TEACHING PORTFOLIO

ZOË A. JOHNSON KING

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TEACHING STATEMENT

I'm a qualified teacher. In between my M.Phil and my Ph.D., I completed the Teach First program – the UK's equivalent of Teach for America. I earned a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (the UK's main teaching degree) and taught full-time for two years at a secondary school in South-East London. I taught 22 classes, totaling approximately 500 students, aged 11-16. Officially, my subjects were Citizenship and Religious Studies. Unofficially, the former consisted largely of social and political philosophy, the latter a mixture of ethics and metaphysics. I passed the Teach First program rated "Outstanding" – the highest grade available – with my final lesson observation graded Outstanding in every category. I also secured good exam results for my students: 71.5% of my students earned A*-C grades in the UK's national exams, as compared with a school average of only 46%. In my second year, I was asked to plan schemes of work and produce lesson materials for the whole department, which I did.

My experiences in the Teach First program have profoundly shaped the way I think about teaching. I taught at a school in a socio-economically deprived part of London; most students did not have access to many educational resources at home, and many had turbulent home lives. Many were learning English as an additional language, having recently arrived in the UK. Some were refugees or asylum seekers, who faced significant personal and emotional barriers to learning due to the trauma they bore from their previous lives. Some had never been to school before their arrival in the UK. As a result, I encountered many students who were extremely bright and talented, but lacked the support and stability at home necessary for them to realize their potential – or indeed, in some cases, to even realize that they *had* potential. This is all commonplace for Teach First teachers; that's the kind of school Teach First works with. But the ethos of the program is to maintain high expectations of all students, regardless of their personal circumstances, and then do whatever it takes to enable them to make progress toward these expectations. I fully embraced this ethos at the time, and I still embrace it now.

All this is to say: my undergraduate teaching is driven by a deep commitment to the view that teachers have a moral and social responsibility to teach in a way that will enable *all* students to make progress. So I strive to incorporate the skills that I gained from my teaching degree into my current work as a Graduate Student Instructor. My courses are intellectually demanding; my undergraduate education at Cambridge left me with the firm conviction that undergraduate students can and indeed should be engaged in detailed critical study of primary texts, and that this is the best way to learn the intellectual history of our discipline. But I recognize that students will only be able to enjoy and appreciate these texts when provided with proper pedagogical support from me. This is especially true of students from non-academic backgrounds. I think that, rather than lowering our expectations of these students, we should keep our expectations high and instead raise the quality and quantity of academic support that we provide for them.

This applies first at the level of syllabus design. I use "backwards planning" techniques (see Fink 2003) to design syllabi. This means first identifying the knowledge, understanding, and skills that I want students to gain by the end of the course, then selecting assessment activities that are appropriate to determine the extent to which students have attained these goals, and then – but *only* then – identifying readings and in-class activities that will enable students to develop the desired knowledge, understanding, and skills over the course of the semester. I focus on three or four learning objectives per course, and I structure teaching and assessment with a view to ensuring that all students make clear, measurable progress toward them. This approach makes it clear to students what they must do to succeed in the course. This is important for two reasons. First, this clarity can partially compensate for pre-existing inequalities in students' cultural

capital. Secondly, students are far more motivated by this structure than by the all-too-common course structures in which the relationship that readings, activities, and assessments bear to the course goals is less clear (on this see Green 2015). The results of applying these techniques can be seen in my sample syllabi; I would be very happy to explain them further.

Ensuring that all students in a class make progress is challenging when they have widely varying levels of prior knowledge and ability. Here my practice is heavily informed by Vygotsky's (1978) concept of the "zone of proximal development" – the idea that learning occurs when students are performing tasks (or thinking thoughts) that they are able to do with support, but would not have been able to do without support. Keeping a class "in the zone" requires providing additional support to struggling students so that they can access the material. For example: I offer optional "writing frames" for in-class written exercises, which help students to practice the skills (e.g. summarizing arguments, explaining counterexamples) that I look for in their papers; I ask students to submit clarificatory questions about the readings before each class, which I then address in class; I compile a glossary of technical terms on our course website to help students who are less proficient in English, or less proficient in "philosospeak". At the same time, keeping a class "in the zone" requires stretching and challenging high-achievers. To this end, I accompany most in-class activities with "challenge tasks" that will push students who find the main activity straightforward. For example: when identifying the structure of an argument from the reading, a challenge task is to come up with another argument that has the same structure; when explaining a counterexample, a challenge task is to come up with a possible reply on behalf of the author; when defending a view, a challenge task is to identify which of several arguments for the view the student thinks is the strongest and to explain why. These techniques help to ensure that each student encounters an appropriate degree of challenge for them, given their background.

My most central tool for structuring my teaching to ensure that all students make progress is the regular use of Assessment for Learning ("AfL"; see Black and Wiliam 1998, Wiggins 1998, Black 2003). The term "AfL" refers to any process by which teachers and students gain information on students' progress toward the course objectives, which informs their choice of the appropriate next steps to "close the gap" between where students are currently and the course objectives. In my case, AfL includes everything from students' self- and peer-assessment of their written work using the rubrics that I use to grade their papers, to post-it notes collected at the end of class on which students write one thing they learned and one question they have, to interactive quizzes in which students write their own multiple-choice questions on key ideas and arguments from the course and then play Taboo! or Pictionary to describe or depict key concepts. In some courses I devote one class out of every six to an extended whole-class AfL session, in which students write down concepts or arguments that they have found confusing, collect these in a hat, then take turns to lead clarificatory discussion on "topics from the hat". Encouraging the use of good AfL in college philosophy classrooms is a personal project of mine. I delivered an interactive workshop on effective use of AfL at the American Association of Philosophy Teachers' group program session at the Central APA in March 2017 (resources for which are available on my website), and in my current role as Chair of the APA's Graduate Student Council I am developing online resources to help graduate students nationwide to incorporate AfL into their teaching.

My prior teaching experience also informs how I plan in-class activities. I think that teaching should be active and varied. My classes include a variety of planned activities that help students approach course material in different ways and practice the various skills described by the course goals. I use various small-group discussion and whole-class debate techniques, and various self-/peer-assessed writing tasks, to this end. But I also try to convey central concepts and ideas in an active way whenever possible. For example, when I taught my own Metaethics course in Summer 2016, I found that students struggled to distinguish

metaphysical from epistemological issues. I responded by bringing a cuddly toy penguin to the classroom and asking them to hide the penguin while I left the room briefly. On my return, I administered an i>clicker quiz that asked "Does Zoë know where the penguin is?", "Is there a fact about where the penguin is?", and "Suppose Zoë thinks the penguin is under the table, and she manages to convince everyone else of this. Is it possible for *all* of us to be wrong about where the penguin is?". This stunt helped to make the distinction between what is true and what is or can be known more vivid in students' minds; they were still mentioning "the penguin in the ceiling" (where they somehow managed to hide it!) weeks later. By making course material more memorable, this sort of activity promotes deep learning.

Although have a lot of teaching experience, I know that it is always possible to improve, and all too easy to become complacent. To this end, I have pursued opportunities for continued professional development whenever they have arisen. I have attended six workshops run by Michigan's Center for Research on Learning and Teaching – on designing writing assessments, designing syllabi, teaching methodologies in the philosophy classroom, teaching philosophical argumentation, teaching with technology, and using Canvas (our online learning platform) – and have arranged for consultants from the Center to conduct midterm observations of my teaching and to record my classes for me to watch. I also traveled to Salem in May 2017 for a workshop run by the American Association of Philosophy Teachers (in addition to their workshop at the Central APA). In the future I plan to avail myself of all opportunities to discover new evidence-based strategies that will help me to improve my teaching so as to enable all students to make clear, measurable progress each of in my classes. I believe that I owe it to my students to do this.

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TEACHING EVALUATIONS – QUANTITATIVE

The University of Michigan collects qualitative data on student satisfaction each semester. Students are asked to express how strongly they agree with a series of statements, on a scale from 5 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree). Here are the median scores for a representative selection of these statements from all five of the courses that I have taught at Michigan, alongside the cut-off point for being rated within the top quartile of courses University-wide (presented for comparison). I have also included the percentage of my students in each class who selected either "agree" or "strongly agree" (4 or 5 out of 5) for each statement.

