



# PHIL 102A: Contemporary Moral Problems

## Syllabus

### 1912 Winter 2018

Instructor: Dr. Andrea Sullivan Clarke

Class Time: M-F 9:30-10:20 Location: R302

Office Hours: Weds. 1-3 (and by appointment)

Office: R-230

Campus Phone: 425-564-2045

e-mail: [a.clarke@bellevuecollege.edu](mailto:a.clarke@bellevuecollege.edu)

## Course Information

This course is an introduction to the basic issues, arguments, and methods of traditional and contemporary moral philosophy. As we examine different issues in applied ethics, we will learn about normative ethical theories, such as Utilitarianism, Kantian Ethics, and Feminist Ethics. The issues to be analyzed using these theories include (but are not limited to): charitable giving, euthanasia, friendships, animal rights, and abortion. In addition, our investigations will include exploring the sub-discipline of research ethics. While actively engaging these issues, students will develop their ability to critically reason, become better speakers and critically evaluate their own beliefs and views.

## Course Outcomes

After completing this class, students should be able to:

- Formulate, clarify and evaluate arguments.
- Analyze and assess views that make ethics a matter of convention, including moral relativism.
- Explain and evaluate substantive ethical theories including utilitarianism and respect for persons and the ethics of care.
- Explain how substantive ethical theories including utilitarianism, respect for persons and the ethics of care incorporate the value of cultural diversity. Explain the ethical foundations for sustainability.
- Apply substantive ethical theories including utilitarianism and respect for persons to a range of specific problem areas like abortion, physician assisted suicide, animal rights, poverty, environmental protection and free speech.
- Write argumentative essays containing clear thesis claims, strong arguments for the theses, reasonable consideration of opposing views, and conforming to the presentation/writing standards set forth in the “BC Philosophy Writing Guidelines.”

## How Outcomes Will be Met

Participation ( ?)	150 points
Reading Quizzes 16 @ 5 points each	80 points
Class Projects 2 @ 25 points each	50 points
Exams 2 @100 points each	200 points
Final Exam	105 points
Paper 1	60 points
Paper 2	75 points
Final Paper	80 points
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Total:	800 points

**Participation:** Attendance and participation go hand in hand. Although I will only take attendance for safety purposes, students are expected to **actively** participate in class. (To do so, you will need to attend!) This can be accomplished by actively listening, asking good questions, participating in class discussion/exercises/games, and attending office hours. In addition, it is important to be respectful of others. Allow people to speak and do not talk while others (including the instructor) are talking. Some of the topics in philosophy can be controversial, it is critical that we engage arguments and not people. **Group work cannot be made up.** The use of electronics, such as phones/computers/music players during class, may result in a lower participation grade.

**Reading Quizzes:** Reading quizzes will be conducted at the beginning of class. There are 18 assignments total and I will drop the two lowest grades (in short, you may miss two.) These quizzes are a low stakes way of ensuring the student does the reading for the particular day. Each quiz will have 1-3 multiple-choice questions. To know if we will have a quiz, students should check the syllabus; days that will have a quiz will have an (\*) by it. For example, the first quiz is on Friday, January 5<sup>th</sup> and it will be over non-deductive arguments.

**Class Project:** On February 2<sup>nd</sup> and February 15<sup>th</sup>, we will work class projects. The details of each will be given prior to the assignment due date. Students are expected to complete the projects on their own.

**Paper 1 & Paper 2:** Students are expected to write a critical paper (3-5 pages), which will be assigned during class (see syllabus for dates). In addition, you will receive instruction on how to write philosophy papers. In general, the requirements for these papers differ from papers assigned in other disciplines. We will go over how to write a philosophy paper in class. If for some reason you miss class during this time, please make an appointment with me. Submission instructions will be provided along with the writing prompts.

**Final Paper:** The final paper is a revised version of either Paper 1 or Paper 2, your choice. Depending on the type of revisions needed, it may be that revising the

lower scoring paper would be better than the other. It should be no longer than 5 pages! This paper is due in class. It should be revised using comments from fellow students and the instructor. You may seek advice outside of class- the academic center is a resource on campus.

