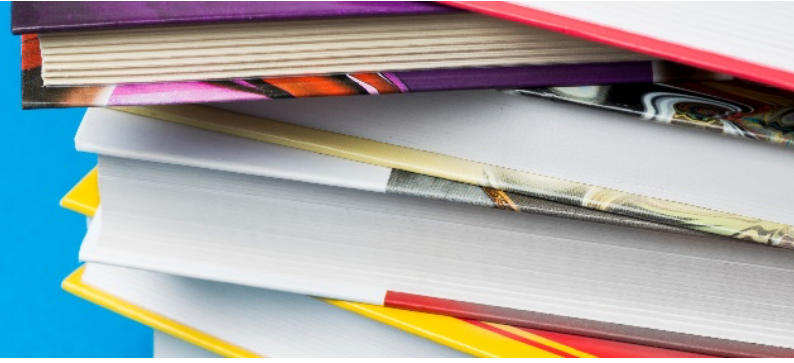




Short Syllabus



Course Title

Contemporary Moral Problems

Lecturer

Dr. Rona Cohen

Contact details

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Office Hours: By Appointment

Semester

Spring 2023

Short Description

Ethical theory is concerned with questions of rightness and wrongness, obligation and permissibility, moral decision-making, virtue, and so on. At its grandest and most ambitious, ethics tells us how to live and explains why we should live that way. Most of us engage in intuitive ethical theorizing all the time, when we think about what we ought to do, read about a certain government policy, make major life decisions, or just ask questions about the rightness or wrongness of our decisions and actions. Ethical theorists pursue these kinds of questions systematically and thoroughly.

Throughout the seminar, we will address the tension between the crisis of values in postmodern ethics vis-à-vis our deep desire to find a moral compass in an ever-changing world.

Among the topics to be discussed are the crisis of values; ethics and relativism; the mechanism of moral disengagement; the ethical value of friendship; hate speech, pornography and free speech; the moral status of animals; the banality of evil; consumption and the environment; abortions; the relationship between ethics and politics; Native American perspectives on nature; and Buddhist ethics of compassion.

This seminar will explore these foundational questions in ethics through the study of classic works by Aristotle, Kant, Nietzsche, John Stewart Mill, Emmanuel Levinas, Jean Baudrillard, Michel Foucault, Catharine MacKinnon, Martha Nussbaum, Hannah Arendt, Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Thich Nhat Hanh, and others.

Final grade components

Midterm: 15%

Participation and discussion: 15%

Seminar paper/Referat: 70%



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Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. Students are permitted a maximum of three unauthorized absences without penalty. Any additional absences will affect the final grade and may result in failure of the course.*

Academic Conduct

Plagiarism is taken extremely seriously. Any instance of academic misconduct which includes: submitting someone else's work as your own; failure to accurately cite sources; taking words from another source without using quotation marks; submission of work for which you have previously received credit; working in a group for individual assignments; using unauthorized materials in an exam and sharing your work with other students, will result in failure of the assignment and will likely lead to further disciplinary measures.*

Final assignment

Exam dates and submission deadlines are published on the Liberal Arts website. Courses with a final exam also have a second make-up exam. Students requiring an extension for a final paper must submit an Academic Committee Request Form to the Liberal Arts office in advance of the deadline. Late papers will be subject to a point deduction.*

Additional requirements

* See Liberal Arts academic handbook for further details