

Philosophy 303—Ethics and Social Responsibility

Ethics and Animals

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

Students will study the historical bases of ethical decision-making and social responsibility by examining the theories of Descartes (17th century), Kant (18th century), and Mill (19th century). They will understand the major schools of ethical thought, such as deontology and utilitarianism through their readings, class discussion, and response papers. They will see how the various principles in these schools of thought yield different principles that impact our ethical decision-making and social responsibility.

Use independent thinking, critical analysis, and reasoned inquiry when assessing personal, professional, and societal issues

Students will write 12 response papers, as well as a longer midterm and a final paper, all of which require independent thinking, critical analysis, and reasoned inquiry when assessing these issues. In all written assignments, students must not only show that they understand the readings, but half of each paper requires that they display independent thought rather than merely repeat what is contained in the reading or class discussion. When they evaluate the philosopher's arguments, they must use critical analysis and reasoned inquiry. Finally, each paper is designed to make students assess how course material impacts them in their personal and professional lives, as well as how it would affect society.

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

When students volunteer at non-profit organizations that assist animals, they will demonstrate the knowledge and skills that they have learned through their response papers, their midterm and final paper, films, and classroom discussion. Each of their assignments will help them to develop the ability to make personal and professional decisions regarding ethics and theories of social responsibility. Although the focus of the course is the treatment of non-human animals, the theories and principles the students study can be applied to the treatment of any sentient individual.

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

Students will articulate how their actions have been influenced through classroom discussion as well as through their written assignments. It is expected that they will treat both human and non-human animals with more respect and consideration. They will learn to bring their understanding of ethics into their everyday lives, For instance,

their ethical understanding will make them consider how they eat, what they wear, and how they treat wild animals as well as companion animals.

SYLLABUS

GENERAL DESCRIPTION AND APPROACH

In this Foundational Studies course in the Ethics and Social Responsibility category, Students will be made aware of the extent of the relation between human and non-human animals and seriously consider the concept of animal rights. **(LO 1; FSO 5)** In order to vividly display some of these relationships, films will be shown to complement the readings. Students will explore the question whether there is any plausible justification for granting rights to human animals that does not serve as a plausible justification for granting rights to non-human animals. **(LO 2; FSO 2)** Since the exploitation of non-human animals is taken for granted in our society, this course will challenge the student's ordinary, daily assumptions. Hopefully, the course will sensitize the student to the interests of others that do not belong to his/her group. What criteria should be used to determine whether an individual has rights? The examination of these questions should make the student aware that he/she belongs to a larger community than the student had previously supposed. **(LO 3, 4; FSO 5, 8)**

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 303 (readings, discussions, response papers, and longer writing assignments) will allow you to meet these goals as well as the specific goals of the class. The readings for the 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. **(LO 3)**. The writing will also help you articulate how an ethical framework and understanding of social responsibility shapes one's actions. **(LO 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

TEXTBOOK

The Case for Animal Rights by Tom Regan
Animal Rights and Human Obligations, edited by Tom Regan and Peter Singer

OFFICE HOURS AND PHONE

Office: Root Hall A-138C

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 8:00-11:00 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.

Email: judith.barad@indstate.edu

EVALUATION AND GRADES

1. You will be expected to participate in class discussions 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 the professor is informed of the student's absence at least half an hour before class, either by telephone or message. Please do not hand the professor written medical excuses after an absence. If you are absent, you are responsible for obtaining class information.

2. All students are required to hand in two typewritten papers, which **apply what you are learning to real world scenarios. (LO 1, 2, 3 and 4; FSO 2, 3 5, 8 and 10, SALRS)** The midterm paper must be at least 5 pages in length and the final term paper, to be turned in at a specific date during finals week, must be at least 8 pages in length. These papers should adhere to instructions provided on the philosophy paper requirement sheet.

3. Students are required to write a total of 12 response papers. **(LO 1, 2, 3 and 4; FSO 2, 3 5, 8 and 10, SALRS)** Each typed paper should consist of two paragraphs. The first paragraph should elaborate on one of the main points of the reading, displaying your understanding. The second paragraph should explain why you agree or disagree with the philosopher on this point. Use examples drawn from everyday life. If a philosophical term is used, it should be defined. No late response papers will be accepted. However, your lowest two grades on these assignments will be dropped. Thus, if you miss turning in one or two assignments, it would not count in the computation of your overall grade. Missing more than two Assignments will result in points deducted from your overall grade.

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)** You may choose to volunteer at Harmony Haven (535-3819), the Human Society (232-0293) or the Spay –Neuter League (235-6465).

5. You may write a three-page extra credit paper. **(FSO 2, 3, 5, 8, and 10; LO 1, 2, 3, and 4)** As many as three extra credit papers will be accepted, each due within a week after the discussion of a particular paper topic. A paper must be at least "C" quality to receive extra credit. No partial extra credit will be given. (.3 added on to your overall grade for each paper)

6. The professor reserves the right to adjust and or revise the daily syllabus when appropriate to course progress. She will inform you of the adjustments when they occur.

7. **Late Policy.** The midterm paper may be handed in late, but the grade will decrease the later it is returned to the professor. The final paper should not be handed in late. Failure to turn it in on time will result in the grade being lowered by two letter grades. For example, an 'A' paper will become a 'C' and a 'C' will become an 'F.'