The courses are as follows:
Phil 361 (Ethics), Fall 2014 – Graduate Student Instructor for Peter Railton
Phil 180 (Introductory Logic), Winter 2015 – Graduate Student Instructor for David Manley
Phil 303 (Intermediate Logic), Fall 2015 – Graduate Student Instructor for Eric Swanson
Phil 232 (Philosophical Problems), Winter 2016 – Graduate Student Instructor for Brian Weatherson
Phil 181 (Is Morality Objective?), Summer 2016 – Sole instructor

As a Graduate Student Instructor, I was responsible for planning and teaching discussion sections, grading assignments, providing students with feedback on their work, and holding office hours. As sole instructor for Phil 181 I was also responsible for syllabus design and for planning and delivering lectures.

Statement	Class	My median	*Top quartile*	% agree
Overall, this was an excellent course.	Phil 361 (Ethics) Phil 180 (Logic) Phil 303 (Logic) Phil 232 (Intro) Phil 181 (Metaethics)	4.71 4.28 3.95 4.92 4.95	*≥ 4.72*	90% 90% 64% 100% 92%
Overall, the instructor was an excellent teacher.	Phil 361 (Ethics) Phil 180 (Logic) Phil 303 (Logic) Phil 232 (Intro) Phil 181 (Metaethics)	4.88 4.80 4.63 4.98 4.95	*≥ 4.85*	97% 95% 79% 100% 100%
The instructor gave clear explanations.	Phil 361 (Ethics) Phil 180 (Logic) Phil 303 (Logic) Phil 232 (Intro) Phil 181 (Metaethics)	4.92 4.80 4.50 4.95 4.95	*≥ 4.79*	97% 92% 97% 100% 100%
The instructor was enthusiastic.	Phil 361 (Ethics) Phil 180 (Logic) Phil 303 (Logic) Phil 232 (Intro) Phil 181 (Metaethics)	4.96 4.94 4.94 5.00 5.00	*≥ 4.93*	97% 97% 100% 100% 100%

Statement	Class	My median	*Top quartile*	% agree
The instructor put material across in an interesting way.	Phil 361 (Ethics) Phil 180 (Logic) Phil 303 (Logic) Phil 232 (Intro) Phil 181 (Metaethics)	4.82 4.85 4.57 5.00 4.95	*≥ 4.79*	90% 92% 86% 100% 92%
The instructor appeared to have a thorough knowledge of the subject.	Phil 361 (Ethics) Phil 180 (Logic) Phil 303 (Logic) Phil 232 (Intro) Phil 181 (Metaethics)	4.94 4.89 4.75 4.95 5.00	*≥ 4.92*	97% 97% 100% 100% 100%
The instructor was sensitive to student difficulty with course work.	Phil 361 (Ethics) Phil 180 (Logic) Phil 303 (Logic) Phil 232 (Intro) Phil 181 (Metaethics)	4.85 4.74 4.33 4.95 4.83	*≥ 4.79*	93% 90% 68% 95% 92%
The instructor acknowledged all questions insofar as possible.	Phil 361 (Ethics) Phil 180 (Logic) Phil 303 (Logic) Phil 232 (Intro) Phil 181 (Metaethics)	4.96 4.87 4.50 4.95 4.95	*≥ 4.83*	97% 97% 82% 100% 100%
Students in this course were free to disagree and ask questions.	Phil 361 (Ethics) Phil 180 (Logic) Phil 303 (Logic) Phil 232 (Intro) Phil 181 (Metaethics)	4.88 4.61 4.60 4.98 -	*≥ 4.8*	97% 95% 89% 100% -
The instructor told students when they had done especially well.	Phil 361 (Ethics) Phil 180 (Logic) Phil 303 (Logic) Phil 232 (Intro) Phil 181 (Metaethics)	4.71 4.69 4.71 4.95 -	*≥ 4.80*	90% 90% 100% 100% -
The instructor encouraged student participation in an equitable way.	Phil 361 (Ethics) Phil 180 (Logic) Phil 303 (Logic) Phil 232 (Intro) Phil 181 (Metaethics)	4.82 4.78 4.50 4.98 -	*≥ 4.86*	93% 95% 93% 100% -
Grades were assigned fairly and impartially.	Phil 361 (Ethics) Phil 180 (Logic) Phil 303 (Logic) Phil 232 (Intro) Phil 181 (Metaethics)	4.79 4.47 4.50 4.88 4.50	*≥ 4.67*	87% 90% 86% 95% 92%

TEACHING EVALUATIONS – QUALITATIVE

Below are *complete and unedited* sets of qualitative comments from three classes. This is a lot of material, so I have highlighted the comments that I feel most bring out my strengths as an instructor. I am very happy to provide full sets of evaluations from all classes that I've taught on request.

In all cases, students were offered the following prompts:

(a) Comment on the quality of instruction in this course.
(b) How would you change this course?

Philosophy 180 (Logic), Winter 2015

Responses to "Comment on the quality of instruction in this course":

Good

Discussion was much more helpful than lecture. Discussion of lecture material and worksheets were helpful.

The weekly worksheets and group activities were great. With only 50 minutes per week, Zoe made very efficient use of this time. I learned more here than lecture! Zoe came to class with a super enthusiastic attitude every week. One of the best discussions I have ever been a part of in terms of structure and clarity of information.

My GSI Zoe was great, Professor Manley was unprepared and gave poor assistance.

Zoey was a great GSI! She had a lot of enthusiasm and her passion for her students really showed.

I thought the worksheets were very helpful with reinforcing ideas from lecture

Zoe did an amazing job teaching this course. I wish all of my GSIs were as motivated, engaging, and relatable.

Zoe was a very enthusiastic and great instructor! She made class fun and I felt like I learned a lot. She put a lot of effort into planning and was very sensitive to students feelings and questions regarding course material.

Instruction was very good. I learned a great deal and all of my questions were answered promptly and clearly.

The course was very challenging and frequently proved to be too complex given my limited math and reasoning abilities.

This was the part of the philosophy 180 course in which i actually learned something. i helped clarify material that could not be explained in lecture

The instructor did a great job in her explanations and was clear. The professors lectures were more of a bore and confusing, but having this discussion made the class more understandable.

I enjoyed discussion because it was the only part of the class where I actually learned something. Lecture didn't help at all so I relied on discussion.

Very good and enthusiastic, very helpful

Zoe was an excellent GSI with a strong understanding of the material. She was always energetic in our early discussion and made her lessons interesting and helpful.

This was a wonderful discussion!

good

The quality was very good, I consistently learned more in discussion than I did in lecture.

Zoe was a fantastic GSI to have for Philosophy 180. As someone who struggled with the course material, discussion section was very helpful and she did a great job of clarifying some of the more difficult concepts we had covered in lecture and in the midterm. I was greatly appreciative of her enthusiasm for teaching and her ability to break down material that was challenging in a way that made difficult concepts much easier to understand.

Her knowledge of the material was impressive and she did a great job of presenting the concepts in ways that were interactive and productive. I am very glad to have had Zoe as a GSI for this class.

Great class! I'm a pre-med/psych student and I took 180 purely out of interest, and I'm glad I was enrolled in just the right class at just the right time.

Zoe was GREAT! By far the best graduate student instructor I've ever had at The University of Michigan. She was truly passionate about teaching and it showed. She is very approachable and genuinely cares about her students. She seems to be very knowledgable about the topic and did a great job selecting information to clarify in discussion. *I would definitely consider taking another course with her as the gsi, because I know I will learn the information that is necessary, and have an enjoyable time doing it. Kudos!*

Extremely cheerful every day in class and this welcomed more open discussion among students.

Instruction was great, especially discussion sections with Zoe that cleared up a lot of confusion from lecture.

I love the GSI I had. She was an amazing instructor, always telling us why she was having us do what we were doing and always challenging us to think critically about the material.

Zoe was always very well prepared for class each week and brought a high amount of energy and enthusiasm with her. She always answered questions and encouraged participation from all of her students.

Zoe combined enthusiasm for the course material with an understanding of how to engage, challenge, and empower students. She made the material presented in lecture more concrete, accessible, and clear. *It was due to her exceptional teaching that I remained interested in this class despite a disorganized, unclear experience in lecture.*

Responses to "How would you change this course?":

I would not

Less group work and more work as a class. More time to talk through the worksheets.

Nothing.

Replace the professor, I would suggest with the GSI.

