

Spring 2023

Phil 162: Contemporary Moral Issues (Provisional)

Spring 2023

Instructor

Reuven Brandt

Class time: M, W, F, 1-1:50PM, WLH 2115

Office Hours: Fri. 2:00-4:00PM Ridge Walk Arts and Humanities Bld Room 0497

Email: rbrandt@ucsd.edu (Put Phil 162 in subject line)

Course description:

The aim of the class is to bring philosophical tools to bear on debates about moral issues that are of contemporary importance. Over the course of the quarter students will engage with philosophical literature examining ethical questions that are the subject of current debate. Topics include the status of animals, the permissibility of civil disobedience, conscience clauses in medicine, questions in reproductive medicine including abortion, and debates about the removal of public statues.

Readings (All available on the course website)

	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Week 1	April 3 rd Intro – no readings	April 5 th Singer, Peter. "All animals are equal." (1974).	April 7 th Tom Regan "Utilitarianism, Vegetarianism, and Animal Rights"
Week 2	April 10 th Kagan, Shelly. "What's Wrong with Speciesism?" Journal of Applied Philosophy 33.1 (2016): 1-21.	April 12 th Lefkowitz, "On a Moral Right to Civil Disobedience"	April 14 th Farrell, "Paying the Penalty: Justifiable Civil Disobedience and the Problem of Punishment"
Week 3	April 17 th Brownlee, Kimberley. "The communicative aspects of civil disobedience and lawful punishment." Criminal Law and Philosophy 1 (2007): 179-192.	April 19 th Wester, Gry. "Conscientious objection by health care professionals." <i>Philosophy Compass</i> 10.7 (2015): 427-437.	April 21 st Savulescu, Julian, and Udo Schuklenk. "Doctors have no right to refuse medical assistance in dying, abortion or contraception." Bioethics
Week 4	April 24 th Review	April 26 th Midtem 1	April 28 th Thomson, Judith Jarvis. "A defense of abortion." <i>Philosophy & Public Affairs</i> 7.1 (1971): 47-66.

Week 5	May 1st Boonin-Vail, David. "A defense of" A defense of abortion": on the responsibility objection to Thomson's argument." <i>Ethics</i> 107.2 (1997): 286-313.	May 3rd Warren, Mary Anne. "On the moral and legal status of abortion." <i>The Monist</i> 57.1 (1973): 43-61. + postscript	May 5th Marquis, Don. "Why abortion is immoral." <i>The Journal of Philosophy</i> 86.4 (1989): 183-202.
Week 6	May 8 th Bayne, Tim, and Avery Kolers. "Toward a pluralist account of parenthood." <i>Bioethics</i> 17.3 (2003): 221-242.	May 10th Brandt, Reuven. "The transfer and delegation of responsibilities for genetic offspring in gamete provision." <i>Journal of Applied Philosophy</i> 34.5 (2017): 665-678.	May 12 th Velleman, J. David. "The gift of life." <i>Philosophy & Public Affairs</i> 36.3 (2008): 245-266.
Week 7	May 15th Melo-Martín, Inmaculada De. "The ethics of anonymous gamete donation: is there a right to know one's genetic origins?." <i>Hastings Center Report</i> 44.2 (2014): 28-35.	May 17th Review	May 19th Midterm II
Week 8	May 22 nd Mill, <i>On Liberty</i> excerpt	May 24 th "Is There a Case for Banning Hate Speech?" in Michael Herz, and Peter Molnar (eds.), <i>The Content and Context of Hate Speech: Rethinking Regulation and Response</i> , Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 37–56	May 26 th Rini, Regina. "Fake news and partisan epistemology." <i>Kennedy Institute of Ethics Journal</i> 27.2 (2017): E-43.
Week 9	May 29 th NO CLASS	May 31st Open topic	June 2 nd Open topic
Week 10	June 5th TBD	June 7th Demetriou, Dan, and Ajume Wingo. "The ethics of racist monuments." <i>The Palgrave handbook of philosophy and public policy</i> (2018): 341-355.	June 9 th Review

Assessments:

Midterm 1: 25%

Midterm 2: 35%

Comprehensive final: 40%

Percentage to Letter Grade Conversion Chart

Letter Grade	From	To
A+	97	100
A	93	96.99999
A-	90	92.99999
B+	87	89.99999
B	83	86.99999
B-	80	82.99999
C+	77	79.99999
C	73	76.99999
C-	70	72.99999
D	55	69.99999
F	0	54.99999

Grade Disputes:

Your appeal should include some justification for why you think your grade was incorrect – a good way to do this is to respond to comments made by me about your exam.

General Policies:

- Readings are subject to minor adjustments.
- If you require any form of accommodation on the grounds of disability please make sure you have registered with the Office for Students with Disabilities and have followed their guidelines for alerting instructors to your particular needs. The university's policy on the accommodation of disability can be found here: <https://senate.ucsd.edu/Operating-Procedures/Senate-Manual/Appendices/3> Students requesting accommodations for this course due to a disability must provide a current Authorization for Accommodation (AFA) letter issued by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) which is located in University Center 202 behind Center Hall. Students are required to present their AFA letters to Faculty (please make arrangements to contact me privately) and to the OSD Liaison in the department in advance so that accommodations may be arranged.
858.534.4382 (phone) | osd@ucsd.edu (email) | <http://disabilities.ucsd.edu> (website)

- If you require any accommodation on religious grounds, please alert me in writing as soon as possible. The university's policy on religious accommodation can be found here: <https://senate.ucsd.edu/operating-procedures/educational-policies/courses/epc-policies-on-courses/policy-exams-including-midterms-final-exams-and-religious-accommodations-for-exams/>
- All instances of academic offences including plagiarism, cheating on exams, and multiple submission of work, will be handled in accordance with official UCSD policy, which can be found here: <http://senate.ucsd.edu/Operating-Procedures/Senate-Manual/Appendices/2>. Please read the policy and ensure that you understand it.

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