

Introduction to Ethics

Description: This course provides an introduction to those problems of philosophy that are problems of *moral* philosophy, or ethics. We will begin by examining certain problems that arise when we try to make moral judgments: problems such as the role of religion in morality (e.g., “What’s right is just what God says is right”), cultural relativism (“What’s right for us is not necessarily right for them”), and psychological egoism (“People are always out to do what’s best for themselves anyway”). Second, we will consider several important theoretical approaches to ethics that attempt to provide general principles to guide our thinking about specific questions of right and wrong. In the third and final part of the course we will consider more concretely several important moral issues: aid to the poor, abortion, and euthanasia. Throughout, the course will be guided by the goals of (1) enhancing understanding of the central concepts and principles of ethics and (2) improving ethical reasoning, decision-making, and behavior.

Learning outcome: This course is intended to enable you to achieve Goal 5, Learning Outcome 1: “Upon reaching this goal, students will be able to develop and apply a combination of knowledge and skills to demonstrate an understanding of social responsibility and ethical behavior.” (from <http://kucore.ku.edu/goal5>)

Class schedule: Mondays and Wednesdays, 9:00–9:50 a.m., in 130 Budig Hall (enrollment code 56620); plus a weekly 50-minute discussion section with your T.A.

Discussion sections: Here are the times, room numbers, enrollment codes, and T.A.s for the sixteen discussion sections.

<u>time</u>	<u>room</u>	<u>code</u>	<u>T.A.</u>
W, 12	3097 Wescoe	56631	Kamuran Osmanoglu
W, 1	3097 Wescoe	56632	Kamuran Osmanoglu
W, 2	3097 Wescoe	56633	Kamuran Osmanoglu
W, 2	4047 Wescoe	56635	Vasfi Ozen
W, 3	4051 Wescoe	66251	Vasfi Ozen
W, 4	4011 Wescoe	66253	Vasfi Ozen
R, 8	4011 Wescoe	56622	Polo Camacho
R, 9	1015 Wescoe	56626	Polo Camacho
R, 2	220 Fraser	56630	Kamuran Osmanoglu
F, 8	4022 Wescoe	56624	Polo Camacho
F, 9	4049 Wescoe	56627	Polo Camacho
F, 9	1007 Wescoe	56629	Michael Otteson
F, 2	505 Summerfield	56634	Michael Otteson
F, 3	505 Summerfield	66252	Michael Otteson
F, 4	505 Summerfield	66254	Michael Otteson
M, 8	505 Summerfield	56621	Vasfi Ozen

Teaching assistants: Here is contact information for the T.A.s:

<u>name</u>	<u>e-mail address</u>	<u>office location</u>
Polo Camacho	mpcamacho@ku.edu	3108 Wescoe
Kamuran Osmanoglu	osmanoglu@ku.edu	3085 Wescoe
Michael Otteson	papersformike@gmail.com	3098 Wescoe
Vasfi Ozen	vasfi.o.ozen@gmail.com	3098 Wescoe

Meeting with me and contacting me:

I am happy to meet with you outside of class. My office is in 3071 Wescoe, and I have office hours on Mondays from 2:00 to 2:50 and on Wednesdays from 10:00 to 10:50. If you would like to see me at another time, that's fine. If you come looking for me at another time, you might not find me in my office and available when you come by, so the best way to meet with me outside of my office hours is to make an appointment. Please send me an e-mail (my e-mail address is my last name (no capitalization necessary), followed by '@ku.edu') with a list of some times when you are available, and I'll find a time when we're both available and write back to you. Please note that I tend to use e-mail only for scheduling appointments and handling logistical matters, not for substantive discussions of course material.

Requirements/grading:

At the end of the course, I'll give you a grade between A and F. The grades A, B, C, and D are given specific interpretations in KU's University Senate Rules and Regulations, which I adhere to. Article 2 of those rules and regulations – "Academic Work and Its Evaluation" – contains a section called "The Grading System" (at <http://policy.ku.edu/governance/USRR#art2sect2>), which says that an A should be given for achievement of outstanding quality, a B for achievement of high quality, a C for achievement of acceptable quality, and a D for achievement that is minimally passing, but of less than acceptable quality.

What letter grade I give you will depend on the final average of the scores you get on the various assignments in the course (which I'll outline below). I'll use the following scale to convert your final average to a letter grade. (For an explanation of how I arrived at these numbers, see the "Plus/Minus Grading" document on my web site.)

<u>final average</u>	<u>letter grade</u>
93.50 and above	A
90.00 through 93.49	A–
86.50 through 89.99	B+
83.50 through 86.49	B
80.00 through 83.49	B–
76.50 through 79.99	C+
73.50 through 76.49	C
70.00 through 73.49	C–
66.50 through 69.99	D+
63.50 through 66.49	D
60.00 through 63.49	D–
59.99 and below	F

Many (if not all) assignments will be graded numerically, rather than with letter grades, and you can also use this scale to interpret the numerical scores you get in this course during the semester.

Your final average will be determined by your scores on the following ten course components.

