PAR 115: Introduction to Ethics

Term:	Summer 2021	**Instructor:**	Robert Smithson
Time:	Online	**Email:**	smithsonr@uncw.edu

Course Description

In this class, we will discuss a central human question: *how ought one to live*? We will first consider how a variety of *moral theories* have sought to answer this question. In this part of the course, we will learn about such ideas as: *moral obligation*, *moral law*s, *moral virtue*s, *moral emotion*s, and *moral responsibility*. We will then consider the broader question of what role morality itself should have in our lives; in this part of the course, we will address issues such as *relativism*, *egoism*, *non-moral valu*e. In the third unit, we will consider whether human life has meaning and what that meaning is. In the final unit, we will seek to develop practical skill at *ethical reasoning* by discussing a variety of concrete ethical dilemmas from bioethics, environmental ethics, the political sphere, and interpersonal relationships.

Course Goals

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Understand and critically assess a variety of influential moral theories.

2. Assess the broader question of the role that morality itself should have in our lives.

3. Engage in nuanced ethical reasoning about complex ethical dilemmas.

4. Assess the question of what makes a human life meaningful.

5. Defend philosophical theses through philosophical ("argumentative") writing.

Online courses

As an online course, all lectures, readings, assignments, etc. will be posted on Canvas. For more information on this, simply click the "Start Here" whenever you first open the course's Canvas site.

Because the course is entirely online, it is especially important that you email meany questions that might come up during the class. This will help ensure that you do not fall behind in the class.

Course Texts

All texts for the course will be posted to the course's Canvas site.

Grading

Three papers (3 pages each): 40%

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Assignments (1-2 pages each): 20%
Forum participation: 20%
Final: 20%

Papers
In light of the second listed goal for the course, there will be a series of writing assignments throughout the term. There will be a different prompt for each of the three units in the course.

To facilitate anonymous grading, only include your identification number (and not your name) at the top of the document that you upload to Canvas. For helpful advice on writing philosophy papers, please see the two documents about writing philosophy papers that have been uploaded to Canvas.

Honor Code
All students enrolled at UNCW are subject to the UNCW Student Academic Honor Code, which is intended to help every member of the UNCW community appreciate the high value placed on academic integrity and the means that will be employed to ensure its preservation. Students are expected to perpetuate a campus culture in which each student does his or her own work while relying on appropriate resources for assistance. In such a climate, students enjoy a special trust that they are members of a unique community in which one's thoughts and words are attributed correctly and with proper ownership, and in which there is little need for systems to sanction those who cheat. As such, all UNCW students shall commit to the principles and spirit of the Honor Code by adhering to the following pledge:

> As a student at The University of North Carolina Wilmington, I am committed to honesty and truthfulness in academic inquiry and in the pursuit of knowledge. I pledge to uphold and promote the UNCW Student Academic Honor Code.

More information on the Honor Code is available at the following website: http://www.uncw.edu/odos/hono

Please be especially familiar with UNCW's position on plagiarism as outlined in the UNCW Student Handbook. Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty in which you take someone else's ideas and represent them as your own. Here are some examples of plagiarism:

1. You write about someone else's work in your paper and do not give them credit for it by referencing them.

2. You give a presentation and use someone else's ideas and do not state that the ideas are the other person's.

3. You get ideas from some other reference material and do not reference that material.

Accessibility Services
It is very important that this classroom be an inclusive environment that meets the learning needs of all of its students. If you are a person with a disability and antici- pate needing any type of academic accommodations in order to fully participate in your classes, please contact the Oce of Disability Services (962-7555). Please give me a copy of the letter you receive from Oce of Disability Services detailing class accommodations you may need. If you require accommodation for test-taking, please make sure I have the referral letter no fewer than three days before the test.

Title IX Statement
UNCW practices a zero tolerance policy for any kind of violent or harassing behavior. If you are experiencing an emergency of this type contact the police at 911 or UNCW CARE at 962- 2273. Resources for individuals concerned with a violent or harassing situation can be located at http://uncw.edu/noharm/resources/index.html.

University Learning Center
The University Learning Center's (ULC) mission is to help students become successful, independent learners. Tutoring at the ULC is NOT remediation: the ULC oers a dierent type of learning opportunity for those students who want to increase the quality of their education. ULC services are free to all UNCW students and include the following:

—|Learning Services (University Learning Center) http://uncw.edu/ulc/learning/

—Supplemental Instruction http://www.uncw.edu/ulc/si/index.html

—Writing Services http://www.uncw.edu/ulc/writing/index.html

Course Schedule
The entire course schedule, including all assignments, can be found under the "Modules" tab on Canvas. A summary of the assignments is found under the "Syllabus" tab on Canvas. The schedule and the due dates of the assignments are subject to change, depending on the progress of the course.