8. Grading will be as follows:

Midterm paper (5 page minimum)	20%
Final paper (7 page minimum)	33%
Each response paper (30% altogether)	3%
Volunteer work	5%

Participation	12%
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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:

- a. Find the numerical grade your letter grade corresponds to.
- b. Multiply that grade by the percentage it is worth of your overall grade. For example, a 'B+' on your midterm paper corresponds to 3.3 points. Multiply 3.3 by 20% (the percentage of your overall grade the paper is worth) and you will find you have achieved a total of .66 points for that paper.
- c. Add up all your grades using the same process
- d. a missing assignment will subtract points from your overall grade

COURSE OUTLINE

All readings are from *The Case for Animal Rights*, unless they are marked **ARHO** (*Animal Rights and Human Obligations*). An asterisk signifies that a response paper is due on the reading.

- August**
- 21 Introduction to the course
- 26 Ethical Thinking and Theory, pp. 22-36 This is an overview of major ethical theories and criteria for how to evaluate them. **(LO 1; FSO 2, 8)** When you hear or read a moral argument, ask yourself:
- Have important concepts been analyzed correctly?
 - Does the author/speaker argue from a basis of knowledge of the real-life setting in which a moral question arises?
 - Does the author/speaker observe the rules of logic?
 - Is there a lack of impartiality?
 - Are things argued for in a state of strong emotion?
 - Are the moral principles involved valid ones?

These questions explicitly develop your critical thinking skills.

- 28 Religion and Animals (Film: "We are All Noah") ARHO pp. 1-3; 132-133 * **(LO 4; FSO 5, 6)**
- September**
- 2 Descartes' claim that animals are unconscious machines; the language test, pp. 3-9 **(LO 2, 4; FSO 8)**
- 4 ARHO*, pp. 13-19; 66-72 **(LO 2, 4; FSO 8)**
- 9 Evolution, pp. 18-28 The Cumulative Argument for Animal Consciousness **(LO 1; FSO 3)**
- 11 Consciousness, pp. 28-46 Which Animals are Conscious? **(LO 2, 4; FSO 8)**
- 16 Consciousness, The Complexity of Animal Consciousness, pp. 57-59; 63-71; 73-79 * **(LO 2, 4; FSO 8)**
- 18 Interests, Benefits, and Psychological and Social Needs, pp. 84-94 (Film: Breaking Barriers) **(LO 1,2; FSO 2, 3, 8, 9)**
- 23 Harms and Death, pp. 94-103, 109-116* ARHO 150-152 Harm can be caused by inflictions or deprivations. Is it morally objectionable to kill animals painlessly? **(LO 1, 2, 3, 4; FSO 2, 5, 8)**
- 25 Indirect Duty Views, pp. 150-155; 174-185; 197-193 May we adequately account for the wrongs done to animals without appealing to rights? **(LO 1, 2, 4; FSO 2, 8)**
- 30 Direct Duty Views, pp. 195-206* Cruelty and kindness, utilitarianism **(LO 1, 2, 4; FSO 2, 8)**
- October**
- 2 ARHO, pp. 25-36 **(LO 1, 2, 4; FSO 2, 8)**
- 7 Preference Utilitarianism, ARHO, pp. 73-86 *(**LO 1, 2, 4; FSO 2, 5, 8)**
- 9 Justice, pp. 232-245; 248-250 **(LO 1, 2, 4; FSO 2, 3, 5, 8)**
- 14 Principles and Rights, pp. 258-263; 267-273; 276-280* **(LO 1, 2, 4; FSO 2, 3, 5, 8)**
- 16 Overriding Rights, pp. 286, 307 **(LO 1, 2, 4; FSO 2, 5, 8)**
- 21 Side Effect and Special Considerations, pp. 307-315; 322-325 **(LO 1, 2, 4; FSO 2, 5, 8)**

- 23 **MIDTERM PAPER DUE (FSO 2 and SALRS);** farm animals ARHO, pp. 159-167
- 28 ARHO* pp. 169-175; 183-195 (Film)
- 30 Vegetarianism, pp. 330-349* (**LO 1, 2, 3, 4: FSO 2, 5, 8**)
- November** 4 The Lifeboat, pp. 352-353, Barad handout, "The Dog in the Lifeboat Revisited" (**LO 1, 2; FSO 2, 8**)
- 6 Wild Animals, pp. 353-63 (Film) (**LO 1, 2, 3, 4: FSO 2, 5, 8**)
- 11 ARHO, pp. 256-272* (**LO 1, 2, 3, 4: FSO 2, 5, 8**)
- 13 The Use of Animals in Science, pp. 363-376, pp. 363-376 (**LO 1, 2, 3, 4; FSO 2, 3, 5, 8**)
- 18 ARHO, pp. 197-207* (**LO 1, 2, 3, 4; FSO 2, 3, 5, 8**)
- 20 Science, pp. 376-392 (Film) (**LO 1, 2, 3; FSO 2, 3, 5, 8**)
- 25 ARHO, pp. 209-222 * (**LO 1, 2, 3; FSO 2, 3, 5, 8**)
- December** 2 The Limits of Trooghaft ARHO, pp. 77-80 (**LO 1, 2, 4; FSO 2, 5, 8**)
- 4 Review
- 11 **Final Paper Due (LO 1, 2, 3, 4; FSO 2, 5, 8 and 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.