

Syllabus for PHI 3650: Moral Philosophy
Dr. Molly Gardner
University of Florida, Fall 2020

<p>Lecture: M&W, 1:55 – 2:45 on Zoom (Link will be posted on Canvas.)</p>	<p>Discussions: F 9:35 – 10:25, 11:45 – 12:35, <u>or</u> 12:50 – 1:40 on Zoom (Links will be posted on Canvas.)</p>
<p>Professor Gardner: Office: 313 Griffin-Floyd Hall (But office hours will be held on Zoom this semester.) Office Phone: 352-294-0426 (Calls will be forwarded to my cell phone.) Email: mollygardner@ufl.edu Office Hours: Thursdays 1 – 4 p.m. and by appointment, all by Zoom. (Link will be posted on Canvas.)</p>	<p>Teaching Assistant Mihana Mitchell: Office: 316 Griffin-Floyd Hall (But office hours will be held on Zoom this semester.) Email: mihana.mitchell@ufl.edu Office Hours: Tuesdays 1 – 4 p.m. and by appointment, all by Zoom. (Link will be posted on Canvas.)</p>

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

What do morally wrong actions have in common? What do right and wrong have to do with things that are good and bad? In this course we will explore *normative ethics*, the branch of philosophy that attempts to systematize and explain our moral judgments. The major theories we will consider include ethical egoism, utilitarianism, Kantianism, deontology, and virtue ethics. We will also briefly consider some problems at the intersection of normative ethics and other branches of philosophy, such as *metaethics*, the field that considers where morality comes from and how moral knowledge could be possible; and *practical ethics*, the field that analyzes specific moral issues like climate change and our treatment of nonhuman animals.

COURSE MATERIALS:

You do not need to purchase any required or recommended textbooks for this course. All required and recommended readings will be available on our Canvas website.

COURSE GOALS:

- Better understand some of the central developments in the field of normative ethics
- Improve your ability to read for arguments, reconstruct the arguments you have read, and evaluate the arguments you have reconstructed
- Improve your ability to reason about moral theories, arguments, and issues
- Improve your ability to express yourself in speech and writing with clarity, depth, and precision

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

4 Quizzes: 10 points each, lowest grade dropped (30 points total)	Final Exam: 50 points
2 Papers: 25 points each (50 points total)	Attendance and Participation: 20 points (see chart on next page)
Midterm Exam: 50 points (see note below)	

Total: 200 points

Each quiz will consist of 4 multiple-choice and 3 short-answer questions. The exams will consist of multiple-choice, short-answer, and essay questions. I will post study guides for the quizzes and exams to Canvas. I will also post instructions for writing your papers, which should each be approximately 550 to 650 words.

- **Lowest Quiz Grade Dropped:** Your lowest quiz grade will be dropped.
- **Replacing your Midterm Grade:** If you do better on the final exam than you did on the midterm, your grade for the final exam will replace your original grade for the midterm. For example, if you originally received a 30 on the midterm and then you received a 40 on the final, your updated grade for the midterm will be 40 points.
- **Extra Credit:** You will have the opportunity to get up to 3 extra credit points over the course of the semester. Information about extra credit opportunities will be posted periodically on Canvas.
- **Attendance and Participation:** See chart on next page

DETERMINING YOUR SEMESTER GRADE:

A	186 to 200 points
A-	180 to 185 points
B+	172 to 179 points
B	164 to 171 points
B-	160 to 163 points
C+	152 to 159 points
C	144 to 151 points
C-	140 to 143 points
D+	132 to 139 points
D	124 to 131 points
D-	120 to 123 points
E	0 to 119 points

Please note that your course grade is determined by points, not percentages, and that all points have equal weight, regardless of the assignment. Canvas is sometimes misleading when it tries to calculate your percentage grade for you; if you are in doubt about what your true course grade

is going to be, ***ignore the percentage that Canvas gives you*** and simply calculate the number of points you have and the number of points you can still earn, keeping in mind my policies about dropping your lowest quiz grade and replacing your midterm exam grade with your final exam grade.

