent thinking, critical analysis, and reasoned inquiry when you explain your oral responses.** (L02) I encourage intelligent and lively, well-supported debates. Be sure to complete the assigned reading prior to each class; otherwise, you will be unable to take effective notes and enter into discussion. The lectures and reading material are designed to complement each other **(FS Syllabus).**

CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

The Code of Student Conduct insists that all students are expected to maintain professional behavior, which includes the highest standards of integrity and honesty. The following are example of academic dishonesty: Plagiarism, Cheating, Fraud, Using another person's material as one's own; Knowingly allowing another person to use one's work or signature as his/her own. Students risk course failure if there is any violation of this code **(FS Syllabus).**

TARDINESS

Generally, tardiness is a form of disrespect for the people waiting for you. When you enroll in this course, you must arrive at or before the time when class begins, unless you have a good reason for being late. My respect for you also requires me to arrive on time. Additionally, my respect for you entails that I end class no later than when it's supposed to end. Although occasionally people may have a good reason to be late, I take perpetual tardiness very seriously. If there are specific circumstances that may make you late on a regular basis, please let me know about it.

LAPTOP POLICY: Laptops are permitted only for note-taking purposes (**FS Syllabus**)

CLASS ATMOSPHERE

Any true discussion involves personal exposure and thus risk-taking. Your ideas may not conform to your neighbors'. However, as long as your points are honest and supportable, they need to be respected by everyone in the classroom. Encouragement, questions, discussion and laughter are a part of this class, but ridicule is never allowable.

The following intellectual virtues will be encouraged (**LO 1, 2, 3, 4; FSO 5,8, SALRS**):

Intellectual Humility: Having a consciousness of the limits of one's knowledge, sensitivity to bias, prejudice, and the limitations of one's viewpoint. Intellectual humility depends on recognizing that one should not claim more than one actually knows. It does not imply spinelessness or submissiveness. It implies a lack of intellectual pretentiousness, boastfulness, or conceit, combined with insight into the logical foundations, or lack of such foundations, of one's beliefs.

Intellectual Empathy: Having a consciousness of the need to imaginatively put oneself in the place of others in order to genuinely understand them, which requires the consciousness of our tendency to identify truth with our immediate perceptions of long-standing thought or belief. This trait correlates with the ability to reconstruct accurately the worldviews and reasoning of others and to reason from premises and ideas other than one's own. This trait also correlates with the willingness to remember occasions when we were wrong in the past despite an intense conviction that we were right, and with the ability to imagine our being similarly deceived in the present.

Faith in Reason: Confidence that, in the long run, one's own higher interests and those of humankind of large will be best served by giving the freest play to reason, by encouraging people to come to their own conclusions by developing their own rational faculties; faith that, with proper encouragement and cultivation, people can learn to think for themselves, to form rational worldviews, draw reasonable conclusions, think coherently and logically, persuade each other by reason and become reasonable persons, despite the deep-seated obstacles in their cultures.

Fairmindedness: Having a consciousness of the need to treat all worldviews alike, without reference to one's own feelings or vested interests, or the feelings or vested interests of one's friends, community or culture; implies adherence to intellectual standards without reference to one's own advantage or the advantage of one's culture.

EVALUATION AND GRADES (**FS Syllabus**)

1. You will be expected to participate in class discussion and raise questions. (**FSO 2**) It must be noted that one cannot participate unless one attends class. Thus, attendance is mandatory. If you have three unexcused absences, your grade will be lowered by one full letter. Five unexcused absences warrant automatic failure. An absence is excused if I am informed of your absence at least half an hour **before** class, either by phone or email. Please **do not** hand me written excuses after an absence. If you are absent, you are responsible for obtaining class information (**FS Syllabus**).

