

## RIGHTS AND WRONGS

A primary objective of this course is to develop analytic tools for making thoughtful moral decisions in our own lives and for evaluating policies and decisions made by others. Equally, this course offers students the opportunity to become effective and eloquent academic writers.

This course has no prerequisite. Admission is by consent of the instructor.

- **BOOKS TO PURCHASE:** The following books have been ordered for this course through Amherst Books, 8 Main Street, Amherst.

Graff, Gerald and Cathy Birkenstein. *They Say/I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2005.

Harvey, Gordon. *Writing with Sources*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2008.

Harvey, Michael. *The Nuts and Bolts of College Writing*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2003.

LaFollette, Hugh, ed. *Ethics in Practice*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2007. (EP).

O'Connor, Patricia. *Woe is I*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. New York: Riverhead Books, 2004.

- **COURSE PACKET (CP):** A selection of additional readings is available for purchase in the Philosophy Department Office, Cooper 208. This packet includes the following items:

Kenneth Bruffee. Selection from *A Short Course in Writing*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: Harper Collins, 1993

Linda Flower. *Problem-Solving Strategies for Writing in College and Community*. New York: Hartcourt, 1998, ch. 12.

Thomas Kane, *The New Oxford Guide to Writing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994, ch. 6.

Eric Olson, selection from *The Human Animal*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Thomas Scanlon. "Consequentialism and Utilitarianism." In Amartya Sen and Bernard Williams, ed., *Utilitarianism and Beyond*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982.

- **REQUIRED WORK:**

- Short writing assignments for most classes.
- Two papers 5-7 pages in length. You will have the option of rewriting these papers.
- Extensive Collaboration in the Writing of our Thesis
- Informed class participation.

- **DEADLINES:**

- Short writing assignments are due by 3:00 am the morning of class. Hand them in as a Word attachment to an e-mail to me at [jgentzler@amherst.edu](mailto:jgentzler@amherst.edu). If you do not have Word, get it. It can be down-loaded free from the IT website.

- Short Papers: Hand in your papers as a Word attachment to an e-mail to me at any time on the day that they are due.

- **Sunday, March 1: First paper due.**
- **Sunday, March 29: Second paper due.**

You have the option of rewriting these papers in light of my comments. Any paper that you choose to rewrite is due to me by 5:00 pm on the last day of the examination period. I encourage you to try to hand it in earlier (ideally within two weeks of my returning your paper to you), while your ideas are still fresh in your mind.

- Collective Thesis Work:

- **Tuesday, February 10, noon: Thesis Proposal**
- **Sunday, March 8, noon: Annotated Bibliographies and Advice for Further Research**
- **Sunday, April 5, noon: A polished draft of your section of our thesis (TD1).**
- **Sunday, April 12, noon: A revision of your section of our thesis (TD2)**
- **Sunday, April 19, noon: A revision of your section of our thesis (TD3).**
- **Sunday, April 26, noon: A revision of your section of our thesis (TD4)**
- **Sunday, May 3, noon: Final Version of your Section(s) of our Thesis (TD5)**

- **GRADING:**

- 25%— Regular short writing assignments
- 5%— Thesis Proposal
- 5%—Annotated Bibliography and Advice for Further Research
- 40%— Two 5-7 page papers. If you choose to rewrite a paper, your final grade for the paper will be an average of the grade that you receive on the first version and the rewrite.
- 25%- Your Section(s) of our Thesis— Each of the five drafts is worth 5%

This is not a correspondence course; regular class attendance and informed participation are necessary conditions for receiving *any* credit for this course.

- **THE PECULIAR GRADING OF THE SHORT WRITING ASSIGNMENTS:** Your short writing assignments will be graded on a scale of 0 to 2.

- “2” means: “Very good; I couldn’t have asked for more.”
  - To say this is not to say that your homework is perfect or even that, in my view, it is close to being right. It’s only to say that I’m very happy with the work that you have done on this assignment.
  - If you receive a 2 from me, it is unlikely that you will receive comments from me.
- “1” means: “You have completed the assignment, but there are significant problems with your work. In my view, you would benefit from trying to complete the assignment again in light of my comments, class discussion, and/or a discussion with me during my office hours.”
  - A “1” does *not* mean that you are *required* to redo this assignment, only that you have the *option* of doing so.
  - You have the option of redoing your short assignments as often as you wish in order to improve your understanding and/or grade.