UNIVERSITY GRADING POLICIES:

For information on how your grade for this course will be averaged with your grades in other courses at the University of Florida, see the following:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx> . Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION GRADE:

This semester you will be expected to Zoom 27 times with me (during lecture) and 13 times with your teaching assistant (during Friday discussions). This means there are 40 classes total. Four absences (from either lecture, discussion, or both) will be automatically excused, but any additional absences will lower your attendance and participation grade according to the following chart: (Remember that attendance and participation are worth 20 points out of 200 for the semester.)

	Poor participation	Excellent participation
0 absences	18	20
1 absence	18	20
2 absences	18	20
3 absences	18	20
4 absences	18	20
5 absences	15	18
6 absences	14	17
7 absences	13	16
8 absences	12	15
9 absences	11	14
10 or more absences	0 to 10	13

There is almost never a need to email either me or your teaching assistant to have your absences excused. We do not need to know why you were gone. As the chart above illustrates, 4 absences are *automatically* excused no matter what reason you had to be absent, and any additional absences will lower your attendance and participation grade *regardless of your reason for being absent*.

There is one exception to this policy: in a case where at least ***five*** of your absences are justified by what the university deems to be “acceptable reasons,” please email me at mollygardner@ufl.edu and I will consider evaluating you on participation only. Please see the University of Florida’s policy for a list of acceptable reasons:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>. **This exception does**

not apply when fewer than *five* of your absences are for good reasons. For example, if you had good reasons for being absent 4 times but were absent a total of 6 times, then the exception does not apply to you, and your maximum attendance/participation grade is 17 out of 20, as the chart above indicates.

LATE PAPERS, MISSED QUIZZES, OR MISSED EXAM:

- If you miss a quiz deadline, you will receive a 0 for that quiz; there will be no make-up quizzes this semester. (But remember that your lowest quiz grade will be dropped.)
- If you miss the deadline or anticipate that you *will* miss the deadline for the midterm exam, a paper, or the final exam, please send me an email at mollygardner@ufl.edu *as soon as possible*, and I will consider whether to grant you an extension and/or offer you a make-up version of the exam. I reserve the right to deduct between 0 and 10 points from an exam or paper grade for lateness.

WORKING WITH OTHERS:

Although you are free to study for quizzes and exams with other students, your work on the quizzes and exams must be your own. You may also discuss your paper ideas with me, your teaching assistant, or other students. For help brainstorming, formatting, and writing your papers, you are welcome to take drafts of your papers us or to the writing studio.

However, you must ultimately write your papers on your own, and you must cite your sources. Any citation style—MLA, Chicago, APA, or some variation—is acceptable. For information about how to avoid plagiarism, see the handouts I have uploaded to the non-required readings folder on Canvas.

Please note that you can bring me and your TA as many drafts of your papers as you like. However, we do not give *written* feedback on drafts—instead, we will provide you with *oral feedback* only, which means that you must set up a Zoom meeting with us to get feedback.

HONOR CODE:

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code.” On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions; for more information see this page: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>. You are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with me or your TA.

RECORDING OUR ZOOM MEETINGS:

Neither the lectures on Mondays and Wednesdays nor the discussions on Fridays will be

recorded. However, I will upload my PowerPoint slides and various other materials to help you review the course material. As in all courses, unauthorized recording and unauthorized sharing of recorded materials is prohibited.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center:

<https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/> . It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs as early as possible in the semester.

COURSE EVALUATIONS:

You will be asked twice to evaluate the course: once midway through the semester (this is the “midterm” evaluation) and once at the end of the semester (this is the “end-of-semester” evaluation). The midterm evaluation is designed to help me and your teaching assistant address any problems with the course while there is still time for you to benefit from your suggestions; thus, the evaluations will not be shared publicly. The evaluation at the end of the semester will be used for additional purposes and the data will be shared on the University website.