No changes needed for discussion

Go over questions from Aplia

I would give students more time on exams and more time for discussions.

I wouldn't. Seemed great to me.

I would go much slower and go less into reasoning and formulas and focus more on the kaneman type stuff.

offer more convenient times in comparison to when lecture is offered

more time

I feel like Zoe utilized the time we had for discussion very well. She got to go through all the past weeks material and had time left to answer our questions. She made sure we were all engaged and was very enthusiastic throughout the hour.

More probabilistic reasoning

I do not think we covered the probability material at the end of the semester thoroughly enough. This was probably due to time constraints, but another discussion section on utility and prospect theory would have been useful.

More practice exams.

Zoe only made the class that much better...there can't be anything she could've done to improve the course. She definitely made the class enthusiastic and aroused our minds in the early morning.

I felt the mid term was poorly written. It didn't test what I felt was a knowledge of the material, due to the length, short time, and tricky questions

Philosophy 232 (Philosophical Problems), Winter 2016

Responses to "Comment on the quality of instruction in this course":

I loved how organized Zoe, always providing us with a calendar of upcoming assignments to keep us on top of our work. Her presentations were very engaging and always had a fun activity to allow students to speak with other students, express their opinions, and hear others opinions.

Clear, respectable and highly inclusive/understanding instruction.

Zoe was one of, if not the most passionate instructors that I have had in my entire life. She was wonderful at keeping all of the material interesting and making sure that everyone was involved. She would regularly vary the type of classwork that we did, and would encourage all sorts of discussion even when it went slightly off of the curriculum when she felt as though we would find it interesting and beneficial. Moreover, Zoe had a respect for her students that I have rarely seen*, especially by GSI's where it seems that more often than not they are the GSI for a class that they are not all that committed to.*

Discussions were led by the GSI but the our input really shaped the direction we went--highlighted and expanded the ideas from lecture very nicely. Zoe was fantastic in interpreting students' opinions and also in knowing when we were getting off track. Assignments were graded impartially and returned promptly with individual comments, and also a generic rubric was distributed. ***Zoe's enthusiasm helped keep all of us interested and she obviously knows the material inside and out. She helped me think about the material in a whole new way and I was excited to go to class.***

Very enthusiastic, one of the best GSI's I have ever had. I hope that I can have more instructors like Zoe.

The only problem I would change in the course is the length we discuss the reading. Sometimes I don't understand part of the readings then we don't go over it enough/don't have time to ask questions about it.

Zoe is the most enthusiastic GSI I have had at the University of Michigan. Although the nature of the material was certainly difficult at times, her passion made it more enjoyable and straightforward!

The instruction was very enthusiastic and detailed - overall I feel as if I learned a great deal of practicable knowledge.

Very good--topics were always very clearly explained, my opinions always felt respected, and nuances and ideas in readings were put to me very clearly. On top of this, powerpoint slides were clear and supplemented the discussions well.

AMAZING. Zoe was fun, passionate, empathetic, insightful, and still maintained a perfect authoritative balance. *I cannot say enough about how much I appreciated having her as my GSI this semester. Hands down my favorite instructor this semester, or any semester for that matter.*

My GSI Zoe was amazing. She not only made every discussion relevant to the course topics but she also had a new activity every discussion. These activities helped solidify concepts while also making discussion more active and engaging. She also was clearly brilliant and her knowledge really showed. Also, she was very fair in her grading, she

graded everything blind, which helped keep grading unbiased. Always willing to help and prompt with responding to emails. Honestly, best GSI I have encountered so far, her passion and enthusiasm for this course has made me want to pursue philosophy further.

This was my favorite class I have taken so far. Zoe is a wonderful teacher, she did a very good job of making sure all students in the class were heard. She also did a great job of explaining confusing topics for us in ways that we could understand. She also always had high energy (even when she was sick) which made the class more enjoyable. This is easily one of the best experiences I have had at Michigan.

Responses to "How would you change this course?":

I would keep teaching the exact same way!

If weekly (or even bi-weekly) attendance/participation points could be posted to the grade book, it would be very helpful for students trying to keep track of how they are doing.

One thing that I would change is to have more regular, shorter, assignments (whether those be written assignments or quizzes).

The Q and A sessions we added toward the end of the course were super helpful--maybe have that time once a week when the course begins.

More debates

I didn't like certain writing activities as much--such as small activities where we would come up with counterexamples to certain claims--as I felt my understanding of this type of thinking was developed more fully in class discussion. So by the time we got to writing activities such as these, I already had a good understanding of them.

Honestly, I can't think of anything.

Readings could be shorter and more to the point. Sometimes the readings were 20 pages long yet we only discussed or referenced certain parts of the readings, so it would be more beneficial to be only assigned those parts if those are the only parts needed.

The only issue was the 1 hour discussion section didn't always feel like enough time. We almost always had more to talk about in discussion so I would maybe change it to be a longer discussion section? Or instead of having 2 1-hour sections just make 1 2-hour section

Philosophy 181 (Is Morality Objective?), Summer 2016 – Lead Instructor

Responses to "Comment on the quality of instruction in this course":

Zoe was awesome! She brought an amazing energy to the class that made me want to pay attention and engage with her. I was taking the class pass/fail but was compelled to do the readings and attend every

class because of her. She gave great, clarifying feedback to students' written questions to the readings, and did an awesome job at responding to any questions in class. She made the most complex topics digestible with examples and interactive activities. Zoe has an obvious passion for teaching. She was also very responsive to feedback - when students requested in the middle of the semester that she give previews for the readings, she went above and beyond to provide detailed outlines that highlighted the most important sections. Because of the collaborative environment Zoe fostered, I made some great friends in this class and we would engage in extensive debate about the material on our own time.

It was great, it allowed a lot of student teacher interactions.

Professor is expert at teaching. But we have a bit more work for a two credit class.

Zoe was an excellent instructor who sought to make everyone participate. Through group work and other activities, she really helped break down difficult material. Overall a great person to be an instructor.

Very good overall. Only complaint being that the workload felt a little much for a 2-credit summer course, although it being a complicated subject material, it makes sense why the workload was as intensive as it was.

I thought the instructor was enthusiastic, approachable, knowledgable, and engaging.

Responses to "How would you change this course?":

One of the best learning experiences I've had in my 3 years as an undergrad! Zoe was SO enthusiastic, SO knowledgable, and SO willing to help/answer questions. Amazed that she's a graduate student! Keep it up :)

Many of the readings were very challenging, and seemed uncharacteristically so for a 100 level class. While I think the topics were all interesting, I often did not grasp them until the class following each reading when Zoe would go over them and break them down in simple terms. It would have helped to have received previews of the readings and their topics in advance, something that Zoe implemented towards the end of the semester. It also would have been useful to do more big pictures work: what is a general historic outline of metaethical theories? How does each theory fit into this bigger picture?

More experience with how students handle class work. Other then that everything was pretty great one of the best courses I have take at U of M (Instructor wise)

Please adjust workload a bit. Don't put an extreme hard reading in the week of mid-term.

While breaking down some of the concepts well, perhaps reordering the material in a different order would stimulate better understanding of the material.

Wish there was an option above strongly agree for question 25. Overall, great course. Zoe did an excellent job instructing. So well, in fact, I didn't even realize that she was only a graduate student until after the course had ended.

I think the readings can be cut down as this is an intro course, but I understand it was a lot to fit in during a summer semester.

TEACHING INTERESTS

Below is a list of areas in which I would be very happy to teach at the undergraduate level. I have put an asterisk next to areas in which I would also be happy to teach at the graduate level.

Introductory	Advanced
Historical introductions	Normative ethics*
Topic-based introductions	Metaethics*
Intro to philosophical methodology	Applied ethics*
	Epistemology*
Formal philosophy	Moral psychology*
	Philosophy of action*
Logic	Philosophy of law*
Decision theory	Social and political philosophy*
Formal epistemology*	Feminist Philosophy
Formal methods*	Philosophy of language

SAMPLE SYLLABI

I am including sample syllabi for the following courses:

1. *Is Morality Objective?* (Metaethics)
2. *Real World Ethics; Taking Philosophy Outside the Classroom* (Applied Ethics)
3. *Thinking Clearly and Reasoning Logically* (Logic)
4. *Moral Motivation* (Ethics/Metaethics/Moral Psychology)
5. *Evidence and Blame: Philosophy In the Legal System* (Epistemology/Ethics/Law)

Is Morality Objective? is a syllabus from a class that I designed and taught in the Summer of 2016, in which I taught metaethics to a group of students most of whom had no philosophy background. *Real World Ethics* is a syllabus that I have designed to be taught at Michigan in affiliation with the Michigan High School Ethics Bowl – the outreach program that I co-founded in 2013. (More information about the Bowl is on my website.) *Thinking Clearly and Reasoning Logically* is an introductory logic class that uses differentiated assignments to stretch and challenge all students despite the inevitable variation in prior knowledge and ability. *Moral Motivation* and *Evidence and Blame* are upper-level courses in my own research areas; they are presented here as upper-level undergraduate classes, but I would be very happy to offer similar classes for graduate students.

