

SATURDAY ENRICHMENT SPRING 2019

ETHICS AND MORAL DILEMMAS

Instructor: Drue Miller
Instructor Email: druem@uw.edu
Location: Loew Hall 217

Course Description

What qualities determine whether a person is good or bad? What does it matter if something isn't fair? Who decides what's the right thing to do? Who should care about the environment? These and other challenging moral dilemmas will be addressed in a meticulous and thoughtful way throughout this course. Students will consider moral and ethical issues via guided individual instruction, as well as group discussions. Through images, stories, and thought experiments students will engage in productive philosophical discussions to strengthen their rhetorical and reasoning skills as well as their ability to confidently answer complicated questions.

Essential Questions

- Why are some actions punished while others are neutral or rewarded?
- What does it mean to be "good"?
- What does it mean to be "fair"? Is being fair the best way to go about things?
- How do you know what's the right thing to do?
- How do we morally judge Artificial Intelligence, or even non-human animals?

Learning Outcomes

Students will understand . . .

- How to respectfully interpret and genuinely analyze ideas that are different than their own to gain a better understanding of rationality and the world around them.

Students will know . . .

- How to reflect on ethical questions and answer with critical responses.
- How to strategically uncover better answers to complex issues, both individually and as a collective.

Students will be able to . . .

- Address complicated and reflective questions with clear and thoughtful responses.

Instructional Strategies

Each class will include a conversation inspired by an activity, moral dilemma, or story. Questions either suggested by a student or the facilitator initiate an open discussion on philosophical topics. Instruction is more heavily weighted on quality of philosophical discussions during class than lectures on philosophy. Objectives set by the instructor may vary depending on where the conversation goes in each session. This is so the students may gain the most out of having an open discussion rather than limiting the discussion to a specific goal. The schedule of activities posted are subject to change, especially if a topic brought up in class makes for a

different activity to be more worthwhile in the next class meeting. Otherwise, the themes will be rather consistent.

Student Assessment

Much of the student assessment will be based on in-class participation. Students will have opportunities to write down their thoughts about in-class topics and other philosophical material as well as participate in verbal discussions. Illustrations, notes, and questions are permitted and encouraged! Our class time is short, so any additional questions or comments are happily accepted by the instructor via email.

Resources and Materials

Please bring the following each day:

- A pencil/pen
- Philosophy Journal: This could be a composition book, 3-ring binder, or folder with lined or blank paper, whatever you prefer.

Tentative Course Schedule

Date	Topic(s)	In-Class Activities
Week 1 - April 6	Introduction to Philosophy Law and Morality	What does "Philosophy" make you think of? Ring of Gyges
Week 2 - April 13	Exploring Morality Maxims	How to be a good person manual/ Philosophy Journal
Week 3 - April 27	Environmentalism and Morality	Who Pays for Climate Change?
Week 4 - May 4	Fairness, Equity, Equality	Albert, the fairest teacher of them all
Week 5 - May 11	Introduction to Moral Dilemmas Forming Rational Arguments	Trolley Problem
Week 6 - May 18	Dilemmas continued... Technology and Morality	What Moral Should Drive Driverless Cars?
Week 7 - June 1	Moral Dilemma Wrap-up... Animal Ethics and Racism	Breed-Specific Legislation
Week 8 - June 8	Class Wrap-up	How to be a good person manual (final draft)