For the official evaluation, you are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback is here: <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. You will be notified when the official evaluation period opens, and you can complete evaluations through the email you receive from GatorEvals, in your Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to you here: <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

ACADEMIC RESOURCES:

- **E-Learning Technical Support:** <http://helpdesk.ufl.edu/> . Contact them via phone at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.
- **Career Connections Center:** Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services, <https://career.ufl.edu/>
- **Library Support:** See <https://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>.
- **Teaching Center:** Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. <https://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>
- **Writing Studio:** 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>
- **Student Complaints On-Campus:** <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-%20code-student-conduct-code/>
- **On-Line Students Complaints:** <https://distance.ufl.edu/getting-help/student-complaint-process/>

HEALTH AND WELLNESS RESOURCES:

- **U Matter, We Care:** If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit <https://umatter.ufl.edu/> to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- **Counseling and Wellness Center:** Call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis and non-crisis services or visit <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>.
- **Student Health Care Center:** Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit <https://shcc.ufl.edu/>.
- **University Police Department:** Go to <https://police.ufl.edu/> or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- **UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center:** For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608. <https://ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-center> .

COURSE SCHEDULE:

This schedule is tentative. Please check Canvas for updates.

Date	What we will do in class	Reading (to be done before class)
8/31/20	Introduction to Moral Philosophy	None
9/2/20	Reasoning about Morality	Boonin & Oddie, "Arguments in general," excerpt 1
9/7/20	Labor Day: No Class	
9/9/20	Reasoning about Morality	Boonin & Oddie, "Arguments in general," excerpt 2
9/14/20	Religion and Morality	Plato, <i>Euthyphro</i> (excerpt)
9/16/20	Classical Utilitarianism	John Stuart Mill, <i>Utilitarianism</i> , excerpt 1
9/21/20	Classical Utilitarianism	John Stuart Mill, <i>Utilitarianism</i> , excerpt 2
9/23/20	Hedonism	Robert Nozick, <i>Anarchy, State, and Utopia</i> (excerpt)
9/28/20	Hedonism	Roger Crisp, "Pleasure is All That Matters"
9/30/20	Contemporary Consequentialism	Alastair Norcross, "Great Harms From Small Benefits Grow: How Death Can Be Outweighed by Headaches"
10/5/20	The Separateness of Persons	John Taurek, "Should the Numbers Count?" (excerpt)
10/7/20	Death	Peter Singer, "What's Wrong with Killing?"
10/12/20	Consequentialism and Climate Change	Walter Sinnott-Armstrong, "It's Not My Fault: Global Warming and Individual Moral Obligations"
10/14/20	Review for Midterm	None
10/19/20	Midterm Exam	None

10/21/20	Kantian Theory	Immanuel Kant, <i>Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals</i> (excerpt 1)
10/26/20	Kantian Theory	Immanuel Kant, <i>Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals</i> (excerpt 2)
10/28/20	Kantian Theory	Christine Korsgaard, "The Right to Lie: Kant on Dealing With Evil"
11/2/20	Rossian Pluralism	W.D. Ross, "What Makes Right Acts Right?"
11/4/20	Contemporary Deontology	Philippa Foot, "The Problem of Abortion and the Doctrine of Double Effect"
11/9/20	Contemporary Deontology	Fiona Woollard, "The New Problem of Numbers in Morality"
11/11/20	Veterans' Day: No Class	
11/16/20	Psychological Egoism	Joel Feinberg, "Psychological Egoism"
11/18/20	Ethical Egoism	Russ Shafer-Landau, "Ethical Egoism"
11/23/20	Virtue Ethics	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> (excerpt)
11/25/20	Thanksgiving Break: No Class	
11/30/20	Virtue Ethics	To Be Determined
12/2/20	Animal Ethics	Peter Singer, "All Animals Are Equal"
12/7/20	Animal Ethics	Tom Regan, "The Case for Animal Rights"
12/9/20	Review for Final Exam	None

The final exam will be available on Canvas from 8 a.m. through 8 p.m. on December 16, 2020. Once you begin taking the exam, you must complete it within two hours.