PHILOSOPHY 181 – INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHICAL ISSUES (SUMMER 2016)

Is Morality Objective?

Instructor: Zoë Johnson King
Email: zoejk@umich.edu
Class meetings: TuTh 4pm-6pm, AH G127, Office Hours: times TBC, AH 1156

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will address questions like the following:

- Does the existence of widespread moral disagreement mean that there can't be any objective moral facts and it's all just a matter of opinion?
- Can we reconcile the idea of an objective moral reality with evolutionary and sociological arguments that explain how we developed our moral beliefs?
- Is it strange that there can be facts that tell you what to do?

We will begin by examining three famous arguments for an "anti-realist" view of morality: J.L. Mackie's arguments from disagreement and from "queerness", and Sharon Street's "Darwinian dilemma". All three of these arguments are supposed to challenge the "realist" idea that our moral beliefs reflect some kind of mind-independent moral facts. We will begin to develop philosophical skills through close analysis of these arguments, identifying their logical structure and the places where they could be challenged. We will then apply these skills to a series of classic texts defending alternative views of the nature of morality and our relationship to it, including quasi-realism, reductive and non-reductive naturalism, and constructivism. We will explore these four positions and the main challenges to each of them. Throughout, we will ask whether our moral beliefs are on surer footing than some of our other kinds of normative beliefs, especially beliefs about rationality and - most importantly - beliefs about what we should believe.

COURSE GOALS

By the end of this class, students will have developed the following knowledge and skills:

- An in-depth understanding of the main ways of answering the three questions above, and the advantages and shortcomings of each of these answers.
- An in-depth understanding of the main claims made by each of the theories listed above, the central arguments for them, and some of the most famous criticisms of them.
- The ability to *identify the structure of arguments* – including their central premises, conclusion/s, and the way in which the premises are thought to provide support for the conclusion/s – and to give a formal presentation of this structure.
- The ability to *present focussed objections to arguments*, which concentrate on either a particular premise or a particular inference in the argument's structure and suggest reasons to be dubious of it.
- The ability to *analyze the strength of different objections to an argument*, thinking about how an objection works, how central to the argument is the point that is challenged by the objection, and how easy it would be to modify the argument so as to avoid the objection.
- The ability to *rationally defend a point of view*, by explaining and then presenting valid arguments in favor of each of its central tenets, and identifying and responding to potential objections to it.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This course has four components: class participation (20%), a mid-term response paper (20%), a final paper (30%), and a final exam (30%).

- *Class participation*
  Students are required to submit questions or comments for discussion, based on the readings, by 11:59pm the night before each class. I will then design our class so as to incorporate your ideas! Students are further required to attend and to participate actively in all class meetings.

- *Mid-term response paper*
  The mid-term response paper will assess students' understandings of one of the three most famous challenges to the objectivity of morality, and of the responses to this challenge. We will focus on the ability to analyze the structure of arguments and assess the strength of objections.

- *Final paper*
  The final paper will allow students to develop their own argument regarding a view on the status of moral discourse and practice, and to defend this view over its rivals. We will focus on the ability to summarize, unify and critically comment on a range of different positions in metaethics.

- *Final exam*
  The cumulative final exam will assess students' understanding of all course material. It will consist of a combination of multiple-choice questions and short-answer questions, and will be taken via Canvas. I will distribute a review sheet and a list of sample questions a week in advance, and will hold a review session on August 15th. The final exam must be completed by 10am on August 18th.

Of the 30% of the course grade allotted to the final paper, 5% is an *improvement grade*. We are going to write two papers over the course of this class, and I want you to see this as an opportunity to improve your philosophical writing. To that end, I will offer one-on-one, personal feedback meetings exactly one week after the first paper deadline, for you to discuss your paper's main strengths and weaknesses with me and to set a target for how to improve next time. You can earn improvement credit by (a) signing up for a one-on-one feedback meeting, (b) choosing a target, and (c) meeting that target in your second paper. But this is all optional, not required. You can skip it and forego the 5% if you would prefer to do that.

I-CLICKERS

We are going to use i-Clickers in this class, both to conduct polls of student opinions and for me to test comprehension of course material. Participation points will be awarded for participation in i-Clicker polls. You can purchase a student remote from the Computer Showcase; new i-Clicker remotes are priced at $32 and used remotes can be purchased for $28. You will then need to register your i-Clicker through Canvas. IT services recommend that you use the Google Chrome browser to register your i-Clicker.

CANVAS

There is a Canvas site for this course, which can be accessed from https://canvas.umich.edu. All course documents (syllabus, slides, assignments, readings, and some documents with helpful tips for reading and writing Philosophy papers) will be available on this site. Please check the site regularly for announcements – when I want to send a message to all students, I will do so by posting an announcement on Canvas.

COURSE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ELECTRONICS IN THE CLASSROOM

In this class there is a ban on using all electronics other than i-Clickers – including laptops, tablets, smart phones, etc. There is a lot of research indicating that the use of electronics in the classroom prevents you and people sitting around you from learning. If you have a special reason to need electronic equipment for note-taking, that's a different matter; in this case, please contact me to arrange a waiver from the ban.

EMAILS

When emailing me about this class, please write "Phil 181" in the subject line, and maintain a formal tone. I will endeavor to reply to all emails within 48 hours. If I do not manage to do this, it is okay to email again to remind me – but please wait 48 hours first.

PLAGIARISM

You are responsible for making sure that none of your work is plagiarized. You must cite any work that you draw from in your papers, both direct quotations and paraphrased ideas. You are encouraged to discuss the course material, including assignments, with your classmates, but all written work that you hand in must be your own. For more information, see my "Plagiarism" handout on Canvas. You should also be familiar with the academic integrity policies of the College of Literature, Science & the Arts, which are available at http://www.lsa.umich.edu/academicintegrity/; violations of these policies will be reported to the Office of the Assistant Dean for Student Academic Affairs, and may result in you failing the class.

DISABILITY

If you think you need an accommodation for a disability, please let me know at your earliest convenience. Some aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities, and the way the course is usually taught may be modified to facilitate your participation and progress. As soon as you make me aware of your needs, we can work with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) to help us determine appropriate academic accommodations. SSD (734-763-3000; ssd.umich.edu/) typically recommends accommodations through a Verified Individualized Services and Accommodations (VISA) form. Any information that you choose to provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.

CAMPUS MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Taking College courses can be mentally and emotionally challenging, even – perhaps especially! – in the Summer. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, lots of services are available. You can contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at (734) 764-8312 and https://caps.umich.edu/ during and after hours, on weekends and holidays, or through its counselors physically located in schools on both North and Central Campus. You may also consult University Health Service (UHS) at (734) 764-8320 and https://www.uhs.umich.edu/mentalhealthsvcs, or for alcohol or drug concerns, see www.uhs.umich.edu/aodresources. For a listing of other mental health resources available on and off campus, visit: http://umich.edu/~mhealth/.

SCHEDULE & READINGS

Required readings are required. Optional readings are optional. If you find the required readings hard, read the optional readings, then return to the required readings and see if this has helped to make things clearer.