2. There will be one logic quiz in which you will be expected to detect fallacies in a reading and/or an episode. This will be an open-book quiz, but the time allotted for the quiz will be limited. By detecting fallacies in reading and film, **this exercise will explicitly develop your critical thinking skills(LO 2, FSO 2, 10)**
3. Students are required to hand in three typewritten papers, following the topics and format that I give you. These papers will **apply what you are learning to real world scenarios**. The first two papers must be **at least** three pages long and the final paper must be **at least** five pages long **(LO 1, 2, 3 and 4, FSO 2, 3, 5, 8 and 10, SALRS)**.
4. You are required to do eight hours of volunteer work (see Prof Pack), followed by a one page paper explaining the experience and expressing empathy for those served. **(SALRS)**
5. Extra credit opportunities will be provided during the first two-thirds of the course. You will receive .3 for writing an extra credit paper that is a minimum of 3 pages in length. The paper must be at least "C" quality. You may write as many as 3 extra credit papers, each of which are due a week after the topic is discussed in class. Extra credit (.5 added on to your overall grade) will be given for eight hours of volunteer work (see Prof Pack).
6. Following the viewing of an episode, you will gather in a small group to apply the reading to the episode. Generally, the small group you are assigned to will remain the same throughout the semester. Consider such questions as how the reading pertains to the episode, whether any ethical issues portrayed in the episode were neglected by the reading, how the episode brings up ethical dilemmas that we may face in our daily lives. **(LO 2, 3, FSO 8)**
7. If you keep up with the readings, follow the written instruction on the papers and take responsibility for attendance in class, you should receive a passing grade in this course. If you have trouble with the readings, please see me.
8. I reserve the right to adjust and/or revise the daily assignments when appropriate to course progress. I will inform you of the adjustments when they occur and you will be expected to revise your copy of the syllabus accordingly.
9. Late Policy: The first two papers may be turned in late, but the grade will be reduced on letter grade for each class they are not turned in. If you final paper is late, it will be graded down two full letter grades. For example, if the paper would have been an "A," it will be adjusted to a "C"; if it would have been a "C" paper, it will become an "F."

10. Grading will be as follows:

Quiz	14%
Volunteer Work	5%
Paper on Ethics	20%
Paper on Metaphysics	20%
Final Paper	30%
Participation	11%

Grade Chart

A+ = 4.2	A = 4.0	A- = 3.7
B+ = 3.3	B = 3.0	B- = 2.7
C+ = 2.3	C = 2.0	C- = 1.7
D+ = 1.3	D = 1.0	D- = .7

To determine your grade:

- Find the numerical grade your letter corresponds to.
- Multiply that grade by the percentage it is worth of your oval grade. For example, if you receive a "B" on your quiz, multiply the 16% it is worth of your overall grade by 3, as found on the grade chart. You will have earned .48.
- Add up your grades using the same process for each grade. The total will determine what letter grade you will receive according to the grade chart.
- A missed assignment will subtract points from your overall grade.
- Late Policy:** The first two papers may be turned in late, but the grade will be lowered by half a letter grade for each class it has not been submitted. If your final paper is late, it will be graded down two full letter grades. For example, if it is an 'A' paper, it will be adjusted to a 'C' grade, if a 'C' paper it will become an 'F' and if a 'D' it will be graded below an 'F.' No late extra credit papers will be accepted

COURSE OUTLINE

Phil 190, The Philosophy of Star Trek

Each reading is followed by an episode that illustrates the ideas and principles in the reading.

TOS = The Original Series TNG = The Next Generation DS9 = Deep Space Nine V= Voyager

