



CONTEMPORARY ETHICS

PHI 4360 - FALL 2020
TR 12:30-1:45 PM, DRAPER 243
ZOOM MEETING 957 4736 5500
DR. ANNE JEFFREY

WELCOME TO CONTEMPORARY ETHICS!

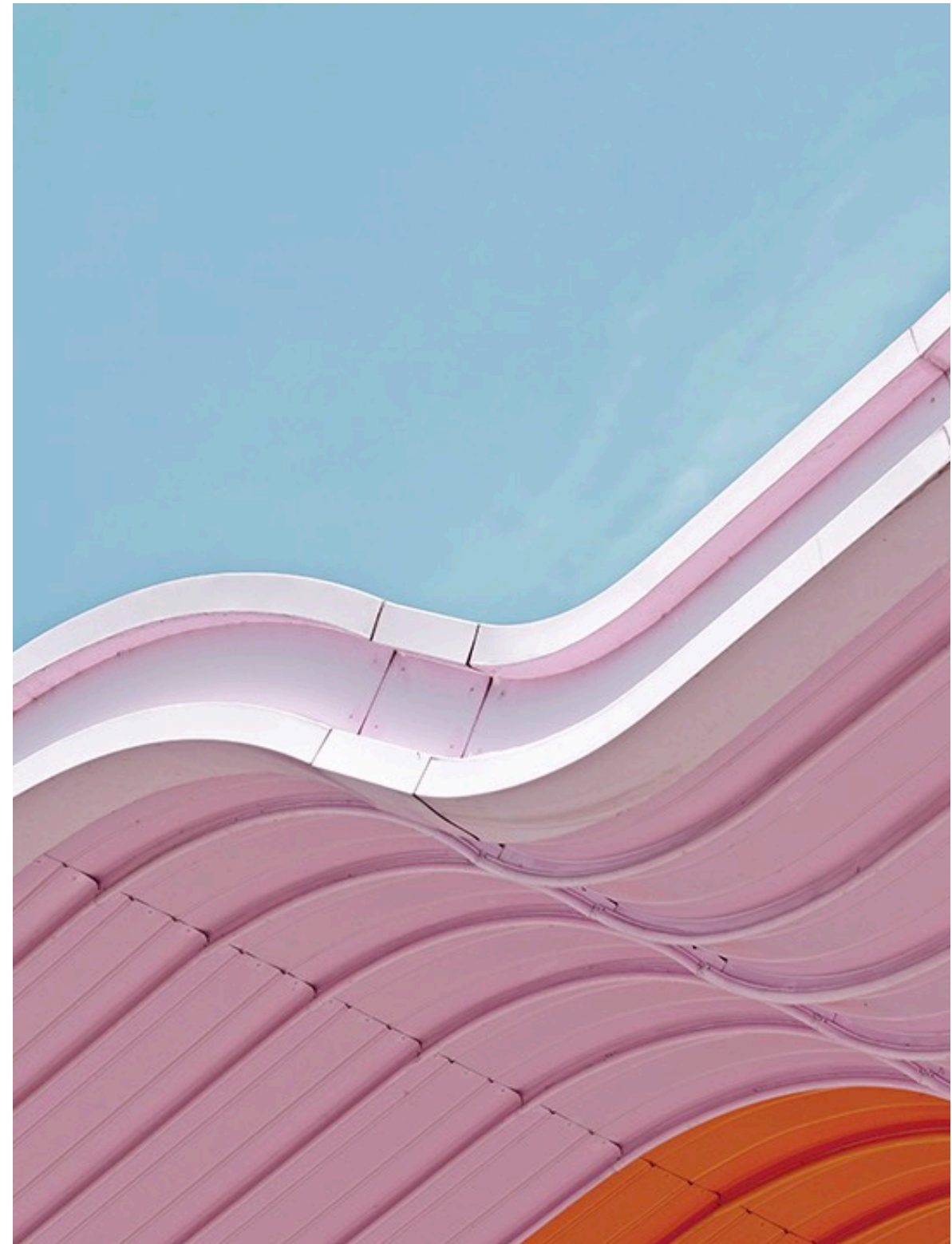
PROFESSOR: Dr. Anne Jeffrey

COURSE SITE: <https://blogs.baylor.edu/phi4360f20/>

COFFEE HOUR: appointments available TR 11-12
anne_jeffrey@baylor.edu

I'm looking forward to venturing together on a journey to learn more about how we should live. I expect that I'll learn from you and your experiences, just as you'll learn from me and each other.