June 30 – INTRODUCTION
- no readings

July 5 – J. L. MACKIE'S ARGUMENTS FROM DISAGREEMENT AND QUEERNESS
- Required: J. L. Mackie – excerpt from *Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong*
- Optional intro 1: Richard Joyce, "Mackie's Arguments for the Moral Error Theory"
- Optional intro 2: Alexander Miller, "Realism", §3

July 7 – OBJECTIONS TO MACKIE
- Required: Bart Streumer, "Can We Believe the Error Theory?"
- Required: Stephen Finlay, "The Error in the Error Theory", §1-2 (not §3)

July 12 – SHARON STREET'S DARWINIAN DILEMMA
- Required: Sharon Street, "A Darwinian Dilemma for Realist Theories of Value"
- Optional intro: Richmond Campbell, "Moral Epistemology", §4

July 14 – OBJECTIONS TO STREET
- Required: Katia Vavova, "Evolutionary Debunking of Moral Realism"

July 19 – NON-COGNITIVISM
- Required: C.L. Stevenson, "The Emotive Meaning of Ethical Terms"
- Required: Simon Blackburn, "Is Objective Moral Justification Possible on a Quasi-realist Foundation?"
- Optional intro: Richard Joyce, "Projectivism and Quasi-Realism"

JULY 20: MIDTERM PAPER DUE

July 21 – OBJECTIONS TO NON-COGNITIVISM: "CREEPING MINIMALISM", FREGE-GEACH
- Required: Jamie Dreier, "Metaethics and the Problem of Creeping Minimalism"
- Required: Mark Schroeder, "What is the Frege-Geach problem?"

July 26 – REDUCTIONIST NATURALISM
- Required: Peter Railton, "Moral Realism"

JULY 27: ONE-TO-ONE FEEDBACK MEETINGS ON MIDTERM PAPER

July 28 – OBJECTIONS TO REDUCTIONIST NATURALISM: THE OPEN QUESTION ARGUMENT

- Required: G. E. Moore, *Principia Ethica*, §10-13 (no other sections!)
- Required: Tristram MacPherson, "Semantic Challenges to Normative Realism", §1-2 (not §3)

August 2 – NON-REDUCTIONIST NATURALISM

- Required: Richard Boyd, "How to Be a Moral Realist"
- Optional intro: James Lenman, "Moral naturalism", §4.2, paragraphs 1 to 5

August 4 – OBJECTIONS TO NON-REDUCTIONIST NATURALISM: MORAL TWIN EARTH

- Required: Terence Horgan and Mark Timmons, "New Wave Moral Realism meets Moral Twin Earth"
- Optional intro: James Lenman, "Moral naturalism", §2.1

August 9 – CONSTRUCTIVISM

- Required: Christine Korsgaard, excerpt from *The Sources of Normativity*
- Optional intro: Carla Bagnoli, "Constructivism", §2.2

August 11 – OBJECTIONS TO CONSTRUCTIVISM AND A FINAL HOORAH FOR ROBUST REALISM

- Required: David Enoch, "Agency, Schmagency"
- Required: David Enoch, "An Outline of an Argument for Robust Meta-Normative Realism"

AUGUST 14: FINAL PAPER DUE

August 15: Review session (time TBC)

AUGUST 18: FINAL EXAM

Done! ☺

PHILOSOPHY 3000 – PHILOSOPHY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (FALL 2019)

Real World Ethics: Taking Philosophy Outside the Classroom

Instructor: Zoë Johnson King
Email: zoejk@umich.edu
Class meetings: TuTh 4pm-6pm, AH G127, Office Hours: Fridays 10am-12pm, AH 1156

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Undergraduate students have numerous opportunities for community engagement, mostly via volunteer-led student organizations. They also have numerous opportunities to study ethical reasoning, in Philosophy classes and beyond. *Real World Ethics* combines these two opportunities. Students in this course will discuss ethical problems and will study theories and principles that help them to analyze these problems. They will receive training in lesson design and engaged pedagogy, with a focus on understanding how to make ethical theories and philosophical skills accessible to students without academic backgrounds. With this training under their belt, students will then spend the second half of the semester coaching at a local high school as part of the [Michigan] High School Ethics Bowl program. In so doing, *Real World Ethics* students will deepen their understanding of contemporary ethical and political theory by teaching what they have learned to others, and will have the opportunity to engage in practical philosophical discussion with members of the local community at a stage in their lives at which they are especially open to calling their assumptions into question, exploring new ideas, and considering their obligations to others.

COURSE GOALS

By the end of this class, all students will have developed the following knowledge and skills:

- An understanding of three of the most historically prominent approaches to ethical reasoning – consequentialism, deontology, and virtue ethics – and of the strengths and weaknesses of each of these approaches.
- An understanding of the main philosophical positions on the nature of distributive justice.
- The ability to explain in detail how these theories apply to a set of specific practical questions (in either environmental ethics, business ethics, or public health ethics).
- An understanding of some of the main barriers to learning for members of marginalized groups.
- The ability to plan a lesson based on a set of learning objectives, to assess comprehension of class material, and to adapt teaching methods accordingly.
- The ability to mediate discussion on contentious topics between people with initially opposing views, ensuring that all voices – especially marginalized voices – are heard, and guiding groups toward a thoughtful, reasoned position on which everyone is able to agree.
- The ability to motivate young people to engage in critical reflection on pressing practical issues arising in the world around them.

In addition to these, high-achieving students will develop the ability to engage in metacognitive processes: applying their understanding of the factors that conduce to or that inhibit good learning to their own case, and identifying what is helping them to learn well and/or what would help them to learn better.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This course has three components: learning about ethical theory, learning about pedagogy, and putting this knowledge into practice by coaching local high school students in reasoning about ethical issues. The first component will be assessed through an in-class exam. The second component will be assessed through an in-class presentation. The third component will be assessed through students' reflective journals, visits to coaching sessions, and feedback from schools.

- *Exam (20%)*
  At the end of Unit 1, students will sit an in-class exam on the main ethical theories and the structure of the Ethics Bowl. Answers will be assessed for accuracy, clarity, and depth of understanding.

- *Class presentation (20%)*
  At the end of Unit 2, students will deliver in-class presentations on new material from the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. They will be expected to present and discuss this material in a manner appropriate for high-school students. They will be assessed on the quality of their teaching.

- *Coaching visits (20%)*
  During Unit 3, each student will deliver 12 coaching sessions at a school participating in this year's High School Ethics Bowl. I will make one visit per school in the second or third week of coaching, and a second visit in the fifth or sixth week, to observe and assess the quality of students' teaching.

- *Reflective journal (20%)*
  Students will be expected to complete a reflective journal during Unit 3. The journal contains 12 writing prompts – one for each coaching session – each of which asks students to write a short entry reflecting on an aspect of the coaching process. We will also meet back in class three times over the coaching period to discuss successes and challenges that students have experienced and to collectively resolve any challenging issues.

- *School feedback (20%)*
  Each participating school will be given forms on which to provide feedback on their coaches, both for students on Bowl teams and for teachers coordinating Ethics Bowl participation at each school. Students and teachers will be asked to assess their coaches' understanding of ethical theory, their understanding of the Ethics Bowl, and their coaching skills.

Assessment on the quality of teaching in Units 2 and 3 will be based on a rubric collaboratively created by myself and the students in the class during Unit 2. Students are encouraged to regularly self-assess, using this rubric, during Unit 3, to monitor their own progress and to identify areas where they can improve.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is not a graded component of this course, but it is mandatory. The pace of the course is fast, and it will simply be impossible for students to perform adequately as coaches if they miss any sessions in either of the first two Units. Under exceptional circumstances it may be possible to arrange make-up work for a missed class session, but *you must contact me in advance to arrange this* – as far in advance as possible.