<u>assignment</u>	<u>weight (percent)</u>
test 1	16
homework 1	4
homework 2	4
paper 1	16
test 2	16
homework 3	4
paper 2	16
test 3	16
class participation (in discussion section)	8
total	100

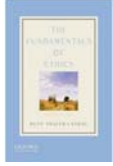
If you want to figure out what your final average will be, based on the scores you earn on the individual assignments and tests, you can use the following procedure:

In the boxes in column b, write your grades for the assignments and tests listed in column a:		Multiply each number in column b by the number immediately to the right of it, in column c, and write their product immediately to the right, in column d.	
column a	column b	column c	column d
test 1 (February 18)	1b	0.16	1d
homework 1 (due in discussion section February 25–March 2)	2b	0.04	2d
homework 2 (due in discussion section March 4–9)	3b	0.04	3d
paper 1 (due in discussion section March 11–13)	4b	0.16	4d
test 2 (April 1)	5b	0.16	5d
homework 3 (due in discussion section April 8–13)	6b	0.04	6d
paper 2 (due in discussion section April 15–20)	7b	0.16	7d
test 3 (April 29)	8b	0.16	8d
class participation (in discussion section)	9b	0.08	9d
Add up the numbers in column d (boxes 1d through 9d), and write their sum in box 10. This is your final average.			10

As the semester progresses, you can consult the online gradebook at the Blackboard site for this course to keep track of your scores on individual assignments.

Illness and attendance:

Although there is a class-participation component as a determinant of your grade in this class, I don't want to encourage you to come to class when you are ill and might infect others. If you have a contagious illness, please protect your classmates from the risk of catching it from you. Absences in such circumstances will be excused and there will be no adverse effect on your class-participation grade.

Required textbook:

The book for this course is *The Fundamentals of Ethics*, 2nd edition, by Russ Shafer-Landau (Oxford University Press, 2012), ISBN 978-0-19-977355-8. I have asked the KU bookstore to stock this book, or you can buy it elsewhere.

There will also be some other required readings; these will be provided on Blackboard. Because of their length, you should be prepared to print them out rather than reading them on a computer screen.

Course materials on the web:

Some course documents, including this syllabus, will be available on the web site I have set up this course, the URL of which is

<http://www.benegg.net/courses/ethics15>

(If you don't want to type in this whole thing, you can stop after 'net' – at which point you'll be at my personal web site – and then follow the links to the web site for this particular course.)

One thing that will not be posted on the web site is a record of your grades for this course. To allow you to have online access to your grades, your grades will be entered into the online gradebook at the Blackboard site for this course. Note that although Blackboard provides a shell for all sorts of course-related documents, I plan to use it only to provide you with access to your grades, PDF files containing some of the required readings, and PDF files containing the slides that I will use in my lectures. This syllabus, and perhaps other course-related documents, will be at the non-Blackboard site mentioned above.

E-mail distribution list:

I've had the KU computer folks set up an e-mail distribution list for the course. In general, I'll try to mention everything important (whether substantive or procedural) in class. But at times, I may use the e-mail distribution list to send you information that you will be responsible for having or acting on, so it is your responsibility to make sure that you read mail that I send to this list, by checking the e-mail account that goes with the e-mail address that you have on record with KU in the Outlook address book.

Time commitment, academic misconduct, and disability accommodation:

To do well in this course, you should be prepared to commit a considerable amount of time outside of class to reading the textbook, reviewing your notes, and practicing the skills this course is intended to teach. According to section 5.1.1 of the Faculty Senate Rules and Regulations (<http://policy.ku.edu/governance/FSRR#art5sect1>), "One semester hour means course work normally represented by an hour of class instruction and two hours of study a week for one semester, or an equivalent amount of work." Thus, for a three-credit course such as this one, you should be prepared to spend six hours per week outside of class on reading and other out-of-class work.

In addition, I should note here that I take academic misconduct, especially cheating on tests and plagiarizing papers, extremely seriously, and am generally disposed to impose the harshest available penalties when it occurs. To assist instructors in combating plagiarism, KU subscribes to the plagiarism detection program SafeAssign. To enable you to meet my expectations in this regard and to do so without fear of inadvertently falling short of them, I will provide guidance as to what does and does not constitute academic misconduct when I tell you about the tests and the paper assignments. If you would like to see KU's policy on academic misconduct, it is in article 2, section 6 of the University Senate Rules and Regulations (<http://policy.ku.edu/governance/USRR#art2sect6>).

Finally, if you have a disability for which you may be requesting special services or accommodations for this course, be sure to contact the Academic Achievement and Access Center (<http://achievement.ku.edu>), at 22 Strong Hall or at 864-4064 (V/TTY), if you have not already done so, and give me a letter from AAAC documenting the accommodations to which you are entitled. Please also see me privately, at your earliest opportunity, so that I can be aware of your situation and can begin to prepare the appropriate accommodations in advance of receiving the letter from AAAC.

Rules and tips for the tests:

You'll have 50 minutes to take each test. To enforce that rule even-handedly, I'll deduct points from the score of any student who doesn't turn in his or her test when time is up. Also, if you arrive late, you can take the test, but you still have to finish at the same time as everyone else.

Here are some suggestions for studying for each test:

- Re-read all of the assigned reading. If you start several days in advance, you might be able to get through all of it by doing just a moderate amount each day. Whatever you have time to re-read will probably not only remind you of what you grasped previously, but also expand your understanding, due to more-through comprehension resulting from your subsequent learning.
- Review the lecture slides (available on Blackboard) and your class notes.
- Review the way I asked about similar material on the multiple-choice tests I used in the Fall 2012 semester (available on Blackboard).
- Review the short-answer practice questions for this material available on Blackboard.

Make-up test policy:

If you miss a test without a good excuse, you can take a make-up test, but only if you contact your T.A. within five days of the test, and only for partial credit. That is, some number of percentage points will be deducted from whatever percentage score you get on the make-up test. The number of percentage points deducted will be 25 if you take the make-up test later on the test date, 30 points if you take it the next day, 35 points if you take it two days later, and so on.