Shoot me an email with a fun fact about yourself anytime in the semester and I'll return the favor!



PHI 4360 SYLLABUS

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SAFETY

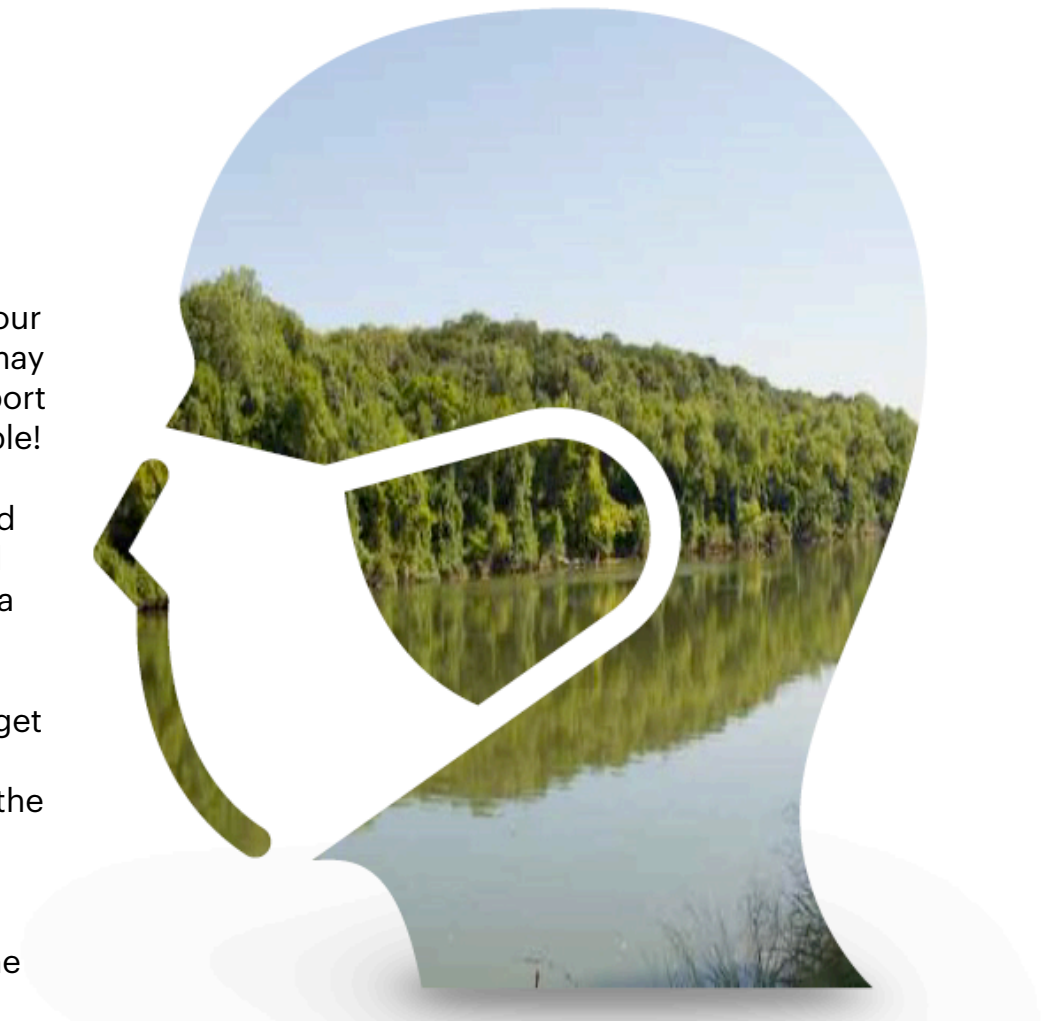
HEALTH MATTERS

At Baylor, we're committed to providing **safe spaces** for our bodies and minds. Some of you or your fellow students may be at risk or living with someone who is at risk. Let's support each other by creating the healthiest environment possible!