SCHEDULE & READINGS

UNIT 1: ETHICAL THEORY

Week 1

- First class: Introduction to ethical and political theory
  - *No readings*
- Second class: Consequentialism
  - *Reading: Walter Sinnott-Armstrong, "Consequentialism"*

Week 2

- First class: Deontological Ethics
  - *Reading: Larry Alexander and Michael Moore, "Deontological Ethics"*
- Second class: Virtue Ethics
  - *Reading: Rosalind Hursthouse and Glen Pettigrove, "Virtue Ethics"*

Week 3

- First class: Distributive Justice
  - *Reading: Julian Lamont and Christi Favor, "Distributive Justice"*
- Second class: Exam
  - *No readings*

UNIT 2: PEDAGOGY

Week 4

- First class: Lesson design
  - *Reading: L. Dee Fink, "A Self-Directed Guide to Designing Courses for Significant Learning"*
- Second class: Discussing contentious topics & Assessing student progress
  - *Reading 1: Gerald Graff, "The Problem Problem and other Oddities of Academic Discourse"*
  - *Reading 2: Paul Black and Dylan Wiliam, "Inside the Black Box"*

Week 5

- First class: How to discuss a Case Study
  - *Reading: 2017 National High School Ethics Bowl Case Studies*
- Second class: How to prepare a team for the Bowl
  - *Reading: National High School Ethics Bowl rules and scoring rubric*
  - *Extra homework: Watch the judges' training video made by the Michigan outreach team*

Week 6

- First class: Time for group preparation of presentations
  - *Readings on Environmental Ethics, Business Ethics or Public Health Ethics will be assigned to groups*
- Second class: Student presentations
  - *No readings*

UNIT 3: COACHING IN SCHOOLS

Week 7

- Students deliver two coaching sessions
  - *Homework: complete Reflective Journal*

Week 8

- Students deliver two coaching sessions
- Half of schools visited by me
- First meeting back in the classroom during our usual class time
  - *Homework: complete Reflective Journal*

Week 9

- Students deliver two coaching sessions
- Other half of schools visited by me
  - *Homework: complete Reflective Journal*

Week 10

- Students deliver two coaching sessions
- Second meeting back in the classroom during our usual class time
  - *Homework: complete Reflective Journal*

Week 11

- Students deliver two coaching sessions
- Half of schools visited by me
  - *Homework: complete Reflective Journal*

Week 12

- Students deliver two coaching sessions
- Other half of schools visited by me
- School teachers and students asked to provide feedback on their coaches
- Third and final meeting back in the classroom during our usual class time

Done! ☺

PHILOSOPHY 1000 – INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHICAL LOGIC (FALL 2019)

Speaking Clearly and Reasoning Logically

Instructor: Zoë Johnson King
Email: zoejk@umich.edu
Class meetings: TuTh 4pm-6pm, AH G127, Office Hours: Fri 10am-12pm, AH 1156

COURSE DESCRIPTION

We encounter arguments on a daily basis. Not all of these arguments are clear, and not all of them reason logically. The ability to distinguish clear and logical arguments from unclear or illogical ones is an important skill for people to have in navigating the world, especially in choosing what to believe. The ability to express oneself using clear, logical arguments is also a crucial skill for anyone who would like to rationally persuade people of their point of view, as opposed to just saying it loudly and emphatically.

It is vital for a functioning democracy that these skills are widespread in the population.

In this course, I am going to teach these skills.

We will begin by thinking about what an argument is, learning how to identify arguments and break down their structure. We will work on distinguishing the content of an argument from the fluff surrounding it. We will then begin to learn the tools Logicians use to model arguments formally, clarifying their structure and being precise about exactly what is being claimed. The first half of the course focuses on translation of arguments from English into precise formal languages and back again. In the second half, we will study *proofs*. A proof is a formal technique for showing that an argument is valid – i.e., that it reasons logically. We will learn how to give proofs using the formal language we have studied. We will also learn how to show that an argument is reasoning illogically, by pointing out fallacies and giving counterexamples.

COURSE GOALS

By the end of this course, students will be able to do the following:

- Analyze the logical structure of arguments, distinguishing premises from conclusions and explaining how the premises are supposed to support the conclusions.
- Design formal languages for talking clearly and precisely about complex topics, and translate sentences from English into these formal languages and back again
- Identify tautologies, contradictions, logically valid arguments, and logically invalid arguments.
- Show that an argument is logically valid by giving a formal proof, and show that an argument is logically invalid by building a formal model that serves as a counterexample.
- Take an argument written in English, translate it into formal logic, and then use their translation to show either that the argument is valid (with a proof) or that it is invalid (with a counterexample).

In addition to this, high-achieving students will consider some philosophical implications of our decisions to model logical relationships in certain ways rather than others, and will also consider several philosophical puzzles arising from the formal systems and methods taught in the course.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This course has four components:

Component	**Total points**
Ten homeworks, each worth 3 points	30
Two exams, each worth 15 points	30
Two written assignments, each worth 15 points	30
Five optional 'bonus' assignments, each 2.5 points, of which the four best will be counted	10
Total	100

- *Homework*
  There will be homework exercises due each week, except the first week and the two weeks when exams are held and written assignments are due. The point of the homework is for you to practice the material outside of class, figure out what you're finding difficult, and come to class armed with questions. All homework is graded entirely on effort, rather than achievement.

- *Exams*
  Exams are graded on achievement. The first exam is on material from the first half of the course: identifying argument structure and formalizing sentences. The second exam is on material from the second half of the course: proofs and counterexamples. By virtue of the nature of the material, the second exam is cumulative. Exams are held in class and are preceded by a review session.

- *Written assignments*
  Logic courses don't usually have written assignments. Mine does. That's because I want students to be able to use the tools they're learning from the course in everyday environments. The written assignments move students towards this goal: the first asks students to design a formal language for talking about a topic of their choosing, and the second asks students to translate and prove or disprove some arguments they have recently encountered, commenting on this process as they go.

- *Bonus assignments*
  In addition to the ten homeworks and two written assignments, this course includes four optional 'bonus' assignments. These are for students who enjoy Logic and want to think some more about its philosophical foundations, and/or who are considering taking more classes in Philosophy. They will ask students to reflect on and respond to a philosophical puzzle related to the class material. It is possible to get an A- in the class without doing any of the bonus assignments. If any student attempts all five bonus assignments, only her four highest scores will be counted.

COURSE TEXT

The course text is an open-access book called *forall x*, witten by P.D. Magnus and updated by Tim Button. It is accessible at: http://people.ds.cam.ac.uk/tecb2/forallxcam.pdf

Interested students can find Magnus' original version at: https://www.fecundity.com/codex/forallx.pdf

Open access to advanced material is being made freely available online by the Open Logic Project.

SCHEDULE & READINGS

Week 1 – INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS LOGIC? WHAT IS AN ARGUMENT?

- No readings for first class
- Readings for second class: *forall x* §1, 2, 3

Week 2 – ANALYZING ARGUMENT STRUCTURE & "SEEING THROUGH THE SMOKE"

- Readings for first class: Sinnott-Armstrong and Fogelin, "Understanding Arguments", ch.1-2
- Readings for second class: "Understanding Arguments", ch.3 and ch.5
- Last day of week 2: first homework due

- *Bonus assignment: Liar paradoxes*

Week 3 – MODELING LANGUAGE FORMALLY: PREDICATES, CONSTANTS, VARIABLES, QUANTIFIERS

- Readings for first class: *forall x* §4, 14.1, 14.2, 14.3
- Readings for second class: *forall x* §14.4, 14.5
- Last day of week 3: second homework due

Week 4 – CONNECTIVES ~, ^, v, →, ↔ ; TRANSLATION

- Readings for first class: *forall x* §5.1, 5.2, 5.3
- Readings for second class: *forall x* §5.4, 5.5, 5.6
- Last day of week 4: third homework due

- *Bonus assignment: Russell's paradox, FoL version*

Week 5 – HARDER TRANSLATION

- Readings for first class: *forall x* §15, 16, 17
- Readings for second class: *forall x* §6, 9, 19
- Last day of week 5: fourth homework due

Week 6 – FIRST WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT AND FIRST EXAM

- No readings for either class
- First class is a review session
- Second class is the **exam**

LAST DAY OF WEEK 6: FIRST WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT DUE

Week 7 – CONNECTIVES ~, ^, v ; PROOFS 1

- Readings for first class: *forall x* §25, 26.1, 26.2, 26.6
- Readings for second class: *forall x* §26.7, 26.8, 29
- Last day of week 7: fifth homework due

Week 8 – CONNECTIVES ~, ^, V ; PROOFS 2

- No additional readings for either class
- We will do some practice exercises in class instead!
- Last day of week 8: sixth homework due

- *Bonus assignment: Tonk*

Week 9 – CONNECTIVES →, ↔; PROOFS 1

- Readings for first class: *forall x* §26.3, 26.4, 26.5
- Readings for second class: §27, 28
- Last day of week 9: seventh homework due

Week 10 – CONNECTIVES →, ↔; PROOFS 2

- No additional readings for either class
- We will do some practice exercises in class instead!
- Last day of week 10: eighth homework due

- *Bonus assignment: a counterexample to modus ponens*

Week 11 – INTERPRETATIONS OF FOL

- Readings for first class: *forall x* §20.5, 21
- Readings for second class: *forall x* §22, 23, 24
- Last day of week 11: ninth homework due