If you have a good excuse that your T.A. can verify, then you can take a make-up test for full credit if you contact your T.A. by e-mail as soon as it is feasible for you to do so. A good excuse means that some circumstances arose that prevented you from taking the test, and there weren't precautions that you could reasonably have been expected to take that would have prevented those circumstances from occurring or from preventing you from taking the test.

When you contact your T.A. about taking a make-up test, please suggest some times when you would be available to take a make-up test. Scheduling your make-up test will not depend on whether you are taking it for full credit or partial credit, so that question does not have to be settled in order for your make-up test to be scheduled. Thus, scheduling your make-up test is the first priority, and the question of full credit or partial credit can be sorted out subsequently. Regardless of whether you intend to take a make-up test for full credit or for partial credit, you must (1) contact your T.A. about taking a make-up test without any unnecessary delay and (2) take your make-up test as soon as you are able to do so.

I know this policy is strict. But the vast majority of students take the tests on the scheduled dates, and I think they're entitled to some vigilance, on my part, against unwarranted requests for make-up tests for full credit.

Policy on late and e-mailed papers:

Papers turned in late, but not more than five days late, will have a penalty of 10 percentage points per day (or fraction thereof) of lateness. Papers turned in more than five days late will receive no credit. Thus, the following schedule of penalties will apply:

<u>lateness</u>	<u>penalty (percentage points)</u>
0–24 hours	10
24–48 hours	20
48–72 hours	30
72–96 hours	40
96–120 hours	50
more than 120 hours	no credit (score = 0)

Also, papers turned in by e-mail will have a penalty of 10 percentage points. Again, I acknowledge that this is strict, but the T.A.s have a very large workload and it is necessary to require that papers be submitted in hard copy in order to prevent them from having a burdensome quantity of e-mail messages and attachments to deal with. If you believe you will have a good reason for needing to turn in your paper by e-mail, you may contact your T.A. in advance and ask for prior approval to turn in your paper by e-mail without penalty.

Exceptions will be made if your paper is late or e-mailed due to conditions that would excuse you from taking a test, if there were a test being given when the paper is due. (See the make-up test policy, above, for details of that.)

Policy on late and e-mailed homework:

Homework turned in late or turned in by e-mail is subject to the same penalty as a paper turned in late or turned in by e-mail. See the policy on late and e-mailed papers, above.

Schedule:

Below, a filled square (■) usually indicates information and an empty square (□) indicates a task to be completed.

January 21: course introduction

- In lecture, we will have an introduction to the course.
- Please mark the following five dates on your calendar:

<u>date</u>	<u>event</u>
Wednesday, February 18, lecture	test 1
March 11–13, discussion section	paper 1 due
Wednesday, April 1, lecture	test 2
April 15–20, discussion section	paper 2 due
Wednesday, April 29, lecture	test 3

- Get the book for the course, if you have not already done so. See “Required textbook,” above.

Metaethics

week of January 26: ethical reasoning

- Before lecture on Monday, read *The Fundamentals of Ethics*, introduction.
- Before lecture on Wednesday, read *The Fundamentals of Ethics*, chapter 5, especially the section called “Second Assumption: God Is the Creator of Morality.”
- Discussion sections (January 28–February 2) will meet as scheduled.

week of February 2: cultural relativism

- Before lecture on Monday, re-read the section in the introduction to *The Fundamentals of Ethics* called “Skepticism about Ethics” (pp. 3–5) and read *The Fundamentals of Ethics*, chapter 19, to the section break on p. 292.
- Before lecture on Wednesday, read *The Fundamentals of Ethics*, chapter 19, from the section break on p. 292 to the section break on p. 296. (The rest of the chapter is optional.)
- Discussion sections (February 4–9) will meet as scheduled.

Friday, February 6:

- I hope this doesn’t apply to you, but if you may need to drop this class, you should be aware that the last day to do so, without having a “W” for this class on your transcript, is this Monday, February 9. For more information, see the following web site: <http://www.registrar.ku.edu/spring-2015-academic-calendar-date>. For instructions, see <http://www.registrar.ku.edu/adddrop-class>.

week of February 9: psychological egoism

- Before lecture on Monday, read *The Fundamentals of Ethics*, chapter 7, to the main section break on p. 100.
- Before lecture on Wednesday, read *The Fundamentals of Ethics*, chapter 7, from the main section break on p. 100 to the end.
- Discussion sections (February 11–16) will meet as scheduled.

Tuesday, February 10:

- If you have a disability that entitles you to special accommodations for taking tests, contact the Academic Achievement and Access Center (see p. 4, above, for the AAAC’s contact information), by the end of tomorrow, February 11, about making arrangements to take the test we have scheduled for February 18. If you are entitled to extra time, you will need to ask the AAAC to proctor your test in a classroom other than our lecture hall. Be sure that the time slot you arrange with the AAAC will finish by 9:50 a.m. on Wednesday, February 18.

test**1*****week of February 16: review and test 1***

- See “Rules and tips for the tests” above, on p. 5.
- In lecture on Monday, we’ll review for the test.
- In lecture on Wednesday, you’ll take the test.
- Discussion sections (February 18–23) will not meet.