To this end, we'll all wear face coverings over mouths and noses while in the building or holding class outdoors and maintain social distancing (6 ft min). No one will remove a mask during class (thus no hydrating or eating).

Any student who forgets a face covering will need to go get one before entering class. I will dismiss class if someone does not wear their mask in class and will not leave, and the student will be subject to disciplinary action through the Student Code of Conduct.

If you are in need of psychological support, please call the Counseling Center at 254-710-2467 or Chaplain Burt Burleson at 254-710-3517. See the **Policies** document and [webpage](#) for more info.



FLEXIBILITY

CLASS FORMAT

Flexibility is the name of the game this fall! The class delivery format is hybrid.

You'll be put into small "study groups" and meet every class period (TR 12:30). We'll meet altogether on zoom once a week (R 1:15 pm). We'll put together a rotation for each study group to be in Draper regularly.

We'll periodically check in with each other to see how this is working and how we can improve our model, then adjust as needed.

UPDATES

Please make sure you regularly check your email for updates. Due to COVID-19, the delivery format may change or you may need to change how you participate in the class.

No worries: I've prepared the class content so we can move swiftly online or offer content online for any student who contracts or is exposed to someone with COVID-19.

"EVEN-KEELED" (of a boat or ship): having a horizontal or level keel, typically ensuring smooth or stable sailing; (of a person or situation): functioning normally after a period of difficulty" (OED)

We'll support each other in staying even-keeled in the event of an individual or group shift to online learning. The course is designed so you can still achieve the learning goals if such a change occurs.



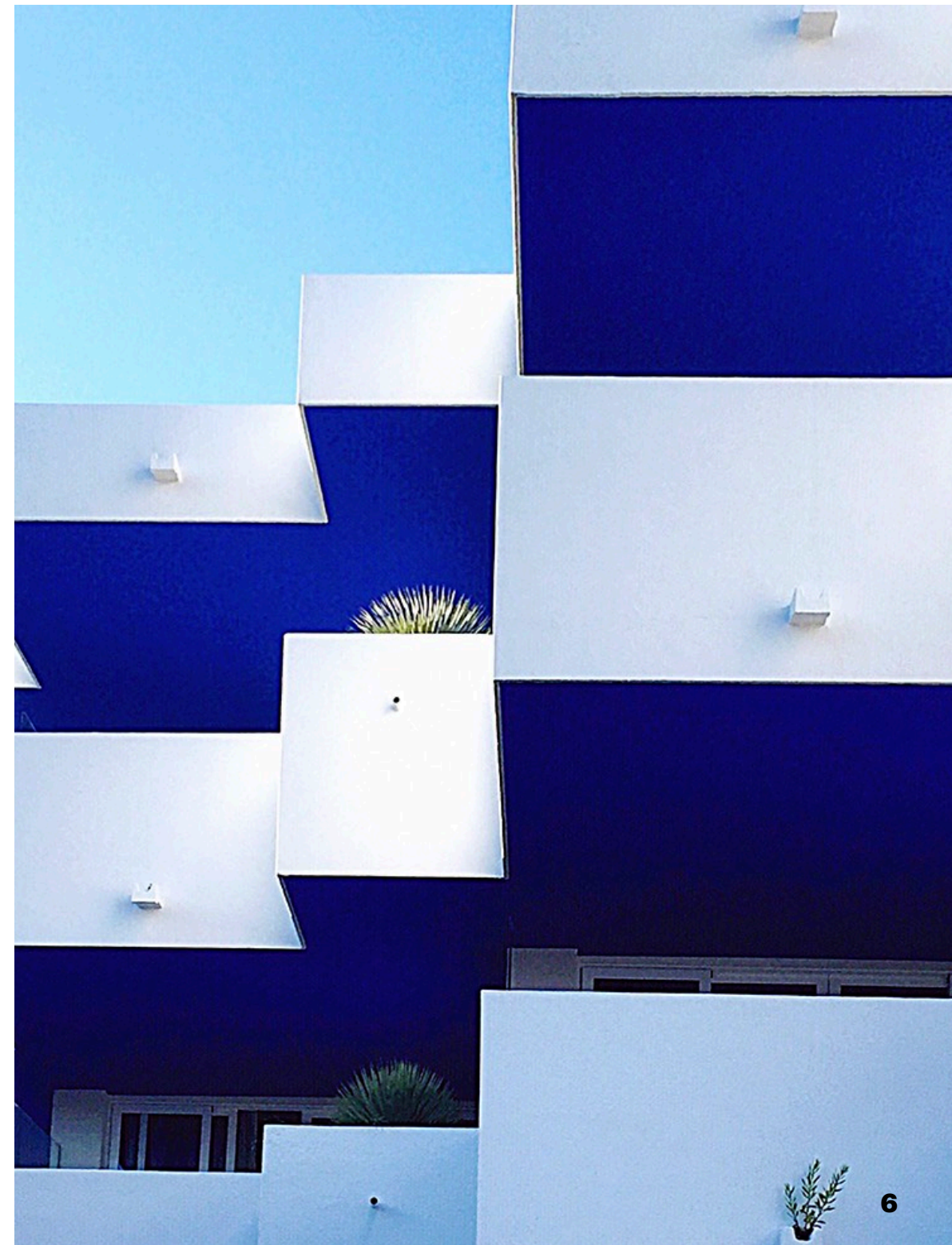
WHAT IS THIS COURSE ABOUT?

