

Ethics and Society 27

Political Science 27
University of California, San Diego
Prof. Gerry Mackie, Fall 2016
Mon Wed 12:00-12:50 PM, Peterson Hall 108
+ Discussion Sections

ETHICS AND SOCIETY

<https://warren.ucsd.edu/academics/ethics-and-society.html>

“All students will eventually confront moral problems with social, political, or legal dimensions in their roles as citizens, scholars, professionals, parents, members of their communities, and as human beings with responsibilities to other nations and peoples. Warren College designed Ethics and Society, PHIL or POLI 27 and PHIL or POLI 28, to help students learn how to make moral decisions, engage in moral reasoning, and understand the positions of others in the great moral conflicts of our time.

“Generals, politicians, executives, and judges often make decisions for many other people that can have widespread ramifications. The Ethics and Society courses demand that students examine essential moral and ethical questions.

- Should we go to war in order to protect our national security or the security of an ally? If so, how should the war be conducted?
- Should we build factories in third world countries that employ people who thereby acquire the means to sustain themselves, if we do so by exploiting them, or by polluting their air, water, and land?
- Do individual persons have the right to decide whether to end their lives without interference from the state?

“These questions, and others like them, are not merely academic—they are very real. Democracy works only when citizens have sufficient knowledge and understanding of moral theory and practice to make decisions that have a significant impact on the lives of others. Warren college is dedicated to the ideal of informed, engaged, morally sensitive citizenship, and considers Ethics and Society to be a principal means of achieving this ideal.”

27 and 28 are taught either by political theorists from the Political Science Department or by moral and political philosophers from the Philosophy Department. *Political theory* is the subfield of political science that deals with moral and conceptual questions and the history of political thought (the rest of political science is empirical, it studies what is, not what should be). Political theorists tend to be more interested in questions of political morality and are often interested in the proper design of political institutions, especially justification and design of the state which claims coercive powers over us.

PURPOSE

A student completing this course would know better how to conduct moral argumentation (what is right for me to do, or right for us to do) and how to clarify her political values. She would briefly be introduced to some of the giants of political thought, and would begin to learn how to read an esteemed text from the past. She would learn how contemporary political philosophers conduct argumentation and analysis. She would know a variety of ways to understand the ideas of *liberty*, *equality*, and *justice*. Finally, the course will show that questions of political justice emerge in surprising places: the building of dams, urban design, harmful gender practices, and even the design and adoption of sanitation technology.

PREVIEW

The course begins with an introduction to moral reasoning and moral theories. A common method of comparing values is cost-benefit analysis of a range of options. That has some relevant application, but we'll soon see how it can fall short. There are several families of moral theories, and each is an effort to make coherent commonly experienced and shared moral intuitions. Although they will be illustrated with thought experiments and practical examples, at this point the conflict among these theories might seem overly academic. However, they will become of greater value and interest as we proceed through the course and its practical questions.

Next, we'll take up political morality. What political morality requires can be starkly different from what personal morality requires, as can be seen in the contrast between Batman and Bruce Wayne. The state requires a legitimate monopoly on violence, and as odious as that requirement seems, history shows that civil war among competing violent powers is usually far worse. However, entrusting sovereignty to a state to regulate the danger from foxes, as philosopher John Locke put it, can put in place a devouring lion even worse. Next, because it is a presidential election year I am including a topic I usually wouldn't – a debate about whether, as some economists claim, it is irrational to vote – I think you'll find the controversies surprising. Finally, taming both the foxes in the field and the lion of the state, we will examine the municipal miracles of Bogotá and Medellín in Colombia, which have gone from some of the most violent cities on earth to globally celebrated models, in part from designing the built environment in order to attain justice objectives.

Political morality is also different from personal morality because it is not about what I should do, but about what we should do together. Theories of distributive justice justify and prescribe alternative social and political institutions. John Rawls began his famous book by saying, "Justice is the first virtue of social institutions, as truth is of systems of thought. A theory however elegant and economical must be rejected or revised if it is untrue; likewise laws and institutions no matter how efficient and well-arranged must be reformed or abolished if they are unjust." Rawls justifies the basic liberties and roughly speaking the modern welfare state. Libertarian philosophers differ from Rawls on the latter point and we will study some their

thinkers. With increasing economic, political, and personal interdependencies across states in the 21st century, the question of global justice arises, which we consider in the final week of the course, with particular focus on an instance of technology adoption.