Normative Ethics

week of February 23: ethical egoism

- Before lecture on Monday, read *The Fundamentals of Ethics*, chapter 8, to the main section break on p. 112.
- Before lecture on Wednesday, read *The Fundamentals of Ethics*, chapter 8, from the main section break on p. 112 to the end.
- Discussion sections (February 23–March 2) will meet as scheduled.
 - Before your discussion section, complete homework 1 in accordance with the instructions on the next page, and print three copies of it to bring to your discussion section.
 - You'll turn in one copy of your paper as homework 1. The policy on late and e-mailed homework (see p. 6) applies to this assignment.
 - You'll work on your paper with your classmates using the other copies of your paper.

instructions for homework 1, due in discussion section February 25–March 2:

- Write a paper arguing for some ethical claim.
- Your paper should be 300–600 words long, and should (1) clearly state the claim for which you are arguing and (2) clearly give one or more reasons in support of your claim. If you give more than one reason, they should be clearly distinguished, possibly by appearing in separate paragraphs. On the following pages are examples of a couple of successful ways of doing this assignment.
 - Both of these sample papers happen to be about education. However, you can choose virtually any topic that interests you. Possible topics include capital punishment, gun control, affirmative action, animal experimentation, the eating of animals, the legality of marijuana use, same-sex marriage, airport body scanners, laws prohibiting texting while driving, and countless others.
 - Although you can choose virtually any topic, the claim that you choose to argue for must be one about which reasonable people disagree. Also, your topic must not be the same as the topic of either of the sample papers, and must not be the same as the topic that someone else that you know of is writing on.
 - The first paper happens to give three arguments in support of its main claim, and the second paper happens to give two. There is no prescribed number of arguments. Even a single argument can be sufficient, if it is logical and well developed.
 - The second paper has a conclusion, but the first one does not. A conclusion is neither mandatory nor prohibited.
- You may talk with other people or do research about what you are writing, but you must do the writing yourself. If you quote or paraphrase from any source – including books, magazines, newspapers, a web page, or another person – you must document that explicitly, in a footnote.
- Your paper must be typed, double-spaced, and prepared for turning in. That means that what you turn in should bear appropriate information at the top of the first page (see the examples on the following pages for details of this). Your paper should also have a title.
- What you turn in will be homework 1 and will be graded only on whether what you turn in reflects a good-faith effort to write this paper – points will not be deducted for flaws in your argument at this stage. Please note that the policy on late and e-mailed homework (see p. 6) applies to this assignment. (This assignment is a precursor to the first paper assignment, which is due in discussion section March 11–13.)
- Print three copies of your paper to bring to your discussion section.

[your name]
Introduction to Ethics
[your TA's name]
W, 12*
February 25, 2015**
518 words***

** Put the day and time when
your discussion section meets.*

*** Put the date when you are turning
this paper in – February 25, 26, or 27,
or March 2.*

**** Put the number of words in your
document, including all text, notes, etc.*

School Uniforms are Beneficial to All

Living in rural Kansas my entire life, I longed to wear school uniforms of plaid and button downs. Initially, they were appealing to me because they were a novelty of “city kids.” Later, however, I came to see that they serve many good purposes. I believe that school uniforms should be required in all public high schools because of their positive effects: they help students avoid unnecessary distractions, alleviate difficult financial situations, and prevent many of the social tensions that can arise from disparities among students’ clothes.

First, school uniforms helps students avoid unnecessary distractions by making their clothing choices virtually automatic: students just put on the clothes that make up the uniform. They do not have to think about what clothes will impress their friends, or an actual or potential boyfriend or girlfriend. Many students put a lot of thought into what to wear, but many students do this because they feel compelled to keep up with

everyone else, not because they really want to. School uniforms remove this burden from all students by making the choice of clothes a “non-issue.”

Second, school uniforms alleviate difficult financial situations by removing much of the incentive that students currently have to buy expensive clothes. Currently, in schools that do not have uniforms, many students strive to dress fashionably. This tends to involve buying expensive clothes for the start of the school year, then more expensive clothes for the winter, and then more expensive clothes when the weather changes again in the spring. Throughout the year, there is always someone who has something new, and everyone else feels that if they just keep wearing the same old thing, they will look uncool. But in schools that require uniforms, this hardly happens at all. If the uniform requires a dark blue shirt with a collar, then it does not matter very much if someone gets a new dark blue shirt with a collar. Everyone else does not feel that have to keep up as much. Although the clothes that make up a uniform are themselves sometimes expensive, the total cost tends to be a lot less than the cost of all the additional shopping that students do when they do not have uniforms.

Third, school uniforms prevent many of the social tensions that can arise from disparities among students’ clothes. In schools without uniforms, clothes lead to comparisons among students in several ways. First, students who wear inexpensive clothes often get perceived as cheap or just poor. Being either cheap about clothes, or poor, is not something to be ashamed of, but it often results in students being negatively perceived by their peers anyway. Second, even when money is not involved, some students get judged by others for being uncool in their choice of clothes. Third, students

who are not as conventionally attractive as other students often feel self-conscious when students with certain body types wear tight-fitting or revealing clothes. In all of these ways, the lack of uniforms leads to many kinds of social tensions that are mostly prevented in schools that have uniforms.

[your name]
Introduction to Ethics
[your TA's name]
W, 12*
February 25, 2015**
326 words***

** Put the day and time when
your discussion section meets.*

*** Put the date when you are turning
this paper in – February 25, 26, or 27,
or March 2.*

**** Put the number of words in your
document, including all text, notes, etc.*

Making College More Affordable

For many Americans, obtaining post-secondary education is becoming increasingly challenging due to rising tuitions for colleges and universities across the country. The federal government should increase the funding it provides to subsidize post-secondary education. This change is warranted for two main reasons.

The first reason has to do with the well-being of students as they progress into adulthood and aim to be self-supporting and prosperous. In our current society having a college degree is practically essential for getting a job that pays significantly more than minimum wage. This is a major and worthwhile reason why many high-school seniors choose to go to college. But it is unrealistic to expect 18-to-25-year olds to be able to afford tuition at today's rates. Moreover, because tuitions across the country have been rising much faster in recent decades than most families' incomes, many students cannot count on their families to offset most of the cost of college. In sum, college is as essential

as ever, but also less affordable than ever. This makes it imperative that the federal government provide more assistance, whether in the form of outright grants or just low-interest loans.