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| August | 23 Introduction to the course |
| | 28 Ethical Underpinnings
Logic: Introduction in Prof Pack (LO 2, FSO 2) |
| | 30 "I, Mudd" (TOS) (LO 2, 3 FSO 8) |
| September | 4 Plato: The Apology in Prof Pack; This reading shows us Socrates standing up for his ethical principles (LO 1, 3, FSO 2, 5, 8) |
| | 6 "Distant Origin" (Voyager) (LO 2, 3 FSO 8) |
| | 11 Quiz (LO 2 FSO 2, 10) and explanation of papers (prof pack) |
| | 13 Cultural Relativism, <i>The Ethics of Star Trek</i> , pp. 3-23 (LO 1, 2, FSO 2, 3, 5, 6, and 8) |
| | 18 "The Cost of Living" (TNG) (LO 2, 3 FSO 8) |
| | 20 <i>The Ethics of Star Trek</i> , Religion and Ethics, pp. 25-38 (LO1, 2, FSO 2) |
| | 25 "Accession" (Deep Space 9) (LO 2, 3 FSO 8) |
| | 27 Justice, <i>The Ethics of Star Trek</i> , pp. 41- 63 (LO 1, 2, FSO 2, 3, 5 and 8). |
| October | 2 "The Savage Curtain" (TOS) (LO 2, 3 FSO 8) |
| | 4 <i>The Ethics of Star Trek</i> , pp. 64-73; Plato: Allegory of the Cave (prof pack) (LO 1, 2, 3, 4, FSO 2, 5, 8) |
| | 9 Paper due (LO 1, 2, 3 and 4, FSO 2, 3, 5, 8 and 10, SALRS) : "Concerning Flight" (V) (LO 2, 3 FSO 8) |
| | 11 <i>The Ethics of Star Trek</i> , pp. 96-117; Aristotle, Book II Virtue ethics, (prof pack) (LO 1, 2, 3, 4, FSO 2, 5, 8) |
| | 16 "The Enemy Within (TOS) (LO 2, 3 FSO 8) |
| | 18 <i>The Ethics of Star Trek</i> , Stoic Ethics, pp. 136-148 (LO 1, 2, 3, 4, FSO 2, 5, 8) |
| | 23 <i>The Ethics of Star Trek</i> , Ethical Hedonism, pp. 148-157 (LO 1, 2, 3, 4, FSO 2, 5, 8) |
| | 25 "Let He Who is Without Sin" (Deep Space 9); Epicurus (prof pack) and Epictetus (prof pack) (LO 1, 2, 3, 4, FSO 2, 5, 8) |
| | 30 <i>The Ethics of Star Trek</i> , Christian Ethics, pp. 161-182 (LO 1, 2, 3, 4, FSO 2, 5, 8) |
| November | 1 "And the Children Shall Lead" (TOS) (LO 2, 3 FSO 8) |
| | 6 <i>The Ethics of Star Trek</i> , The Social Contract, pp.183-198 (LO 1, 2, 3, 4, FSO 2, 5, 8) |
| | 13 Paper due (LO 1, 2, 3 and 4, FSO 2, 3, 5, 8 and 10, SALRS) ; "The Nagus" (DS9) |
| | 15 <i>The Ethics of Star Trek</i> , Deontological ethics, pp.207-220 (LO 1, 2, 3, 4, FSO 2, 5, 8) |
| | 20 "I, Borg" (TNG) (LO 2, 3 FSO 8) |
| | 27 <i>The Ethics of Star Trek</i> , Utilitarianism, pp. 271-280 (LO 1, 2, 3, 4, FSO 2, 5, 8) |
| | 29 "The Mark of Gideon" (TOS) (LO 2, 3 FSO 8) |
| December | 4 <i>The Ethics of Star Trek</i> , Existential Ethics, pp. 311-326 (LO 1, 2, 3, 4, FSO 2, 5, 8) |
| | 6 "Conundrum" (TNG) (LO 2, 3 FSO 8) |
| | 13 Finals Week Paper Due (LO 1, 2, 3 and 4, FSO 2, 3, 5, 8 and 10, SALRS). |