COURSE CONDUCT

You won't be graded on the basis of your political views. In this course we will study and discuss personal and public values, conceptions of justice, and people's political and moral beliefs. You are encouraged to state and defend your beliefs forthrightly (or you may discuss the issues hypothetically and impersonally, as you please). All viewpoints are welcome: anarchist, socialist, left-liberal, libertarian, conservative, religious, Green, Democrat, Republican, indifferent. Inside the course the professor and the teaching assistants are not political partisans or advocates, but are here to encourage considerations of all sides of any issue. Sometimes instructors may take a position opposite to the one on the floor in order to ensure that many considerations are brought to bear on the question; it need not be and probably is not their own view. You will **never** in the course be graded on the basis of your political views; and the way to please instructors is not to echo what you imagine their views to be but rather to challenge them! In this course I do ask students to consider wide conceptions of the value of liberty; but there are good arguments against that wide understanding of liberty which you may find more persuasive. If you think any of us are being one-sided, please let us know.

What we expect from you. You are obliged to attend all lectures and discussion sessions unless you have a legitimate excuse; to do all course readings in advance, to be prepared for and participate in discussion sessions, and to complete and submit assignments on time. Different people legitimately have different reasons to take a course – some are strongly interested in a topic, some want to explore what it is and see whether they would be interested in more like it, some have a requirement to meet. Whatever your reasons for being here, make the best of it, and contribute to making the course a good learning experience for all.

Academic Honesty. We will abide strictly by standards of academic honesty. That means you must not cheat on exams, must not plagiarize on the writing assignments, and must provide proper citations for written work that you submit, among other things. If you have any questions about what is permitted, consult with us, as ambiguities will be construed against the violator. **I do not have a forgiving attitude about academic misconduct.**

Norms of argument in this class. All students and instructors and students will master Graham's hierarchy of disagreements and will strive to conduct discussion at Graham level DH4 and above. Most discouraged to least discouraged; Name Calling, Ad Hominem, Responding to Tone, Mere Contradiction. Encouraged: Counter-Argument, Refutation, Refutation of Central Point:

- http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Graham's_Hierarchy_of_Disagreement.svg
- <http://www.paulgraham.com/disagree.html>

Use of laptops, tablets, smartphones. A few instructors have begun to prohibit use of these devices. Why? Multi-tasking does not work. Here are some serious arguments about that: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/wp/2014/09/25/why-a-leading-professor-of-new-media-just-banned-technology-use-in-class/> I won't ban them, but I urge you to relax and focus on the class rather than addictively cruising in the digital world.

COURSE WEBSITE

The course website is a Blackboard program called TritonED here at UCSD.

- Here it is: <https://triton.ed.ucsd.edu/>
- Here's how to set up your UCSD computing account: <http://acms.ucsd.edu/students/accounts-and-passwords/index.html>
- Ask TAs if you need help!
- You are responsible for regularly checking the course website for announcements; that helps us keep class emails to a minimum.

The syllabus, announcements, assignments, powerpoints and other material are listed in TritonED. If you haven't used TritonED before, familiarize yourself with its nooks and crannies. I will post class powerpoints on TritonED, I will try to do so in advance, but sometimes will do so right before class or even a few days after. Hint: in class spend time thinking and writing – you don't need to copy out the powerpoints as they will be available to you for download at TritonED. The powerpoints have much thinner content than the lecture and are no substitute for engaged attendance.

CONTACTS

Please initiate inquiry about understanding course matters and other advice with your Teaching Assistant. After you have done that, email or see Professor Mackie.