The second reason has to do with the United States's productivity and global competitiveness. In recent years, worries have arisen about whether the United States can compete with other countries in subjects such as math and science. Relatedly, worries have also arisen about whether the United States is or can continue to be a leader in innovation and high-tech industries. If college were more affordable, more students could attend college, and the American workforce would consequently be more educated and better able to help the United States be a global leader in innovation and high-tech industries. In this way, increased federal funding for post-secondary education would be an investment in the nation's economy that will ultimately benefit the country as a whole – not simply a handout that benefits only its direct recipient.

week of March 2: utilitarianism

- Before lecture on Monday, read *The Fundamentals of Ethics*, chapter 9.
- Before lecture on Wednesday, read *The Fundamentals of Ethics*, chapter 10, except for the section on pp. 133–137, the subsection on pp. 146–147, and the section on pp. 149–152.
- Discussion sections (March 4–9) will meet as scheduled.
 - Before your discussion section, complete homework 2 in accordance with the instructions below, and print three copies of it to bring to your discussion section.
 - You'll turn in one copy of your paper as homework 2. The policy on late and e-mailed homework (see p. 6) applies to this assignment.
 - You'll work on your paper with your classmates using the other copies of your paper.

instructions for homework 2, due in discussion section March 4–9:

- Add to the paper you turned in as homework 1 by describing and replying to one or more objections to the claim for which you are arguing. On the following pages are ways that the sample papers shown earlier could be extended in this way.
- Whether you choose to discuss one objection or more than one objection might depend on how substantial you have been able to make the “affirmative” part of your paper – the part you did as homework 1. If you were not able to make that as substantial as you would have liked, you might consider anticipating and rebutting more than one objection. However, be advised that discussing multiple objections in a cursory fashion is not as good as discussing one objection more thoroughly.
- This version of your paper should be 500–800 words long. Be sure your paper is not longer than 800 words, since when you turn in the final version of this paper as paper 1, there will be a penalty for papers that are longer than 800 words.
- Like what you turned in as homework 1, what you turn in as homework 2 will be graded only on whether what you turn in reflects a good-faith effort to write this paper – points will not be deducted for flaws in your argument at this stage. Please note that the policy on late and e-mailed homework (see p. 6) applies to this assignment. (Like homework 1, this assignment is a precursor to the first paper assignment, which is due in discussion section March 11–13.)
- The same rules apply as before. And, as before, you should print three copies to bring to your discussion section.

[your name]
Introduction to Ethics
[your TA's name]
W, 12*
March 4, 2015**
719 words***

** Put the day and time when
your discussion section meets.*

*** Put the date when you are turning
this paper in – March 4, 5, 6, or 9.*

**** Put the number of words in your
document, including all text, notes, etc.*

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Third, school uniforms prevent many of the social tensions that can arise from disparities among students’ clothes. In schools without uniforms, clothes lead to comparisons among students in several ways. First, students who wear inexpensive clothes often get perceived as cheap or just poor. Being either cheap about clothes, or poor, is not something to be ashamed of, but it often results in students being negatively perceived by their peers anyway. Second, even when money is not involved, some students get judged by others for being uncool in their choice of clothes. Third, students who are not as conventionally attractive as other students often feel self-conscious when

students with certain body types wear tight-fitting or revealing clothes. In all of these ways, the lack of uniforms leads to many kinds of social tensions that are mostly prevented in schools that have uniforms.

An important objection against a school uniform policy is that by denying students the choice of what kinds of clothes to wear, such a policy would seriously infringe on students' liberty and right of self-determination. Specifically, it might be claimed that such a policy prevents students from expressing their individuality, their personal interests, and their personal sense of creativity. This objection would claim that these serious moral problems with school uniforms outweigh the benefits discussed above.

In response to this objection, I would argue that even in schools that require uniforms, students have plenty of opportunities for individuality and creativity. First, they can choose what optional activities to participate in, such as student government or the math club. Second, if clothing itself is the issue, students can even start or join a fashion club to design and make whatever kinds of clothes they want to. Third, they can express themselves through all sorts of choices they make every day about how to treat their classmates, how to treat their teachers, and what sort of choices to make about their own goals and futures. With all these other options, clothing should not be regarded as such an important outlet for individuality and creativity.

[your name]
Introduction to Ethics
[your TA's name]
W, 12*
March 4, 2015**
605 words***

** Put the day and time when
your discussion section meets.*

*** Put the date when you are turning
this paper in – March 4, 5, 6, or 9.*

**** Put the number of words in your
document, including all text, notes, etc.*

Making College More Affordable

For many Americans, obtaining post-secondary education is becoming increasingly challenging due to rising tuitions for colleges and universities across the country. The federal government should increase the funding it provides to subsidize post-secondary education. This change is warranted for two main reasons.

The first reason has to do with the well-being of students as they progress into adulthood and aim to be self-supporting and prosperous. In our current society having a college degree is practically essential for getting a job that pays significantly more than minimum wage. This is a major and worthwhile reason why many high-school seniors choose to go to college. But it is unrealistic to expect 18-to-25-year olds to be able to afford tuition at today's rates. Moreover, because tuitions across the country have been rising much faster in recent decades than most families' incomes, many students cannot count on their families to offset most of the cost of college. In sum, college is as essential as ever, but also less affordable than ever. This makes it imperative that the federal

government provide more assistance, whether in the form of outright grants or just low-interest loans.