The central question of ethics is *how should we live?* Answering this question is not optional; we all have to address it because we all have a life to live.

The merits of engaging that question using **philosophy** is that we can approach that question in a principled, charitable, patient, and careful way.

In this course, we're aiming to get a sophisticated understanding of *four different* pictures of how we should live— ethical theories: Consequentialism, Kantian Contractualism, Theistic Ethics, and Virtue Ethics. We'll learn to think philosophically about ethics, communicate about ethics, and integrate philosophy into our lives by figuring out what ethical theories have to say about issues that matter to us.

This is a collaborative effort. We'll build a community with mutual respect, esteem, encouragement, and a shared desire to know how we should live.



WHAT WILL WE READ?

We'll work our way through five books, with some supplemental readings as listed on the reading schedule online.

Each text should be available to you through the Baylor library or a link on the course reading schedule.



Brewer, Talbot, *The Retrieval of Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press). ISBN: 9780199557882

Driver, Julia, *Consequentialism* (New York: Routledge, 2012). ISBN: 9780415772587

MacIntyre, Alasdair, *Ethics in the Conflicts of Modernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016). ISBN: 9781107176454

Scanlon, T.M. *What We Owe to Each Other* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000). ISBN: 9780674004238

Van Zyl, *Virtue Ethics: A Contemporary Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2019). ISBN: 978-0-415-83616

WHAT WILL WE LEARN?

5 LEARNING GOALS

Learning goals are big-picture and intangible.

You can make measurable progress towards the goals by achieving *course objectives*. *Course objectives* are tangible and specific ways of meeting these learning goals:

1 UNDERSTAND FOUR ETHICAL VIEWS

You'll learn to differentiate and identify what drives different views about how we should live: consequentialism, Kantian contractualism, virtue ethics, and theistic ethics.



The deepest philosophical ethics is written with one eye on the past and one eye on the contemporary world. - Talbot Brewer

2 THINK PHILOSOPHICALLY ABOUT ETHICS

You'll learn to think like a philosopher about questions regarding how to live: in a careful, charitable, patient, and principled way.

3 COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY ABOUT ETHICS

You'll learn and practice writing and speaking clearly about ethical claims, arguments, and theories to both academic and public audiences.

4 BUILD COMMUNITY WITH A SHARED GOAL

You'll gain relationships characterized by mutual encouragement, honesty, respect, and esteem for each other as offering perspectives and gifts that will help us figure out how to live well.

5 INTEGRATE PHILOSOPHY INTO YOUR LIFE

You'll learn how to apply the ethical theories and arguments to your own life and use them in dialogues with others and personal decision-making.



There are 14 **course objectives**: tangible ways you're progressing towards the learning goals. Your final grade will be based on number of points accumulated by meeting these objectives.

Each assignment provides opportunity to meet at least one objective.

You'll meet an objective by doing it satisfactorily on a linked assignment (meeting rubric standards).

Meeting an objective once earns 1 point.