**Exams:** All exams will be taken in class. The format of the exams will vary and may include multiple choice, true/false, definitions, short answer, and essay. I will discuss the format of each exam prior to its date. Note the dates of the exams on the calendar- these should not be missed and will require documentation to make up. The final exam will be comprehensive.

## Grading

When converting total points to decimal grades the following scale will be used. To determine your overall class grade, add up all of the points you earned for each assignment, **multiply the total by 1.25**, and use the following chart to determine your final grade for the course.

Letter Grade	Total Points Ranges
A	975-1000
A-	960-974
B+	939-959
B	900-938
B-	885-899
C+	868-884

C	850-867
C-	837-849
D+	806-836
D	785-805
D-	765-784
F	0-764

**There will be no curves and no extra credit in this class.** You will not be graded relative to your fellow students. What this means is that it is possible for *everyone* to get an A (4.0) or an F (0.0) or anything in-between. **In order to pass the course, you must complete all assignment categories with an additive percentage of 60% or higher.**

The College Grading Policy is explained in the current Course Catalog and can also be found at this link: [Grading Policy](#)

## Books and Materials Required

All readings will be supplied on Canvas. Please be sure to bring paper, pen/pencil, and the day's reading to class. You may wish to purchase a folder or something to keep track of graded assignments.

## Help with Canvas

Students can find help with Canvas by following the link here: [Student Canvas Help](#)

# Classroom Learning Atmosphere

## Instructor's Expectations

**Attendance and Participation:** Attendance is very important for doing well in this course. We will be discussing numerous cases, examples, issues, and theories. In addition, philosophy cannot be done adequately in isolation. Thus, attendance, participation, discussion, and asking questions, are all very important for academic success. In addition, be on time and stay for the entire class. If you must leave early, do not disrupt the class. **Should any circumstances cause you to miss more than one week of class, you should consider retaking the course at a more convenient time- since you will miss too much of the material to grasp content or meet learning expectations.**

**Electronic Devices:** *All* electronic devices may only be used in the classroom with the permission of the instructor or to meet an accommodation. Activities that are not related to the course, such as checking e-mail, texting, on-line gaming, and social networking are disruptive to the class.

**E-mail Policy:** I reserve the right to have 24 hours to respond to student e-mails, especially if the e-mail is over the weekend or late at night. You should use your BC e-mail and check frequently. This will be how I communicate with you.

## Accessibility

The online elements of this course are designed to be welcoming to, accessible to, and usable by everyone, including students who are English-language learners, have a variety of learning styles, have disabilities, or are new to online learning. Be sure to let me know immediately if you encounter a required element or resource in the course that is not accessible to you. Also, let me know of changes I can make to the course so that it is more welcoming to, accessible to, or usable by students who take this course in the future.

## Affirmation of Inclusion

Bellevue College is committed to maintaining an environment in which every member of the campus community feels welcome to participate in the life of the college, free from harassment and discrimination.

We value our different backgrounds at Bellevue College, and students, faculty, staff members, and administrators are to treat one another with dignity and respect.

[Affirmation of Inclusion](https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/inclusion/) (<https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/inclusion/>)

## Religious Holidays

Students who expect to miss classes, examinations, or any other assignments because of their religious observance should be provided with a reasonable alternative opportunity to complete such academic responsibilities. It is the obligation of students to provide faculty with reasonable notice of the dates of religious holidays on which they will be absent, preferably at the beginning of the term. Students who are absent on days of examinations or class assignments should be offered an opportunity to make up the work without penalty (if they have previously arranged to be absent), unless it can be demonstrated that a makeup opportunity would constitute an unreasonable burden on a member of the faculty. Should disagreement arise over what constitutes an unreasonable burden or any element of this policy, parties involved should consult the department chair, or Dean.

[Policy 2950 Accommodations for Reasons of Faith or Conscience](http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/policies/id-2950p-2/)  
(<http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/policies/id-2950p-2/>).

## College Anti-Discrimination Statement

Bellevue College does not discriminate on the basis of race or ethnicity; creed; color; national origin; sex; marital status; sexual orientation; age; religion; genetic

information; the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability; or veteran status in educational programs and activities which it operates. Bellevue College is prohibited from discriminating in such a manner by college policy and by state and federal law. All college personnel and persons, vendors, and organizations with whom the college does business are required to comply with applicable federal and state statutes and regulations designed to promote affirmative action and equal opportunity.