The second reason has to do with the United States's productivity and global competitiveness. In recent years, worries have arisen about whether the United States can compete with other countries in subjects such as math and science. Relatedly, worries have also arisen about whether the United States is or can continue to be a leader in innovation and high-tech industries. If college were more affordable, more students could attend college, and the American workforce would consequently be more educated and better able to help the United States be a global leader in innovation and high-tech industries. In this way, increased federal funding for post-secondary education would be an investment in the nation's economy that will ultimately benefit the country as a whole – not simply a handout that benefits only its direct recipient.

Some might object to what I have proposed on the grounds that increasing federal-government subsidies for college tuition would require higher taxes. People who take this position might point out that there is no such thing as a “free lunch” and that whenever the federal government increases funding for some purpose, there has to be some way of paying for it. If the federal government is reducing costs for students and their families, it is increasing costs for itself.

I would reply that this objection can be answered by revisiting the two arguments that I mentioned above. First, when attending college makes people more self-sufficient and prosperous, they pay more income tax every year than if they were not as well off, and they are less likely to need to rely in government programs such as

unemployment insurance and Medicare. So, much of the federal government's up-front cost of providing more funds for higher education is likely to be recovered later in the form of reduced burdens on other programs. Second, the federal government will also be better off, financially, if the United States strengthens its position in the global economy, and improves its leadership with respect to innovation and high-tech industries. This is the sense in which increased federal funding for higher education would be an investment – an expenditure that should produce more income later – rather than just a hand-out to people.

In conclusion, the price tag that comes with college is becoming more than many people can afford. By increasing funding for higher education, the government would be making a wise decision, for the benefit of millions of individual citizens and for the country as a whole.

week of March 9: Kant's moral theory

- Before lecture on Monday, read *The Fundamentals of Ethics*, selections from chapters 11 and 12: pp. 154–164, pp. 168–173, and pp. 184–185.
- Before lecture on Wednesday, read *The Fundamentals of Ethics*, selections from chapters 11 and 12: pp. 164–167, p. 176, and pp. 182–184.
- Discussion sections (March 11–13 and March 23) will meet as scheduled.
 - Before your discussion section, re-read the paper you have been working on and make any final revisions you think are warranted.
 - Your paper should be 500–800 words long. Any paper of more than 800 words will have a penalty of 1 percentage point for every 10 extra words, or fraction thereof. For example, a paper of 832 words will have a penalty of 4 percentage points. Also, there will be a penalty of 10 points for not including your paper's word count at the beginning of your paper, as shown in the example papers.
 - Your paper will be graded on content (not just completeness, as with the earlier drafts you turned in for homework). The grade you get will be your first paper grade; it will not influence any of your homework grades. So the policy on late and e-mailed homework does not apply to this assignment; rather, the policy on late and e-mailed papers (see p. 6) applies to this assignment.
 - Print two copies of your paper to bring to your discussion section – one to turn in, and one to save in case anything happens to the one you turn in.
 - If you are in the discussion section that meets on Mondays at 8 a.m., your paper will be due on Friday, March 13, at 5 p.m. You can turn it in to your discussion-section instructor in hard copy, or you can e-mail it to him and the penalty that usually applies to e-mailed papers will be waived. Your discussion section will meet as scheduled on Monday, March 23.

week of March 16: no class (spring break)

week of March 23: feminist ethics

- Before lecture on Monday, read *The Fundamentals of Ethics*, chapter 18, to the section break on p. 283.
- Before lecture on Wednesday, read *The Fundamentals of Ethics*, chapter 18, from the section break on p. 283 to the end.
- Discussion sections (March 25–30) will meet as scheduled.

Tuesday, March 24:

- If you have a disability that entitles you to special accommodations for taking tests, contact the Academic Achievement and Access Center (see p. 4, above, for the AAAC's contact information), by the end of tomorrow, March 25, about making arrangements to take the test we have scheduled for April 1. If you are entitled to extra time, you will need to ask the AAAC to proctor your test in a classroom other than our lecture hall. Be sure that the time slot you arrange with the AAAC will finish by 9:50 a.m. on Wednesday, April 1.

test 2	<i>week of March 30: review and test 2</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ See “Rules and tips for the tests” above, on p. 5. ■ In lecture on Monday, we’ll review for the test. <input type="checkbox"/> In lecture on Wednesday, you’ll take the test. ■ Discussion sections (April 1–6) will not meet.
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Applied Ethics

reading questions: Because most of the reading for this part of the course was not written as material for an introductory textbook, “reading questions” are provided, below, to guide your reading. You do not have to turn in your answers to these questions; they are just meant as an aid to your reading.

week of April 6: aid to the poor

- Before lecture on Monday, read the material from Peter Singer provided on the course Blackboard site.
reading questions:

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the assumption Singer says he begins with? 2. What are Singer’s two principles (or two versions of one principle) about preventing bad things from happening? How are they different? Are there sacrifices that might be required by one principle (the strong one) that might not be required by the other one (the moderate one)? (You might want to answer this question in connection with question 6, below.) 3. One objection to those principles has to do with their “refusal to take proximity or distance into account” (p. 136b.2). How does Singer defend this aspect of these principles? 4. Another objection to those principles is based on the argument that purports to show that since there would be enough aid if everyone in circumstances like his were to give £5, he has no obligation to give more than £5. What does Singer say is wrong with this argument? 5. At the beginning of p. 138, Singer begins a discussion of “our traditional moral categories.” What does he mean when he says “The traditional distinction between duty and charity cannot be drawn, or at least, not in the place we normally draw it.” In what (new) place does he say we ought to draw it? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. In the middle of the first column on p. 138, Singer gives a (possible) example of the distinction between sacrificing something of moral significance and sacrificing something of no moral significance. What is this example? 7. How does Singer respond to the objection that his position is “too drastic a revision of our moral scheme” (p. 138b.3)? 8. Singer also appears to anticipate the objection that his view would resemble utilitarianism in requiring everyone to devote all their energies toward maximizing overall well-being. What is Singer’s response to this objection? 9. Near the beginning of p. 140, Singer considers some “practical” points. The first is the claim that widespread support of privately run charities would allow governments to escape their responsibilities. How does he respond to this point? 10. The second practical objection Singer considers is that famine relief might do more harm than good by leading to unsustainable population increases and more starvation in the future. How does he respond to this point? 11. The third practical objection Singer considers is that giving money to famine relief will detract from economic growth. How does he respond to this point? |
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- Before lecture on Wednesday, read the material from John Arthur provided on the course Blackboard site.
reading questions:

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arthur discusses Singer’s first principle about preventing bad things from happening (Singer’s stronger principle); he calls it ‘the greater moral evil rule’. According to Arthur, how does this principle follow from the idea of equal consideration of interests? 2. What are some intuitively objectionable implications of this principle that Arthur mentions? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. In what way, according to Arthur, is the concept of a right a useful way of describing those intuitively objectionable implications? 4. What intuitively objectionable implication of Singer’s principle does Arthur describe in order to introduce the concept of desert? 5. What do rights and desert have in common, according to Arthur (aside from both being grounds for objecting to Singer’s principle)? |
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6. What deeper values support rights and desert, according to Arthur?

7. What principle about helping others does Arthur endorse? How do you think it compares to Singer's moderate principle about preventing bad things from happening?

- ☐ Discussion sections (April 8–13) will meet as scheduled.
 - Before your discussion section, complete homework 3 in accordance with the instructions below, and print three copies of it to bring to your discussion section.
 - You'll turn in one copy of your paper as homework 3. The policy on late and e-mailed homework (see p. 6) applies to this assignment.
 - You'll work on your paper with your classmates using the other copies of your paper.

instructions for homework 3, due in discussion section April 8–13:

- ☐ Follow the instructions for homework 1 and 2, above, modified as follows:
 - Choose a topic that is different from the topic on which you wrote your first paper.
 - Your paper should both (1) argue for some ethical claim and (2) describe and reply to one or more objections to that claim. In other words, the process that was broken into two steps in homework 1 and homework 2 is combined into one step for this paper.
 - What you turn in will be homework 3.
 - This assignment is a precursor to the second paper assignment, which is due in discussion section April 15–20.

week of April 13: abortion

- ☐ Before lecture on Monday, read the material from Don Marquis provided on the course Blackboard site. *reading questions:*

1. In section I, Marquis notes that anti-abortion arguments are often criticized for relying on overly broad principles about who has the right to life – principles that attribute the right to life to individuals or entities to which the right to life should not be attributed. What is an example of this that he mentions?

2. He also notes that pro-choice arguments are often criticized for relying on overly narrow principles about who has the right to life – principles that fail to attribute the right to life to individuals to whom the right to life should be attributed. What is an example of this that he mentions?

3. In section II, Marquis develops a theory of the wrongness of killing adult human beings. Why is killing such people wrong, according to Marquis?

4. Does Marquis's view (about what makes killing adult human beings wrong) imply, or deny, that only life that is biologically human has great moral worth?

5. What does Marquis's view imply about the morality of active euthanasia?

6. What does Marquis's view imply about the morality of abortion?

7. Does Marquis's view imply that abortion is wrong in all circumstances? In what sort of circumstances, according to Marquis, could abortion be justified?

8. Section III of Marquis's article is omitted from the excerpt you are reading. In section IV, Marquis considers the objection that since fetuses do not value their futures, their futures are not valuable to them. How does he reply to this objection?

9. In section V, Marquis considers the objection that his view implies not only the immorality of abortion, but also the immorality of contraception. How does he reply to this objection?

- Before lecture on Wednesday, read the material from Judith Jarvis Thomson provided on the course Blackboard site. *reading questions:*