Teaching Assistants

- John Gotti
 - jgotti@ucsd.edu
 - Wed 1:30-2:30
 - Thu 1:30-2:30
 - Soc Sci Bldg 349
- Todd Levinson
 - tslevins@ucsd.edu
 - Fri 12:45-2:45
 - Soc Sci Bldg 320
- Huchen Liu
 - hul045@ucsd.edu
 - Mon 3-5

- Soc Sci Bldg 328
- Mackenzie Rice
 - mdrice@ucsd.edu
 - x
 - Soc Sci Bldg

My office is at SDSC 153E, Center on Global Justice, San Diego Supercomputer Center, tel. 858 534-7015, email gmackie@ucsd.edu (please email and do not telephone). **I guarantee that you will NOT be able to find my office unless you CAREFULLY follow directions.** Office hours are Wed 2-4 or by appointment.

- The CENTRAL (WEST) entrance of the SDSC is on Ridge Walk, north of the Social Science Building and south of Rimac Arena. A path goes downhill to the east. Take the path, enter the main door, continue straight and to the east until you run into windows and can go no further. Then, look right, you will see a sign for UC San Diego Center on Global Justice. At the sign, turn left, and go to the end of the wing; CGJ offices are here.
- The EAST entrance of the SDSC is on Hopkins Drive, north of the Hopkins Parking structure and south of Rimac Arena. Walk west up the outside stairs to SDSC East Entrance. Enter, and go west up one more flight of stairs. At the top, turn 180 degrees and head east, and continue until you can go no further. Then, look right, you will see a sign for UC San Diego Center on Global Justice. At the sign, turn left, and go to the end of the wing; CGJ offices are here.
- BY CAR: From N. Torrey Pines Road, turn east on North Point Drive, follow the road right as it turns into Hopkins Drive, proceed, at the stop sign turn right and uphill on Voight Lane for a short way, then turn right onto floor 6 of the Hopkins Parking Structure. Walk up one flight to 7, take the bridge west to the Social Science Bldg, turn right at SSB and walk north along it, then as SDSC Bldg. becomes visible you will run into a path that goes east downhill to the Central (West) Entrance of SDSC.

Sometimes I will hold office hours at SS **Research** Building 322. NOT Social Science Building. If so, I will announce it in class and on TritonED.

ASSESSMENT

- Participation in discussion sessions, 20% of the grade
 - 5% session attendance
 - 10% discussion session one-pagers*
 - 5% T.A.'s assessment of quality of participation**
- Take-home midterm, 35% of the grade
- Take-home final, 45% of the grade

Discussion Sessions.

The discussion session is a place of learning. You are expected to attend, be prepared, and participate. The discussion session is important, it counts for 20% of your grade.

- Attendance: Required and T.A.s will note it.
 - If you plan to miss a discussion session, let the TA know by email in advance with a legitimate UCSD-accepted excuse.
- *Discussion preparation: you will be provided in advance with a few questions to answer in at least one-half but never more than one single-spaced **hard-copy** page which you will bring to each session. This is to motivate you to attend lecture, read, study, and come into the session with active thoughts.
 - Randomly about four (3-5) times in your section the TA will collect your discussion paper and grade it. No paper is graded 0, an extremely weak paper is graded 1, and most papers will be graded 3.
 - This paper is not expected to be a final considered answer but rather tentative ideas for discussion.
- Oral participation: TAs will assess the quality (of arguments and insights, not viewpoints or positions) and quantity of your oral participation.
 - **If you find it difficult to speak in a small group, please try; this is your chance. TAs will be encouraging, not discouraging.
 - If you are extremely averse to speaking, arrange with the TA in advance to write down *your own* thoughts during the session and provide the notes to him or her at its end (that can satisfy the quality requirement).

Take-Home Exams.

You will also be assessed by two take-home exams, one at midterm and one due finals week.

- Content
 - At least one week in advance of the due date we will provide you with around three topics to write on. You choose one to answer. Here is an **example** from a similar course.
 - Using Thucydides, Appiah, and at least one other text, provide an argument in favor of one of the following: Thrasymachus', Glaucon's, or Socrates' view of justice in *The Republic*
- Submission
 - **We will use Turnitin.Com** through the UCSD TritonED course website.
 - Exams are to be electronically submitted to TritonED by due dates stated below; any submitted after that time will be considered late.
 - Late midterm exams will be penalized ½ grade for 5 minutes to 24 hours late, and another ½ grade for each additional week late (absent meeting *in advance* requirements for exceptions stated next). Lateness will be excused only if
 - a) the T.A. is notified by email at least 24 hours before the due date and time, AND
 - AND b) the student has a university-permitted