Some objectives can be met multiple times, so you can earn more than one point by meeting the objective more than once (1a, 1c, 4a, 4b). But the rest of the objectives need only to be met once (for 1 point).

1. UNDERSTAND THEORIES

- 1a. Differentiate ethical theories from one another
- 1b. Interpret texts about theories charitably in light of context
- 1c. Reconstruct the reasons given for the claims of theories

2. THINK PHILOSOPHICALLY

- 2a. Identify a problem for one of the theories
- 2b. Spend time formulating the strongest version
- 2c. Create original solution or diagnosis for "the hard problem"

3. COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY

- 3a. Summarize claims of a theory for public audience
- 3b. Reformulate arguments for public audience
- 3c. Present your own diagnosis/solution to an academic audience

4. BUILD COMMUNITY

- 4a. Contribute to shared understanding of readings
- 4b. Contribute meaningfully and respectfully in study groups

5. INTEGRATE WITH YOUR LIFE

- 5a. Reflect on your own ethical views and assumptions
- 5b. Conduct an experiment in living and reflect
- 5c. Apply a theory to a current social or personal ethical issue

WHAT WILL WE DO?

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS



There are 7 assignment types that provide opportunities to meet course objectives and progress towards the learning goals. Some assignments are interchangeable- you can meet objectives 3a and 3b with either the Resource Share or the Op-ed/Ted Talk. You can choose which assignments to complete depending on how many objectives you want to achieve.

Click below to visit the assignment’s page with everything you need to know about it.

Assignment Type	Learning Goal(s)	Due
Comprehension Checks	1	9/15, 10/8, 11/10, 12/1
Reading Comments	4	rolling
Op-Ed/Ted Talk	1, 3, 5	10/8
Resource Share	3, 5	10/15
Phased Paper	1, 2, 3	10/29, 11/5, 11/19, 12/1
Study Group Feedback	4	rolling
Experiment in Living	5	rolling after 10/15

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT FROM YOU?

STANDARDS-BASED GRADING

A	19-23 pts
A-	18 pts
B+	17 pts
B	15-16 pts
B-	14 pts
C+	13 pts
C	11-12 pts
C-	10 pts
D	9 pts

You can expect transparent, formative assessment of all your work. This course implements [standards-based grading](#)— a method that proven [highly effective](#) in secondary and postsecondary education for improving [student learning outcomes](#).

Standards-based grading is known for helping focus attention on learning portable skills, encouraging students to take responsibility for their learning, and offering feedback and assessment that more effectively generates improvement. Each grade corresponds to a number of points you've accumulated by meeting course objectives. Thus, the grade earned reflects your progress towards the learning goals measured by objectives.

HOW DO WE ACHIEVE OBJECTIVES?

ASSIGNMENTS & OBJECTIVES ALIGNMENT

Objective	Linked assignments	Point max
1a. Differentiate ethical theories from one another	Comprehension checks (max. 1 pt per unit)	4
1b. Interpret texts about theories charitably in light of context	Phased paper- phase 2, launch phase	1
1c. Reconstruct the reasons given for the claims of theories	Phased paper- phase 1, launch phase, Op-Ed/Ted talk	2
2a. Identify a philosophical problem for one of the theories	Phased paper- phase 3, launch phase	1
2b. Spend time formulating the strongest version of a problem	Phased paper- phase 3, launch phase	1
2c. Create original solution or diagnosis for “the hard problem”	Phased paper- launch	1
3a. Summarize claims of a theory for public audience	Op-ed/Ted talk, Resource share	1
3b. Reformulate arguments for public audience	Op-ed/Ted talk, Resource share	1
3c. Present your own diagnosis/solution to an academic audience	Phased paper- launch	1
4a. Contribute to shared understanding of readings	Reading comments (max 1 pt per unit)	4
4b. Contribute meaningfully and respectfully in study groups	Study groups feedback (max 1 pt per unit)	3
5a. Critically reflect on your own ethical views and assumptions	Op-ed/Ted talk, Experiment in living	1
5b. Conduct an experiment in living and reflect on your experience	Experiment in living	1
5c. Apply a theory to a current social or personal ethical issue	Op-ed/Ted talk, Resource share	1

WHAT'S THE SCHEDULE?