[Equal Opportunity](http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/equal/) (<http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/equal/>)

## Confidentiality and Mandatory Reporting

As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus. It is my goal that you feel able to share information related to your life experiences in classroom discussions, in your written work, and in our one-on-one meetings. I will seek to keep information you share private to the greatest extent possible. However, I am required to share with the Title IX Coordinator any and all information regarding sexual assault and other forms of sexual misconduct (e.g. dating violence, domestic violence, stalking) that may have occurred on campus or that impacts someone on campus. Students may speak to someone confidentially by contacting the BC Counseling Center at (425) 564-2212. The Title IX Office can be contacted at 425-564-2641 and more information can be found at [Title IX](http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/titleix/) (<http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/titleix/>).

## Division Statements

### **AN IMPORTANT NOTE ON *PLAGIARISM*:**

Never plagiarize anything. Do not copy strings of words from books, magazines, newspapers, the Internet, e-mail, or from any other source without letting your reader know where those words came from. To offer the words as your own is dishonest, disreputable, and worthy of the stiffest punishment your philosophy instructor can legally hand out. The BC Philosophy Department will back any



philosophy instructor's decision to discipline students for plagiarism up to and including what is allowed by law. (Just so you know, I copied this from the Philosophy Department Website, see [Writing Guidelines](#) .)

My take on plagiarism is pretty strict. I will fail any assignment that contains examples of plagiarism. We will cover plagiarism when we talk about writing philosophy papers, but I want to make clear that I will not tolerate copying others' work and submitting it as your own to include class projects and reading quizzes. Keep in mind my policy about passing each category with a 60% or higher. One instance of plagiarism could cause you to fail the course.

Information about Bellevue College's copyright guidelines can be found at: [College Copyright Policy](#)

This link provides a good, short summary of how to avoid plagiarism: [Avoiding Plagiarism](#)

There is a 22-minute video that provides a good overview of how to avoid trouble when using sources: From the college home page select LIBRARY, then search by title for PLAGIARISM 2.0: ETHICS IN THE DIGITAL AGE.

## Student Code of Conduct and Academic Integrity

Any act of academic dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism (using the ideas or words of another as one's own without crediting the source), and fabrication and inappropriate/disruptive classroom behavior are violations of the Student Code of Conduct at Bellevue College. Examples of unacceptable behavior include, but are not limited to, talking out of turn, arriving late or leaving early without a valid reason, allowing cell phones/pagers to ring, and inappropriate behavior toward the instructor or classmates. The instructor can refer any violation of the Student Code of Conduct to the Dean of Student Success for investigation. Specific student rights, responsibilities, and appeal procedures are listed in the Student Code of Conduct at: [Student Code](#)

## Disability Resource Center (DRC)

The Disability Resource Center serves students with disabilities. A disability includes any physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Common disabilities include physical, neurological (e.g. Autism, ADD), and mental health (e.g. depression, anxiety). If you are a student who has a disability or if you think you may need accommodations in order to have equal access to programs, activities, and services, please contact the DRC.

If you require assistance in an emergency, please meet with your individual instructors to develop a safety plan for while in class and contact the DRC to develop a safety plan for while you are elsewhere on campus.

If you are a student with a documented autism spectrum disorder, there is an additional access program available to you. Contact Autism Spectrum Navigators (ASN). Email and phone number is on the web page. ASN is located in the Library Media Center in D125.

The DRC office is located in building B132. You can contact the DRC by stopping by B132, calling our desk at 425-564-2498, emailing [drc@bellevuecollege.edu](mailto:drc@bellevuecollege.edu), and Deaf students can reach us by Skype (account name DRCatBC). For more information about the services we offer, including our Initial Access Application, visit our website at [www.bellevuecollege.edu/drc](http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/drc).

Only Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals approved by the DRC are allowed in this classroom. All other animals will be asked to leave. If you believe you need your animal with you, please connect with the DRC and refrain from bringing your animal until a decision has been made.