- If you receive a 1 from me and if we don't discuss the sort of problems that your assignment has in class, then it is likely that I will return your homework to you with comments.
- "0" means that I did not receive a homework assignment from you.
- At best, through revision, your grade on any given assignment can improve by 1 point. Consequently, if you do not complete the assignment on time and, as a result, you receive a 0, then *at best* your grade can be raised to a 1 no matter how many times you revise your assignment.
- The implication of this grading policy is that if you always complete your work on time and are willing to revise your work (sometimes repeatedly) until I am satisfied with your comprehension of the material, then it is completely within your power to earn a 100% for the short assignment portion of your grade in this class (which, in turn counts for 25% of your final grade).
- You can check the state of your grades on Blackboard. If you are not yet registered for this class, you cannot access our course website or Blackboard.

## Course Schedule

Links to online sources can be found at our course website at

<https://www.amherst.edu/academiclife/departments/courses/0809S/PHIL/PHIL-01-0809S/ereserves>

- **Monday, January 26:** Introduction
  
- **Wednesday, January 28:**
  - Reading assignment:
    - Peter. Singer, “Famine, Affluence, and Morality” (*EP*)
    - James Pryor, “Guidelines on Reading Philosophy” at <http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/reading.html>
    - Kenneth Bruffee. Selection from *A Short Course in Writing*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: Harper Collins, 1993 (CP)
    - J. Gentzler, “Descriptive Outlines as a Tool for Paper Analysis”
  - Writing assignment (SA1):
    - State in 35 words or less the main thesis of Singer’s article.
    - For each paragraph that was assigned to you, describe in two sentences (a) the function this paragraph serves in the essay as a whole (i.e., what it does) and (b) its main point (i.e., what it says).
  
- **Friday, January 30:**
  - Reading assignment:
    - Peter Singer, “Famine, Affluence, and Morality” (*EP*)
    - C.H. Conn, “A Short Guide to the Art of Argument Reconstruction and Evaluation”  
<<http://www.sewanee.edu/Philosophy/Resources/Short%20Guide.pdf>>
    - J. Gentzler, “Formatting Argument Reconstructions”
  - Writing assignment (SA2):
    - List the primary steps of Singer’s argument. Be sure to distinguish premises and conclusion(s), and to note the steps on which a conclusion or intermediate conclusion depends.
  
- **Monday, February 2: Writing Workshop on Researching Topics (Meet in the Lobby of Frost Library):**
  - Reading Assignment:
    - Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein, *They Say/I Say*, preface, introduction, and ch. 1.
  - Writing assignment (SA3):
    - In three separate paragraphs, describe three different ethical questions that you would like to explore further for the purpose of discovering a topic to pitch for our collective thesis.

- **Wednesday, February 4:**
  - Reading assignment:
    - Peter Singer, “Famine, Affluence, and Morality” (*EP*)
    - Michael Harvey, *The Nuts and Bolts of College Writing*, ch. 7.
    - Linda Flower, *Problem Solving Strategies*, ch. 12 (CP)
  - Writing assignment (SA4):
    - In two paragraphs, identify a significant weakness in Singer’s argument. (In the first paragraph, locate the weak step within Singer’s argument as a whole, but don’t yet explain why you believe that this step is a weakness. In the second paragraph, explain why you believe that the weakness that you have identified is indeed a weakness.) If you don’t believe that the argument has any significant weakness, defend Singer’s argument against a likely and reasonable objection.
  
- **Friday, February 6 : Writing Workshop– Paragraph Unity, Clarity, and Concision.**
  - Reading assignment:
    - Michael Harvey, *The Nuts and Bolts of College Writing*, chs. 1-3.
    - <http://writing2.richmond.edu/WRITING/wweb/concise.html>
  - Writing assignment (SA5):
    - Look at the paragraphs that you wrote for Monday and Wednesday, and revise two of them in light of the advice in your reading.
  
- **Monday, February 9**
  - Reading assignment:
    - Peter Vallentyne, “Consequentialism” (*EP*)
    - John Arthur, “Famine Relief and the Ideal Moral Code” (*EP*)
  - Writing assignment (SA6):
    - List the primary steps of Arthur’s argument. Be sure to distinguish premises and conclusion(s), and to note the steps on which a conclusion or intermediate conclusion depends.

<b>Tuesday, February 10 at noon: Thesis Proposal Due</b>
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- **Wednesday, February 11: Pitching Proposals**
  - Reading assignment:
    - Read the proposals posted on-line that will be pitched today.
  - Writing assignment (SA7):
    - Write at least one challenging question for the author of **each** proposal pitched today.

- **Friday, February 13: More Pitching Proposals**
  - Reading assignment:
    - Read the proposals posted on-line that will be pitched today
  - Writing assignment (SA8):
    - Write at least one challenging question for the author of **each** proposal pitched today.
  