READING AND ASSIGNMENTS

Date Due	Assignment
Tuesday 8/25	Introductions and planning ahead
Thursday 8/27	Joshua Wolf Shenk, "What Makes Us Happy?", "The Case of the Defaced Den"
Tuesday 9/1	Julia Driver, Consequentialism, Ch. 1
Thursday 9/3	Driver, Consequentialism, Ch. 2
Tuesday 9/8	Driver, Consequentialism, Ch. 3
Thursday 9/10	Driver, Consequentialism, Ch. 4-5
Tuesday 9/15	Driver, Consequentialism, Ch. 6 or Mark Murphy, "Simple Desire-Fulfillment Theory"
Thursday 9/17	Applied issue Consequentialism Comprehension Check first attempt 1a (1 pt) Last day for Reading Comments unit 4a (1 pt) and Study Groups Feedback unit 4b (1 pt)
Tuesday 9/22	Elizabeth Ashford and Tim Mulgan, "Contractualism"
Thursday 9/24	Tim Scanlon, What We Owe to Each Other, Ch. 3
Tuesday 9/29	Scanlon, What We Owe to Each Other, Ch. 4
Thursday 10/1	Scanlon, What We Owe to Each Other, Ch. 5 part 1
Tuesday 10/6	Scanlon, What We Owe to Each Other, Ch. 5 part 2
Thursday 10/8	Applied issue Op-Ed/Ted Talk, 1c, 3a, 3b, 5c (4 pts), Contractualism Comprehension Check first attempt 1a (1 pt) Last day for Reading Comments unit 4a (1 pt) and Study Groups Feedback unit 4b (1 pt)

READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Tuesday 10/13	Elizabeth Anscombe, "Modern Moral Philosophy" and Liesl Van Zyl, <i>Virtue Ethics</i> , 1.3-1.6
Thursday 10/15	Van Zyl, <i>Virtue Ethics</i> , 2.1 and 3 Resource Share 3a, 3b, 5c (3 pts)
Tuesday 10/20	Van Zyl, <i>Virtue Ethics</i> , 4.2, 5.1, 6.2
Thursday 10/22	Talbot Brewer, <i>The Retrieval of Ethics</i> , Intro and Ch. 2
Tuesday 10/27	Brewer, <i>The Retrieval of Ethics</i> , Ch. 3
Thursday 10/29	Brewer, <i>The Retrieval of Ethics</i> , Ch. 4 Phased Paper phase 1: reconstruction 1c (1 pt)
Tuesday 11/3	Brewer, <i>The Retrieval of Ethics</i> , Ch. 6
Thursday 11/5	Brewer, <i>The Retrieval of Ethics</i> , Ch. 7 Phased Paper phase 2: interpretation 1b (1 pt)
Tuesday 11/10	Applied issue Virtue Ethics Comprehension Check 1a (1 pt) Last day for Reading Comments unit 3 4a (1 pt) and Study Groups Feedback unit 3 4b (1 pt)
Thursday 11/12	Alasdair MacIntyre, <i>Ethics in the Conflicts of Modernity</i> , 1.1-1.6
Tuesday 11/17	Alasdair MacIntyre, <i>Ethics in the Conflicts of Modernity</i> , 2.1, 2.3-4, 2.6
Thursday 11/19	Alasdair MacIntyre, <i>Ethics in the Conflicts of Modernity</i> , 3.1-3.5, 4 Phased Paper phase 3: hard problem 2a, 2b (2 pts)
Tuesday 11/24	Scanlon, What We Owe to Each Other, Ch. 5 part 2
Tuesday 12/1	Catch up day Phased paper launch , Theistic Ethics Comprehension Check 1a (1 pt) Last day for Reading Comments unit 4 4a (1 pt) and Study Groups Feedback unit 4 4b (1 pt), Experiment in living 5a, 5b (2 pts)

WHAT RESOURCES DO WE HAVE?

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

COFFEE HOURS

Coffee hours are times I've set aside to get to meet one-on-one or in small groups. I hope you'll take time to visit with me — over coffee or tea if you like, whether on zoom or outside on campus. We can talk about what brought you to Baylor, your major; what you are thinking about, getting out of class and readings; ideas you have to improve the course, and what's working well for you. Sometimes college students think "office hours" are only for students struggling or with other issues. By calling my office hours "coffee hours," I hope I'm dispelling this myth! This is a fun learning-enhancing opportunity. [Make an appointment](#) for zoom office hours anytime.