Week 12 – PROOFS USING QUANTIFIERS

- Readings for first class: *forall x* §31, 33
- No additional readings for second class – we will do some practice exercises instead!
- Last day of week 12: tenth homework due

- *Bonus assignment: Achilles and the Tortoise*

Week 13 – SECOND WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT AND SECOND EXAM

- No readings for either class
- First class is a review session
- Second class is the **exam**

LAST DAY OF WEEK 13: SECOND WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT DUE

DONE! ☺

PHILOSOPHY 4000 – TOPICS IN ETHICS (FALL 2019)

Moral Motivation

Instructor: Zoë Johnson King
Email: zoejk@umich.edu
Class meetings: TuTh 4pm-6pm, AH G127, Office Hours: Fridays 10am-12pm, AH 1156

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Moral judgments are, typically, motivating. We implore others to take courses of action by describing them as *kind*, *honest*, *fair*, or just plain *good*, and we admonish others by describing their actions as *cruel*, *harmful*, *deceitful*, *unjust*, *bad*, *wrong*, and so on. We can encourage ourselves to do something that we don't particularly want to do by thinking "It's the right thing to do". And we often find that our motivations change in line with our moral judgments; for example, somebody who comes to believe that she is morally required to donate to charity, or to refrain from eating animal products, may subsequently find herself with a newfound inclination to donate to charity or a newfound aversion to eating animal products.

By and large, the motivating power of moral judgments seems to be a good thing. After all, it surely helps to get us to do what we morally ought to do. And it helps us to ensure that other people within our sphere of influence also do what they morally ought to do. Moral motivation helps us to be good people.

But, as always, things aren't quite that simple. It is unclear precisely what the relationship between moral judgment and motivation is; in some of us, the relationship seems to be close, but there are also plenty of other people who seem to be able to make moral judgments without being at all motivated to change their behavior. Moreover, it's unclear whether more moral motivation is always better. Following the demands of morality too closely might interfere with our personal relationships, with our happiness, or perhaps even with our ability to make genuine friends. And there may be an important difference between caring about the particular things that are morally valuable – caring about *people*, or *justice*, or *happiness*, for instance – and caring about *morality* itself, considered in the abstract.

This class will survey what has been said on these topics over the course of philosophical history. We will begin with four highly influential historical figures: Plato, Aristotle, Hume, and Kant. We will then examine some of the extensive work on moral motivation that has been written over the past seventy years.

COURSE GOALS

By the end of this class, all students will have developed the following knowledge and skills:

- In-depth understanding of the topics above, and the ability to explain the main views on the nature and value of moral motivation that have been defended over the course of philosophical history.
- The ability to accurately summarize an author's argument, give a focused objection to an argument, anticipate a reply to an objection, and offer a response.
- The ability to defend a view on a contentious topic, by giving a clear, valid argument for the view, defending each premise in turn, and then anticipating and responding to objections.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This is an advanced course, so the quality and quantity of work that I expect from undergraduate students will be similar to that which I would expect in a graduate seminar in the same topic. The course has just two requirements: that students do every reading and take notes in advance of every class (30%), and that students build up their mastery of philosophical skills by completing written assignments (60%).

Requirement 1: Do every reading and take notes in advance of every class (30%)

This is a reading-based class. There are a lot of readings, and the readings are long, and sometimes difficult. I expect that the lion's share of the work that all students do for the class will simply be a matter of coming to understand and to appreciate the complex ideas contained in these readings. We are inheriting a rich intellectual history that rewards sustained attention.

You will be much better-prepared to contribute to class discussion of the readings, and you will remember them much better – not only during the semester, but in future – if you take notes. To that end, I incentivize the taking of notes by asking *all* students to submit a 1-page summary of *each* reading before *each* class. In the first class meeting I will provide samples of good reading summaries for you to use as models.

Late submissions of reading notes will not be accepted. The point of these notes is to get you to a position where you appreciate the arguments in the reading well enough to contribute confidently and productively to class discussion, so there's no point in doing them after class has already happened.

Requirement 2: Build up your mastery of philosophical skills (60%)

In addition to submitting reading notes, undergraduate students in this class will have seven opportunities – one every two weeks – to submit a piece of philosophical writing. There are specific skills that make you a good philosopher, and the point of these exercises is to help you to practice and thereby develop them.

The first four skills pertain to responding to others' arguments, while the final three skills pertain to writing arguments. They are as follows:

Level 1	Summarizing an argument
Level 2	Giving a focused objection
Level 3	Anticipating a response to an objection
Level 4	Replying to an anticipated response
Level 5	Offering a valid argument for a view
Level 6	Defending each premise of an argument
Level 7	Anticipating and responding to objections to your view

Each of these skills builds on the previous ones; it is impossible to master later skills without already having mastered the previous ones. For this reason, all students must start at Level 1. On any submission day, any student may submit a piece of writing intended to showcase the skills at the next level from their current level. You may try to move up two or three levels at a time. Writing assignments will be returned in 1 week; you will either be told that you have cleared the level, or told what you need to do to clear it next time.

SCHEDULE & READINGS

UNIT 1: EXPLAINING MORAL MOTIVATION

Week 1

- First class: Introduction
  - Reading: Connie Rosati, "Moral Motivation"
- Second class: Moral motivation in Ancient Greece
  - Reading 1: excerpts from Plato, *Republic*
  - Reading 2: excerpts from Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*

Week 2

- First class: Hume on reason and passion
  - Reading: excerpts from David Hume, *A Treatise on Human Nature*
- Second class: Kant on good will
  - Reading: excerpts from Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*

Week 3

- First class: Hare's 'Amoralist'
  - Reading: excerpt from Richard Hare, *The Language of Morals*
- Second class: Anscombe on direction of fit
  - Reading: excerpt from Elizabeth Anscombe, *Intention*

Week 4

- First class: Stocker's cases
  - Reading: Michael Stocker, "Desiring the Bad: An Essay in Moral Psychology"
- Second class: Smith's arguments for Humeanism and motivational internalism
  - Reading: excerpts from Michael Smith, *The Moral Problem*

Week 5

- First class: Neo-Kantianism – Korsgaard
  - Reading: excerpts from Christine Korsgaard, *Sources of Normativity*
- Second class: Neo-Aristotelianism – Little
  - Reading: Margaret Little, "Virtue as Knowledge: Objections from the Philosophy of Mind"

Week 6

- First class: Blackburn's Humean non-cognitivism
  - Reading: excerpt from Simon Blackburn, *Ruling Passions*
- Second class: Shafer-Landau's anti-Humean externalism
  - Reading: excerpt from Russ Shafer-Landau, *Moral Realism: A Defense*

Week 7

- First class: Ideas from contemporary neuroscience 1
  - Reading: Adina Roskies, "Internalism and the Evidence from Pathology"
- Second class: Ideas from contemporary neuroscience 2
  - Reading: Jesse Prinz, "An Empirical Case for Motivational Internalism"

UNIT 2: EVALUATING MORAL MOTIVATION

Week 8

- First class: Stocker on morality and partiality
  - Reading: Michael Stocker, "The Schizophrenia of Modern Ethical Theories"
- Second class: Williams' "one thought too many" intuition
  - Reading excerpt from Bernard Williams, "Persons, Character, and Morality"

Week 9

- First class: Wolf on sainthood
  - Reading: Susan Wolf, "Moral Saints"
- Second class: Railton on alienation
  - Reading: Peter Railton, "Alienation, Consequentialism, and the Demands of Morality"

Week 10

- First class: Smith and Lillehammer on fetishism
  - Reading 1: re-read pp.70-75 of the excerpt from *The Moral Problem*
  - Reading 2: Hallvard Lillehammer, "Smith's Argument for Internalism"
- Second class: Svavarsdóttir on fetishism
  - Reading: Sigrún Svavarsdóttir, "Moral Cognitivism and Motivation"

Week 11

- First class: Mason on alienation
  - Reading: Elinor Mason, "Can an Indirect Consequentialist Be A Real Friend?"
- Second class: Arpaly on moral worth
  - Reading: excerpt from Nomy Arpaly, *Unprincipled Virtue*

Week 12

- First class: Markovits on sainthood
  - Reading: Julia Markovits, "Saints, Heroes, Sages and Villains"
- Second class: Sliwa on praise and testimony
  - Reading: Paulina Sliwa, "Praise Without Perfection: A Dilemma for Right-Making Reasons"

Week 13

- First class: What happened to the "one thought too many" objection?
  - Reading: Ron Aboodi, "The Wrong Time to Aim at What's Right"
- Second class: Real moral saints
  - Reading: excerpt from Larissa MacFarquhar, *Strangers Drowning*

Week 14

- First and second class: Concluding reflections
  - *No readings*
  - The final two meetings of this class will be devoted to whole-class discussion and reflection

Done! ☺

PHILOSOPHY 4000 – CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN PHILOSOPHY OF LAW (FALL 2019)

Evidence and Blame: Philosophy in the Legal System

Instructor: Zoë Johnson King
Email: zoejk@umich.edu
Class meetings: TuTh 4pm-6pm, AH G127, Office Hours: Fridays 10am-12pm, AH 1156

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Legal decisions – findings of fault, "guilty" and "not guilty" verdicts, and rulings of evidence as admissible or inadmissible – have substantial real-world impact. Legal verdicts change lives. And legal decisions about what kind of evidence may or may not be permitted in court can dramatically alter legal verdicts.