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What premise that opponents of abortion usually focus on proving does Thomson say she will grant in her defense of abortion? 2. What is the point of Thomson's violinist example? Specifically, what argument is it meant to cast doubt on? 3. Thomson describes a view she calls "the extreme view." What is this view? 4. Sections 1 and 2 of Thomson's article are omitted from the excerpt you are reading. (The text preceding the beginning of section 3, on p. 54, is introductory text that precedes section 1 of Thomson's article.) At the beginning of section 3, Thomson makes a transition from talking about cases of pregnancy what have a certain characteristic to talking about cases of pregnancy that do not have that characteristic. What is that characteristic? 5. How does Thomson argue against the claim that everyone has the right to be given at least the bare minimum needed for continued life? 6. In section 4, Thomson considers the possibility that an opponent of abortion might say that the right to life consists not in the right not to be killed, but rather in the right not to be killed unjustly. On this view, the permissibility of abortion depends on whether abortion is unjust killing. What argument in support of the idea | <p>that abortion is unjust killing does Thomson consider?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Thomson notes that the argument under consideration would not imply that abortion in cases of pregnancy due to rape is unjust killing. She also gives an argument, involving people-seeds, suggesting that abortion in cases of another kind of unwanted pregnancy – pregnancy following the (unsuccessful) use of contraception – is not unjust killing. What is this argument that she gives? In what way does her argument seem to apply specifically to cases of pregnancy following the use of contraception, even though she does not explicitly mention that? 8. In section 5, Thomson acknowledges that abortion would be wrong in some cases. What are the cases that Thomson indicates? 9. Section 6 is omitted from the excerpt you are reading. In section 7, Thomson considers the objection that a pregnant woman has a special kind of responsibility for the fetus she is carrying, such that aborting it would be wrong. How does Thomson reply to this objection? 10. In section 8, Thomson acknowledges that some defenders of abortion will regard her argument as unsatisfactory, on two counts. What is the first of these two concerns? (The second concern is omitted from the excerpt you are reading.) |
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- Discussion sections (April 15–20) will meet as scheduled.
- Before your discussion section, re-read the paper you have been working on and make any final revisions you think are warranted.
 - Your paper should be 500–800 words long. Any paper of more than 800 words will have a penalty of 1 percentage point for every 10 extra words, or fraction thereof. For example, a paper of 832 words will have a penalty of 4 percentage points. Also, there will be a penalty of 10 points for not including your paper's word count at the beginning of your paper, as shown in the example papers.
 - Your paper will be graded on content (not just completeness, as with the earlier draft you turned in for homework). The grade you get will be your second paper grade; it will not influence any of your homework grades. So the policy on late and e-mailed homework does not apply to this assignment; rather, the policy on late and e-mailed papers (see p. 6) applies to this assignment.
 - Print two copies of your paper to bring to your discussion section – one to turn in, and one to save in case anything happens to the one you turn in.

Friday, April 17:

- I hope this doesn't apply to you, but if you feel that should withdraw from this class rather than staying in it for a grade that will influence your G.P.A., you should be aware that the last day to withdraw from this class is this Monday, April 20 (as indicated at <http://www.registrar.ku.edu/spring-2015-academic-calendar-date>). For instructions, see <http://www.registrar.ku.edu/adddrop-class>.

week of April 20: euthanasia

- ☐ Before lecture on Monday, read the material from James Rachels provided on the course Blackboard site. *reading questions:*

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. After arguing for the morality of euthanasia in a preliminary way, Rachels states the utilitarian argument in defense of euthanasia. This argument's first premise is the principle of utility. What does Rachels think is wrong with the principle of utility as a general moral principle? 2. Aside from concerns about the principle of utility as a general moral principle, what concern does Rachels have about using that principle to decide specific instances of possible euthanasia? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Rachels states a second argument in support of euthanasia. Does he agree with all of this argument, or does he find it flawed (like the utilitarian argument)? 4. The second argument in support of euthanasia that Rachels states begins with a premise that includes two criteria that are not included in the principle of utility. What are those two criteria? 5. Rachels seems to take the consent of the person to be euthanized as sufficient to ensure that that person's rights are not violated. Do you agree with this, or can you think of possible counter-examples? |
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- ☐ Before lecture on Wednesday, read the material from Daniel Callahan provided on the course Blackboard site. *reading questions:*

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What does Callahan identify as the three generally accepted reasons for taking a person's life? 2. In the section "Three Arguments in Favor of Euthanasia," Callahan mentions that one argument in support of euthanasia is based on the right of self-determination. To rebut this argument, in the section "Euthanasia as a Social, not Private, Act" Callahan discusses the role of physicians in euthanasia (and physician-assisted suicide). What is Callahan's first concern about this? 3. What is Callahan's second concern about the role of physicians in euthanasia? 4. The second argument in support of euthanasia that Callahan discusses is based on the relieving of suffering. What is Callahan's response to this argument? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. What aspect(s) of the Dutch experience with euthanasia support(s) Callahan's position the most? 6. What does Callahan say was the main reason given in support of Oregon's physician-assisted suicide law, and what does Callahan say has been the main motivation of the patients who have availed themselves of that law? 7. What seems to be Callahan's opinion of the main motivation of the patients who have availed themselves of the Oregon law? Does he seem sympathetic to their concerns, or does he seem to think there is something wrong with their concerns? 8. The principle that Callahan mentions as the "second assumption" underlying his view is a good statement of the foundation of the view he expresses in this paper. What is that principle? |
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- ☐ Discussion sections (April 22–27) will meet as scheduled.
- These will be the last discussion sections of the course.

Tuesday, April 21:

- ☐ If you have a disability that entitles you to special accommodations for taking tests, contact the Academic Achievement and Access Center (see p. 4, above, for the AAAC's contact information), by the end of tomorrow, April 22, about making arrangements to take the test we have scheduled for April 29. If you are entitled to extra time, you will need to ask the AAAC to proctor your test in a classroom other than our lecture hall. Be sure that the time slot you arrange with the AAAC will finish by 9:50 a.m. on Wednesday, April 29.

test 3	<i>week of April 27: review and test 3</i>
	■ See “Rules and tips for the tests” above, on p. 5.
	■ In lecture on Monday, we’ll review for the test.
	□ In lecture on Wednesday, you’ll take the test.
■ Discussion sections (April 29–May 4) will not meet.	

week of May 4: review

- On Monday, we’ll review the third test (taken in class on Wednesday, April 29).
- We’ll reserve Wednesday, May 6, in case we need it.
- Discussion sections May 6–7 will not meet.

end-of-semester information:

The third test is the last assignment of the course. There is no final exam.

I hope to have final grade averages viewable in the online gradebook, on Blackboard, by May 12. If you want to check your final average, you can use the procedure for computing your grade provided near the beginning of this syllabus, on p. 3.

If you would like to retrieve any work that you have turned in, but have not yet had returned to you, please retrieve it by May 31, 2016. After that date, I may discard unclaimed work from this semester.