FOSTER SUCCESS CENTER

Everyone in our class has the ability to meet the goals and objectives outlined. The Foster Success Center is here for you to help you exercise that ability. Those who use it regularly are among the most successful students at Baylor, so I highly encourage you to let them partner with you in your academic journey.

UNIVERSITY WRITING CENTER & LIBRARIANS

I came to college thinking I was a good writer. I spent my first Dia del Oso in a writing workshop because I had bombed an essay.

We can all get better as writers, even if we are very good. The [University Writing Center](#) can help you at any stage from brainstorming to editing. And our librarians (bill_hair@baylor.edu) can help you learn how to research using methods that will take your writing to the next level (this includes you, grad students!). The library has even compiled a Philosophy [resource guide](#) for us!

FIRST IN LINE

My father did not complete a 4-year college degree. I went to Baylor and got a PhD from Georgetown. I married someone whose father was a college professor. My partner's experience navigating college and grad school was *totally* different from mine. Things that he grew up understanding were unfamiliar and confusing to me. He had support at home that I didn't have, and so we faced different challenges in our education.

If your parents did not complete a 4-year college degree, I encourage you to take advantage of the [First in Line program](#)! It's here to support you as a pioneer the college experience (firstinline@baylor.edu).

OALA

If you need academic accommodations related to having different ability/disability, please let me know as soon as the semester starts and get signed up with the Office of Access and Learning Accommodation. They'll help walk you through documentation and information. **15**

PSYCHOLOGICAL RESOURCES

College can be tough, and college in a pandemic- if it is anything like teaching in a pandemic- is very tough.

If you need emotional or psychological support, the Baylor Counseling Center is here for you at 254-710-2467. In crisis or emergency, you can reach out to our wonderful Chaplain (who was my chaplain when I was a student!) At 254-710-3517.

TITLE IX AND EQUITY

Baylor University does not tolerate unlawful harassment or discrimination on the basis of sex, gender, race, color, disability, national origin, ancestry, age over 40, citizenship, genetic information or the refusal to submit to genetic test, past, current, or prospective service in the uniformed services, or any other protected characteristic under federal, Texas, or local law.

If you or someone you know would like help related to an experience involving sexual or gender based harassment, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, stalking, intimate partner violence, or retaliation for reporting one of these types of prohibited conduct, please visit www.baylor.edu/titleix or call 254-710-8454 or email titleIX_Coordinator@baylor.edu.

If you or someone you know would like help related to an experience involving harassment excluding those listed above, or adverse action, based on protected

characteristics, please visit www.baylor.edu/equity or call 254-710-7100 or email equity@baylor.edu.

The Office of Equity and Title IX understand the sensitive nature of these situations and can provide information about available on and off campus resources, such as counseling and psychological services, medical treatment, academic support, housing, advocacy, and other forms of assistance that may be available. Staff members at the office can also explain your rights and procedural options. You will not be required to share your experience.

If you or someone you know feels unsafe or may be in imminent danger, please call the Baylor Police (254-710-2222) or Waco Police (911) immediately.

Except for Confidential Resources, all University Employees are designated Responsible Employees and thereby mandatory reporters of potential sexual and interpersonal misconduct violations. Confidential resources who do not have to report include those working in the Counseling Center, Health Center, and the University Chaplain.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

"We are gathered on the unceded land of the Comanche, Hueco, Tawakoni, and Wichita peoples. We also acknowledge that it was founded upon exclusions and erasures of many Indigenous peoples, including those on whose land this institution is located."*

Baylor was founded by Baptist leaders who owned enslaved persons, supported the institution of slavery both during and following the Civil War. This includes Baylor's founders, most members of its initial board of trustees, and several early leaders of the institution. The University that today grants students such benefits as a Christian liberal arts education has a history marked by deep injustice antithetical to Christian life and mission.

As a professor of Baylor, I enjoy and distribute benefits partly gained through these injustices and inequalities. This acknowledgement marks a commitment to the ongoing work of restoration, redemption, and God's justice for all people at Baylor University.