## Course Calendar

*(I reserve the right to change the syllabus or schedule for any reason.)*

## **Week 1 Introduction and Conceptual Foundations**

- 01/01** Holiday- Happy New Year!
- 01/02** Introduction No Assigned Readings
- 01/03** Ethics Pojman, "What is Ethics?"
- 01/04** Argument Clinic (pp. 1-8) Elements of Argument.pdf
- 01/05\*** Argument Clinic (pp. 8-19) Elements of Argument.pdf

## **Week 2 Challenges to Western Ethical Thought**

- 01/08\*** Relativism Rachels, "The Challenge of Moral Relativism" pp. 34-39
- 01/09** Relativism, cont. Rachels, "The Challenge of Moral Relativism" pp. 39-46
- 01/10\*** Egoism Hobbes, "Leviathan" (Chpt. XIII)
- 01/11** Meta-ethical Nietzsche *Beyond Good and Evil*  
Nietzsche.pdf (§§ 259-261,  
pp.152-158)
- 01/12** Indigenous Ethics Cordova, "Ethics: The We and the I"

## **Week 3 Normative Ethical Theories**

- 01/15** HOLIDAY- MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY
- 01/16\*** Deontology Kant.pdf (pp 84-86)
- 01/17** Deontology, cont. Kant.pdf (pp. 86-93)

**01/18** Paper 1 Assigned                      No Reading Assigned

**01/19** Review                                      No Reading Assigned

**Week 4      Normative Ethical Theories, cont.**

**01/22** Quiz 1                                      No Reading Assigned

**01/23\*** Utilitarianism                      Mill 1863, "Utilitarianism"  
Chapter 1

**01/24** Utilitarianism                      Mill 1863, Chapter 2

**01/25\*** Feminist Critique                      Held-FeministEthics pp. 321-329

**01/26** Paper 1 Check-In                      No Reading Assigned

**Week 5      Charitable Giving**

**01/29\*** Famine Relief                      Hardin, "Lifeboat Ethics"

**01/30\*** Famine Relief, cont.                      Singer, "Famine, Affluence and  
Morality"

**01/31\*** Famine Relief, cont.                      Arthur, "World Hunger and  
Moral Obligation"

**02/01\*** Famine Relief, cont.                      O'Neill, "A Kantian Approach to  
World Hunger"

**02/02** Class Project: Famine



**02/22\*** Euthanasia, cont. Steinbock, "The Intentional Termination of Life"

**02/23** Paper 2 Check-In No Reading Assigned

**Week 9 Research Ethics- What Type of Project Should Science Be?**

**02/26** Science Briggie and Mitcham, *Ethics and Science: An Introduction*, pp. 1-10

**02/27** Movie: NOVA-"Do Scientists Cheat?" No Reading Assigned

**02/28\*** Science Involving Humans McNeil.pdf

**03/01\*** **Travel Day** **No Class**  
Assignment on Canvas Young.pdf

**03/02** Humans, cont. Owens.pdf

**Week 10 Research Ethics, cont.**

**03/05** Paper 2 Due Goldenberg.pdf, Fischer.pdf,  
Boseley.pdf

**03/06** **Faculty Professional Development - no classes/offices open**

**03/07** Science and Indigenous Communities  
Video: Bones of Contention

**03/08\*** Collaborative Science Walters, et al.pdf (pp. 146-159)

**03/09** Collaborative Science Walters, et al.pdf (pp. 159-169)

### **Week 11 Ethics in the Day-to-Day**

**03/12** Family English.pdf

**03/13\*** Family Mills.pdf

**03/14** Free Speech Mill, Chapter 2 (p.19 II.40- 21, stop at notes)

**03/15** Hate Speech Waldron.pdf, Lakoff.pdf, Rowland.pdf

**03/16** Philosophical Discussion Discussion for Participation Points

### **Week 12 Finals Week**

**03/19** Review & Wrap-Up

**03/20** Final Exam 9:30-11:20 R302

**03/21**

**03/22** End of Term!

## **Final Exam Schedule**

### [Final Exam Schedule](#)

In case of an emergency or weather event, please check e-mail for any communications.