

The University of Western Ontario  
Department of Philosophy  
2007-8

**Philosophy 303G (001)**  
**NORMATIVE ETHICS**

**Instructor:** Prof. Carolyn McLeod

**Class Days, Hours, Location:** Wed. 1:30-2:30, and Fri. 12:30-2:30; TC340

**Phone:** 519-661-2111 ext. 85877

**Office Hours and Location:** Tuesday 1:30-2:30, Wednesday 2:30-3:30, or by appointment; TC 410

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Students are responsible for following the Philosophy Department procedures included with this outline. On their office doors, instructors, teaching assistants and tutorial leaders will post information regarding the dates, times and locations of tests and review sessions.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** The goals of this course are to improve upon students' skills in deliberating on moral matters and upon their understanding of normative ethical theories. Two of the most influential theories in normative ethics are Kantianism and virtue theory. The course will focus on three questions about these theories: 1) How do they define right action? 2) What do they say about moral motivation? 3) How do they rationally justify moral behaviour? We will critically analyse and compare the two theories based on how well they answer these questions. As a sideline, we will also discuss the nature of different virtues and vices, such as honesty, compassion, integrity, pride, gluttony, and sloth.

**Prerequisites:** Philosophy 201F/G or Philosophy 235F/G or Philosophy 236F/G or Philosophy 241F/G or Philosophy 242F/G. **Antirequisite:** Philosophy 362E (King's).

**REQUIRED TEXTS:** 1) Rosalind Hursthouse's *On Virtue Ethics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); available at the UWO Bookstore; and 2) a coursepack, available at Inprint in the UCC.

**REQUIRED WORK:**

- 1) Oral presentation on a particular virtue or vice, worth 10%
- 2) Essay on your presentation topic, approx. 5 pages, worth 15%
- 3) 8-page essay, worth 25%
- 4) Quizzes (in class), worth 5%
- 5) Participation, worth 10%
- 6) Final examination, worth 35%.

**THIS OUTLINE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE, GIVEN SUFFICIENT PRIOR NOTICE.**

You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course prerequisites and that you have not taken an antirequisite course. Lack of prerequisites may not be used as basis of appeal. If you are not eligible for a course, you may be removed from it at any time and will receive no fee adjustment. These decisions cannot be appealed.

## READING SCHEDULE

On *Virtue Ethics*: VE

CoursePack: CP

Online Readings: OL

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS	ASSIGNMENTS
Jan. 9/11	Introduction to Course	Hursthouse, "Introduction" (VE); Foot, "Virtues and Vices" (CP)	<b>Presentation Sign-up (Fri)</b>
Jan. 16/18	Right Action: Virtue Ethics	Hursthouse, chapters 1 & 2 (VE)	<b>Presentations begin (Wed)</b>
Jan. 23/25	Right Action: Virtue Ethics	Hursthouse, chapters 3 (VE)	
Jan. 30/ Feb. 1	Right Action: Kantian Ethics	Kant, <i>Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals</i> , Chapter II (CP)	
Feb. 6/8	Right Action: Kantian Ethics	Herman, "Obligation and Performance: A Kantian Account of Moral Conflict" (CP)	
Feb. 13/15	Moral Motivation: Virtue Ethics	Hursthouse, chapters 4 (VE)	
Feb. 20/22	Moral Motivation: Virtue Ethics	Hursthouse, chapters 5, 6 & 7 (VE)	
Feb. 27/29	<b>Conference Week</b>		
March 5/7	Moral Motivation: Kantian Ethics	Korsgaard, "From Duty and for the Sake of the Noble: Kant and Aristotle on Morally Good Action" (CP)	
March 12/14	Moral Motivation: Kantian Ethics	Kant, "Doctrine of the Elements of Ethics, Part I ( <i>The Doctrine of Virtue</i> )" (CP)	<b>8-page essay, due (Fri)</b>
March 19/21* <b>*Good Friday</b>	None	None	
March 26/28	Rational Justification: Virtue Ethics	Hursthouse, chapters 8 & 9 (VE)	

	(and some Kantian Ethics)		
April 2/4	Practical Application: Abortion	Hursthouse, "Virtue Theory and Abortion," <i>Philosophy and Public Affairs</i> , 20 (3), 1991: 223-246. (OL);  Feldman, "From Occupied Bodies to Pregnant Persons" (CP)	<b>Presentations end</b>
April 9	None	None	