

WESTERN UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
Undergraduate Course Outline 2021-22

Philosophy Course Number: 4007G
Aristotle's *Ethics*

Winter 2022
In-person lectures

Instructor: Devin Henry
Office: StH 3141
Office Hours (virtual): By Appointment
dhenry3@uwo.ca

**This is a preliminary course outline developed in the summer. It may be subject to change prior to the course. It is superseded by the course outline to be provided on OWL at the time of the course. After the course begins, students should consult that updated one.*

DESCRIPTION

A close reading of the text of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* with a focus on the human good, the 'Function Argument', character virtues, friendship, pleasure, practical wisdom, and the nature of happiness.

Overview of Aristotle's *Ethics*: <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle-ethics/>

TEXTS

Required: Aristotle *Nicomachean Ethics*.

There are several good translations available, which students may choose, but I encourage you to choose one that uses "Bekker" line numbers (<https://bit.ly/32Qi2g2>) for easy reference. The UWO Bookstore will carry Terence Irwin's Hackett translation (3rd edition). Others good translations include:

Rowe & Broadie (<https://amzn.to/3eOpBGr>)

C.D.C. Reeve (<https://amzn.to/2ZR0EsE>)

W.D. Ross (<https://amzn.to/2D11fOY>)

M. Pakaluk (<https://amzn.to/3hr6lk4>)

Suggested:

Students are also encouraged to purchase Michael Pakaluk's *Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics: An Introduction* and/or David Bostock's *Aristotle's Ethics* (check Amazon.ca for availability). Both are accessible introductions to the main topics in the *Ethics* and will help students worth through the text.

OBJECTIVES

This course has two objectives. The first is to give students of philosophy an introduction to the origins and foundations of their discipline, including the problems that define it. The second is to help students develop their ability to read and understand difficult philosophical texts and to reflect on the ideas and arguments they offer us. These are basic skills that every well-rounded philosopher should have.

REQUIREMENTS

With the move to online courses this year, the trend has been towards many smaller assignments. An unintended consequences of this is that students have become overwhelmed with the constant stream of assignments they are required to complete throughout the term. In an effort to minimize this, I have decided to reduce student workload in this course. Students will instead be required to complete **two essays** (7-9 pages each, double-spaced, normal 12-pt font). Students are expected to research topics of their own choice. Part of the evaluation will be how well-researched your essay topics are. However, the papers cannot overlap; you must choose two distinct topics. If you are having trouble developing your essay topic, feel free to email me.

There is also a **participation grade** for the course. Each week I will post a discussion question(s) related to the weekly readings. The questions will typically ask you to reflect on the philosophical issues under discussion. Students must complete **5 forum posts** throughout the term (350-400 words each), worth 2% each (for a total of 10%). You may complete up to 7 posts, and the best 5 will be counted toward your grade. (You are also free to respond to other student posts, though only your original post will be graded.) **IMPORTANT:** Forum posts will be open for two weeks after the relevant lecture drops, after which point they will be closed. The aim of the forum is to encourage students to keep up with the material and engage with the content while it is still fresh in their minds. Think of the forum as if it were part of class discussion; you wouldn't raise your hand in Week 7 to make a comment about something we talked about back in Week 3. So please do not expect to wait until the last few weeks of class to go back and post answers to the questions from earlier weeks.

Essay One. **45%**

Essay Two. **45%**

Participation. **10%**

Late Paper/Extensions Policy. [1] Papers must be submitted through OWL by 11:00 pm on the day they are due. Late penalties are 3% per day (starting at 11:01 pm on the due date) for a maximum of 5 days, after which the assignment will not be accepted. [2] Since the essays are both over 30%, any extensions must be sought through the Academic Counsellor's Office of your home faculty. I will not grant extensions, so please do not ask. [3] SRAs (self-reported absence). Note that the SRA system cannot be used for assignments over 30%. So they cannot be used for essays.

AUDIT

Students wishing to audit the course should consult with the instructor prior to or during the first week of classes.

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY POLICIES

The **Department of Philosophy Policies** which govern the conduct, standards, and expectations for student participation in Philosophy courses is available in the Undergraduate section of the Department of Philosophy website at <http://uwo.ca/philosophy/undergraduate/policies.html>.

It is your responsibility to understand the policies set out by the Senate and the Department of Philosophy, and thus ignorance of these policies cannot be used as grounds of appeal.

ACCOMMODATION

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

SELF-REPORTED ABSENCE FORM

Students who experience an unexpected illness or injury or an extenuating circumstance (48 hours or less) that is sufficiently severe to temporarily render them unable to meet academic requirements (e.g., attending lectures or labs, writing tests or midterm exams, completing and submitting assignments, participating in presentations) should self-declare using the online Self-Reported Absence portal. This option should be used in situations where the student expects to resume academic responsibilities within 48 hours or less.

The following conditions are in place for self-reporting of medical or extenuating circumstances: http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#SubHeading_322

EVALUATION OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

At least three days prior to the deadline for withdrawal from a course without academic penalty, students will receive assessment of work accounting for at least 15% of their final grade. For 3000- or 4000-level courses in which such a graded assessment is impracticable, the instructor(s) must obtain an exemption from this policy from the Dean and this exemption must be noted on the corresponding course syllabus. In rare instances and at the Dean's discretion, other courses could receive a similar exemption, which also must be noted in the course syllabus.

COURSE ASSIGNMENT

The last day of scheduled classes in any course will be the last day on which course assignments will be accepted for credit in a course. Instructors will be required to return assignments to students as promptly as possible with reasonable explanations of the instructor's assessment of the assignment.

ACADEMIC OFFENCES

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

PLAGIARISM CHECKING

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help. Immediate help in the event of a crisis can be had by phoning 519.661.3030 (during class hours) or 519.433.2023 after class hours and on weekends.