Philosophical ideas can shed useful light on these matters. In epistemology, we discuss the notion of *evidence* and the question of how we should revise our beliefs (or our "credences", i.e. subjective estimations of the probability of a hypothesis) in response to the evidence that we receive. In ethics, we discuss the notion of *blame* and the question of what makes blame and punishment appropriate or inappropriate. Recently, these questions have been brought together in a rich discussion of how much and what kind of evidence we need before we can fairly punish someone for having allegedly done something wrong. That is the topic of this class.

We will begin by reading some of the philosophical literature on the nature of blame. We will then discuss beliefs and credences and how they may differ from one another. In the second half of the class, we will examine three ways in which these philosophical ideas are practically applied in contemporary legal theory, discussing the issues surrounding statistical evidence, racial profiling, and standards of proof.

COURSE GOALS

By the end of this class, all students will have developed the following knowledge and skills:

- An understanding of the main philosophical views on the nature of blame and the main arguments for and against each view.
- The ability to defend one view on the nature of blame in contrast to its rivals, explaining ways in which the view is superior to its rivals and acknowledging and responding to objections that would be made by someone who accepts a rival view.
- An understanding of the nature of credences and the difference between credence and belief.
- The ability to calculate updates to an agent's credences using Bayes' theorem, and to explain some philosophical puzzles about the idea of credences and their relationship to beliefs.
- An understanding of the main contentious issues surrounding: (a) use of statistical evidence in the courts, (b) racial profiling in suspect selection, and (c) the justification of the standard of proof.
- The ability to defend a point of view on one of issues (a—c), explaining relevant case law and prior opinion on the subject, contrasting one's view with what has previously been said, and then giving a structured philosophical argument and anticipating and responding to possible objections.
- The ability to succinctly summarize a complex philosophical argument.
- The ability to provide constructive, critical feedback on others' arguments and ideas.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The requirements of this course are as follows:

- First paper (20%)
- Final paper (30%)
- Peer feedback on first paper (5%)
- Peer feedback on second paper (5%)
- Exam (15%)
- Exam question submissions (5%)
- Notes on readings (10%)
- Participation in class (10%)

Papers

This class will be more collaborative than the average Philosophy class, in two ways. First, though students are required to individually write and submit two papers (as in most classes), we will provide one another with verbal and written feedback on drafts of both papers before the final hand-in date. This means that students will have to start on their papers early, in order to have drafts, or plans, to circulate for feedback. Groups will practice being helpful colleagues by reading one another's drafts or plans, and producing a 1-page set of comments on each other group member's paper. We will then discuss one another's papers in two in-class "paper workshops". I will distribute and discuss guidelines for how to write helpful comments a week in advance of the first workshop. Workshops are held a week in advance of the two paper deadlines.

The first paper will be on the nature of blame. It will be designed to give students the chance to practice producing an extended piece of philosophical writing. The final paper will be on a topic of the student's choosing from the second half of the course: statistical evidence, racial profiling, or standards of proof. It will be designed to give students the chance to display the understanding and skills that they have gained.

Exam

The second respect in which the course will be more collaborative than average is that I will ask students to co-create the final exam with me. This means submitting five suggested exam questions, each multiple-choice, with a short explanation of why each one would be a good exam question (e.g. it tests for a common misconception about the course material). I will construct the final exam largely from students' suggested questions, possibly adding 5-10 questions of my own to ensure that all the course material is covered.

Notes on the readings

This is a reading-based course. We will be studying a rich and complex set of issues about which much of interest has already been written. It is essential that students do all the readings, and do them very carefully, to understand these issues and to appreciate what has already been said about them. This will all go much better if students take notes on the readings as they go along. To that end, I incentivize the taking of notes by asking all students to submit a 1-page summary of the reading before each class. In the first class meeting I will discuss strategies for effective note-taking and will provide examples of good reading summaries.

SCHEDULE & READINGS

Week 1

- First class: Introduction
  - *No readings*
- Second class: Evidence and blame, some issues
  - Reading: David Lewis, "The Punishment that Leaves Something to Chance"

Week 2

- First class: What is blame? 1
  - Reading: T. M. Scanlon, *Moral Dimensions* ch.4, pp.122-166 (up to "The Ethics of Blame")
- Second class: What is blame? 2
  - Reading: T. M. Scanlon, *Moral Dimensions* ch.4, pp.166-214 (from "The Ethics of Blame")

Week 3

- First class: What is blame? 3
  - Reading: Susan Wolf, "Blame, Italian Style"
- Second class: What is blame? 4
  - Reading: R. Jay Wallace, "Dispassionate Opprobrium: on Blame and the Reactive Sentiments"

Week 4

- First class: What is blame? 5
  - Reading: Angela Smith, "On Being Responsible and Holding Responsible"
- Second class: Workshopping first papers
  - *No course readings, but students are required to read the abstracts of the other students in their group*

Week 5

- First class: Primer on beliefs and credences
  - Reading: Kenny Easwaran, "Bayesianism I: Introduction and Arguments in Favor"
- Second class: The belief/credence distinction applied to legal cases
  - Reading: Lara Buchak, "Belief, Credence, and Norms"

END OF WEEK 5: FIRST PAPER DUE

Week 6

- First class: Statistical evidence 1
  - Reading: Smith v Rapid Transit co.
- Second class: Statistical evidence 2
  - Reading: Judith Jarvis Thomson, "Liability and Individualized Evidence"

Week 7

- First class: Statistical evidence 3
  - Reading: David Enoch, Levi Spectre, and Talia Fisher, "Statistical Evidence, Sensitivity, and the Legal Value of Knowledge"
- Second class: Statistical evidence 4
  - Reading: Fred Schauer, "A Ride on the Blue Bus"

Week 8

- First class: Racial profiling 1
  - Reading: US v Brignoni-Ponce
- Second class: Racial profiling 2
  - Reading: Paul Bou-Habib, "Racial Profiling and Background Injustice"

Week 9

- First class: Racial Profiling 3
  - Reading: Brown v Oneonta
- Second class: Racial profiling 4
  - Reading: Richard Banks, "Race-based Suspect Selection and Colorblind Equal Protection Doctrine and Discourse"

Week 10

- First class: Standards of proof 1
  - Reading: Larry Laudan, *Truth, Error, and Criminal Law*, ch.2, "The Unraveling of Reasonable Doubt"
- Second class: Standards of proof 2
  - Reading: Larry Laudan, *Truth, Error, and Criminal Law*, ch.3, "Fixing the Standard of Proof"

Week 11

- First class: Standards of proof 3
  - Reading: Zoë Johnson King, "The Trouble with Standards of Proof"
- Second class: Standards of proof 4
  - Reading: Charles Nesson, "The Evidence or the Event: On Judicial Proof and the Acceptability of Verdicts"

Week 12

- First class: Workshopping final papers
  - *No course readings, but students are required to read the abstracts of the other students in their group*
- Second class: Workshopping final papers
  - *No course readings, but students are required to read the abstracts of the other students in their group*

END OF WEEK 12: FINAL EXAM QUESTIONS DUE

Week 13

- First class: Review session
  - *No readings*
- Second class: Exam
  - *No readings*

END OF WEEK 13: FINAL PAPER DUE

Done! ☺