- **Monday, February 16: Writing Workshop on Annotated Bibliographies (Meet in the Lobby of Frost Library)**
  - Reading assignment:
    - <http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/annotatebib.html>
    - Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein, *They Say/I Say*, chs. 2-4.
  
- **Wednesday, February 18: Writing Workshop – Planning an Academic Essay**
  - Reading assignment:
    - Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein, *They Say/I Say*, chs. 5-6.
    - Thomas Kane, *The New Oxford Guide to Writing*, ch. 6 (“Making a Plan”) (CP)
    - James Pryor, “Guidelines on Writing a Philosophy Paper,” <<http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html>> updated 7 September 2006.
  - Writing assignment (SA9):
    - Write “a statement of purpose” and a “scratch outline” for your first paper.
  
- **Friday, February 20: Writing Workshop: Introductions**
  - Reading assignment:
    - Michael Harvey, *The Nuts and Bolts of College Writing*, ch. 8.
  - Writing assignment (SA10):
    - Write a draft of your first paper.
  
- **Monday, February 23: No Class (Writing conferences)**
  - Reading assignment:
    - Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein, *They Say/I Say*, chs. 7-8.
    - J. Gentzler, “Descriptive Outlines as a Tool for Revision”
  - Writing assignment (SA11):
    - Come to your writing conference with two copies of a **descriptive outline** of your most recent draft of your first paper.
  
- **Wednesday, February 25:**
  - Reading assignment:
    - Judith Jarvis Thomson, “A Defense of Abortion” (*EP*)

- Writing assignment (SA12):
  - List the primary steps of Thomson’s main argument. Be sure to distinguish premises and conclusion(s), and to note the steps on which a conclusion or intermediate conclusion depends.
  
- **Friday, February 27:**
  - Reading assignment:
    - Don Marquis, “Why Abortion is Wrong” (*EP*)
    - Eric Olson, selection from *The Human Animal* (CP)
  
  - Writing assignment (SA13):
    - List the primary steps of Marquis’ main argument. Be sure to distinguish premises and conclusion(s), and to note the steps on which a conclusion or intermediate conclusion depends.
  
    - In two paragraphs, identify a significant weakness in Marquis’ argument (see Writing assignment for February 4 for more information). If you don’t believe that it has any significant weakness, defend Marquis’ argument against a likely and reasonable objection.

**Sunday, March 1: First Paper (P1) due by the end of the day.**

- Your final draft should include a “Works Cited” page. Please consult the following sources for information about correct formatting.
- <http://www.dianahacker.com/pdfs/Hacker-Bish-CMS-Bib.pdf>
- [http://rhsweb.org/library/PDF/WorksCited3\\_Chicago.pdf](http://rhsweb.org/library/PDF/WorksCited3_Chicago.pdf)

- **Monday, March 2:**
  - Reading assignment:
    - Mary Anne Warren, “On the Moral and Legal Status of Abortion” (*EP*)
  
  - Writing assignment (SA14):
    - List the primary steps of Warren’s main argument. Be sure to distinguish premises and conclusion(s), and to note the steps on which a conclusion or intermediate conclusion depends.
  
    - In two paragraphs, identify a significant weakness in Warren’s argument. If you don’t believe that Warren’s argument has any significant weakness, defend it against a likely and reasonable objection
  
- **Wednesday, March 4:**
  - Reading Assignment:
    - Thomas Scanlon, “Contractualism and Utilitarianism” (CP)
  
  - Writing Assignment:
    - Work on your bibliographies

- **Friday, March 6:**
  - Reading assignment:
    - Rosalind Hursthouse, “Virtue Theory and Abortion” (*EP*)
    - Rosalind Hursthouse, “Virtue Theory” (*EP*)
  - Writing Assignment:
    - Work on your bibliographies

<b>Sunday, March 8, noon: Annotated Bibliographies and Advice for Further Research</b>
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- **Monday, March 9: Writing Workshop: Reports on Research**
  - Reading assignment:
    - Annotated Bibliographies posted on-line
  - Additional assignment:
    - Come to class prepared to give a short presentation on your research.
- **Wednesday, March 11: Writing Workshop: Organization of Thesis and Distribution of Writing Assignments**
  - Reading assignment:
    - Annotated Bibliographies posted on-line
  - Writing assignment (SA15):
    - Write “a statement of purpose” and “scratch outline” for our thesis.
- **Friday, March 13: No Class**
  - Writing Assignment (SA16):
    - Write “a statement of purpose” and “scratch outline” for your second paper.