Philosophy Paper Requirements

FORM OF PAPER

1. Papers should be typed, double-spaced. Do not skip four lines between paragraphs.

2. Margins should be approximately one inch from all four sides of the paper.
3. The first paragraph should contain the point you are making and the method you will employ to prove your point.
 - a. Mention the philosopher and topic you are writing on.
 - b. State your general view of the philosopher on the issue. For instance, "I mostly agree with (Kant) on . . . although I think his argument about . . . is too weak to merit my support."
 - c. Specify the order in which you will present your paper. For example, "I will first present (Kant's) position on . . . followed by his views of . . . I will then evaluate his arguments and give my own position on this issue. In conclusion, I will indicate the points of agreement and disagreement between (Kant's) view and my own view."
4. A good paragraph should have one central point and its lesser points should be related to the main point. If your paragraphs run a page or more in length, they probably need to be broken up into more coherent units. Each paragraph, other than the introductory paragraph and the concluding one, should consist of the following:
 - a. The point being made;
 - b. A definition(s), if appropriate;
 - c. At least 2 sentences explaining each point;
 - d. An example of the point.
5. If you use a philosophical term make sure its meaning is clear by giving a definition or using an example. Do not use the term "rationalization" without looking it up in a dictionary.
6. Use concrete examples to make your meaning clearer.
7. If you are asked to evaluate, below are some questions you can incorporate into your evaluation. Use a point-by-point refutation or support, building up to an overall evaluation of the theory:
 - a. Is the answer he gives a good one—does it really answer the question? Does he really prove his point?
 - b. Has he met all the objections that might bear the other way?
 - c. Has he overlooked any facts he should have considered?
 - d. Does the answer fit the facts the philosopher is trying to explain?
 - e. Support and justify with evidence and reasons all your contentions about the philosopher's theory as fully as you can.
8. Everything you write in the explanation section should also be found in your evaluation section. Other Material is irrelevant to the topic. On the other hand, do not write anything in the evaluation section that you have not discussed in the explanation section of your paper.
9. Good writers give internal organization to their paragraphs by using transitions such as "also," "in addition," and "moreover." These words indicate that you are introducing information that will expand on a previous point. Expressions like "for instance" and "for example" prepare readers for illustrations and examples. Contrast is indicated by such expressions as "on the one hand . . . on the other hand," "however," "on the contrary," and similar expressions.
10. When you explain the philosopher's arguments, identify each claim he/she is making and the evidence used to support that claim.

11. In a comparison and contrast paper, you should only write on material that can be used to compare and contrast the 2 philosophers you are writing about. That is, everything you write in the explanation section should also be found in your evaluation section and your comparison and contrast section. Other material is irrelevant to the topic. On the other hand, do not write anything in the evaluation section or the comparison and contrast section that you have not explained in the explanation section of your paper.

AVOID

1. Biographical material.
2. Mention of the historical importance of this problem.
3. Quotes over 3 lines long or more than 3 quotes per page. If they are necessary to your paper, put the entire quote in an endnote.
4. Do not write on any reading not contained in the syllabus. If you do not comply, you will receive an 'F' on your paper and will not be allowed to rewrite it. This prohibition includes any readings which are removed from the syllabus during the course of the semester.
5. Repetition.
6. **Plagiarism:** Do not pass off as your own the words of another. If you do not give the author credit by putting his/her words in quotation marks, citing his/her name, and citing the page number of the quote, you will, at the very least, receive an 'F' for the paper. It is more likely that you will receive an 'F' for the class. There is no specific style that is required for citation.

VOLUNTEER PROJECT

When you have completed 8 hours volunteering at Habitat for Humanity, the Humane Society, a soup kitchen or a nursing home, fill out the form provided in the prof pack.

Then write a reflective one page paper, showing empathy, describing how you would feel if you were in the place of one of the subjects you provided service for. That is how would you feel if you were a senior citizen in a nursing home, who is alone with no one to visit you or care about you? How would you feel if you were a dog or cat, who at one time lived with a family that gave you care and attention, but turned you out on the street to fend for yourself when they moved? How would you feel if you were a single mother, abandoned by your husband, who could not afford decent housing for your children? How would you feel if you were often hungry, unable to afford regular meals, and had no place to turn except a soup kitchen?