<i>Spring Break (March 14-22):</i>
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| ○ | <u>Reading assignment:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Gordon Harvey, <i>Writing with Sources</i></li> </ul> |
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- **Monday, March 23:**
  - Reading assignment:
    - Peter Singer, “All Animals are Equal” (*EP*)
- **Wednesday, March 25:**
  - Reading assignment:
    - Michael Allen Fox, “The Moral Community” (*EP*)

- Writing assignment (SA17):
  - Submit a draft of your second paper.
- **Friday, March 27:**
  - Reading assignment:
    - R.G. Frey, “Moral Standing, the Value of Lives, and Specieism” (*EP*)
  - Writing assignment (SA18):
    - Submit a revision of your second paper.

<b>Sunday, March 29: Second Paper (P2) Due</b>
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- **Monday, March 30:**
  - Reading assignment:
    - Tom Regan, “The Case for Animal Rights” (*EP*)
  - Writing assignment:
    - Work on your section of our thesis
- **Wednesday, April 1:**
  - Reading assignment:
    - Holmes Rolston III, “Feeding People versus Saving Nature” (*EP*)
  - Writing assignment:
    - Work on your section of our thesis
- **Friday, April 3: Writing Workshop: Reports on the Current State of Research**
  - Assignment:
    - Come to class prepared to give a short presentation on the current status of your section of our thesis.

<b>Sunday, April 5, noon: A polished draft of your section of our thesis (TD1).</b>
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- **Monday, April 6:**
  - Reading assignment:
    - John Stuart Mill, “Individuality” (*EP*)
  - Writing assignment:
    - Work on Wednesday’s reading and writing assignment

- **Wednesday, April 8: Writing Workshop: Rethinking the Organization and Structure of the Thesis, Assignments to Writing Groups**
  - Reading assignment:
    - The Master Document of the most recent draft of our thesis
  - Writing assignment (SA19):
    - Write a one page critique of our thesis
  
- **Friday, April 10:**
  - Reading assignment:
    - Lester H. Hunt, “On Improving People by Political Means” (*EP*)
  - Writing assignment:
    - Work on your revisions

**Sunday, April 12, noon: Revision of your section(s) of our thesis (TD2).**

- **Monday, April 13:**
  - Reading assignment:
    - James Q. Wilson, “Against the Legalization of Drugs” (*EP*)
  - Writing assignment:
    - Work on Wednesday’s reading and writing assignment
  
- **Wednesday, April 15: .Writing Workshop: Revisions**
  - Reading assignment:
    - Read the Master Document of the most recent draft of our thesis
  - Writing assignment (SA20):
    - Write a descriptive outline of the whole thesis.
  
- **Friday, April 17:**
  - Reading assignment:
    - Doug Husak, “Why We Should Decriminalize Drug Use” (*EP*)
  - Writing assignment:
    - Work on your revisions

**Sunday, April 19, noon: A revision of your section(s) of our thesis (TD3).**

- **Monday, April 20:**
  - Reading assignment:
    - Todd C. Hughes and Lester H. Hunt, “The Liberal Basis of the Right to Bear Arms” (*EP*)
  - Writing assignment:
    - Work on Wednesday’s reading and writing assignment.
  
- **Wednesday, April 22: Writing Workshop: Revisions**
  - Reading assignment:
    - Read the Master Document of the most recent draft of our thesis
  - Writing assignment (SA21):
    - Write a one page critique of our thesis.
  
- **Friday, April 24:**
  - Reading assignment:
    - Hugh LaFollette, “Gun Control” (*EP*)
  - Writing assignment:
    - Work on your revisions

**Sunday, April 26, noon: A revision of your section(s) of our thesis (TD4).**

- **Monday, April 27:**
  - Reading assignment:
    - John Stuart Mill, “Freedom of Thought and Discussion” (*EP*)
  - Writing assignment:
    - Work on your revisions
  
- **Wednesday, April 29: Writing Workshop: Revisions**
  - Reading assignment:
    - Read the Master Document of the most recent draft of our thesis
  - Writing assignment (SA22):
    - Write a descriptive outline of the whole thesis.
  
- **Friday, May 1:**
  - Reading assignment:
    - Susan J. Brison, “The Price We Pay?” (*EP*)

- Writing assignment:
  - Work on your revisions

<b>Sunday, May 3, noon: Final Version of your Section(s) of our Thesis (TD5)</b>
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- **Monday, May 4:**
  - Reading assignment:
    - Andrew Altman, “The Right to Get Turned On: Pornography, Autonomy, Equality” (*EP*)
  - Writing assignment:
    - Work on your four-minute presentation
  
- **Wednesday, May 6: Writing Workshop: Trial Run of Presentation**
  - Assignment (SA23):
    - Prepare a four-minute presentation of your section of our thesis
  
- **Thursday, May 7: Presentation of our Thesis**
  
- **Friday, May 8: Debriefing**