- AND c) properly documented excuse.
 - The final exam cannot be submitted late except for explicit arrangements made with your TA more than three weeks in advance.
 - If it emerges that you are unable to timely submit the final exam and can show a UCSD-legitimate excuse that would result in an Incomplete grade.
- Format
 - Use one cover page, with only title (if any), the prompt you are answering, your name, and student number.
 - **Only accepted format:** Times New Roman, 12 point, 1 inch margins, double-spaced, with page numbers.
 - Five further pages for midterm, eight further pages for final.
 - Exceeding length, not complying with format: reduction of grade by half point, e.g., B turns in to B-.
 - This provision is intended to reduce everyone's workload by punishing rather than rewarding over-long submissions.
 - One additional page for references cited (if any).
- **Due dates**
 - Mid-Term, five pages, due on **Wed Oct 26 before 12 PM**
 - TENTATIVE, check TritonED announcements to make sure.
 - Final, eight pages, due no later than **Thu Dec 8, before 11:30 AM**
 - Early submission encouraged.
 - There can be NO ad hoc excuses for late submission of the takehome final.
 - Notify TAs well in advance about any submission problem

Writing Skills. I encounter graduating students who are not able to write well, and I know from lifelong experience that lacking that skill will limit their career opportunities. In upper-level courses you won't have a discussion session and a TA closely linked to you. Take advantage of this opportunity to get better at making good arguments and writing well. TAs grading your take-home exams will be providing you with advice about our expectations and how to fulfill them.

Additionally, take advantage of the UCSD Writing Center for undergraduates. They will welcome and assist you. <https://writingcenter.ucsd.edu/>

Readings and Schedule

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STATUS OF SYLLABUS

As of September 20, 2016:

- course design complete through week 10, weeks 6-10 require detailing of specific readings
- library electronic reserves complete through week 5
- weekly discussion questions complete for weeks 1, 3-5, 9 ,10

Syllabus will be updated well in advance of requirements as the course proceeds.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- Readings will be on electronic reserve at UCSD library, both pdfs and urls (urls also listed in the schedule below), organized by week
 - **This course's password for UCSD electronic reserve is gm27**
 - If you notice any defects or any other problems with a reserve item, first double-check your assumptions, and next **immediately** email instructor gmackie@ucsd.edu with **reserves** and **27** in the subject line.
- Pay close attention to the reading instructions in the schedule below. I try to keep readings to a minimum so that students will read text closely. Thus, for some readings that you will open in pdf or by url, you are assigned only selected pages. Sometimes, but not always, I have indicated where to start and where to stop in the pdf itself – check the schedule. I have seen students neglect this and do twice the work they need to do. **Save yourself work.**

SCHEDULE

Moral Theories

- **Week 0.**
 - Fri Sep 23, NO MEETING
 - Start reading Tavani, Ethical Concepts and Ethical Theories

- Read 2.1 and 2.2 for Sep 26
 - If you like, start reading ahead Tavani 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6 for Oct 3 and 5
- Also for Sep 26 read John Rawls, *Theory of Justice*, excerpt on “reflective equilibrium”
- **Week 1. Ethics and Society**
 - Mon Sep 26, Course Introduction
 - Tavani, Ethical Concepts and Ethical Theories, 2.1 and 2.2
ELECTRONIC RESERVE
 - John Rawls, *Theory of Justice*, excerpt on “reflective equilibrium”
ELECTRONIC RESERVE
 - Wed Sep 28
 - Cost-benefit analysis
 - ELECTRONIC RESERVE or
<http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/watkins/cba.htm>
 - Penz, Drydyk, and Bose, ch. 4, Cost-benefit analysis and compensation in *Displacement by Development*, on ELECTRONIC RESERVE
 - Discussion Sections
- **Week 2. Moral Theories**
- - Mon Oct 3
 - Tavani, Ethical Concepts and Ethical Theories, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6
ELECTRONIC RESERVE
 - Wed Oct 5
 - Continued
 - Discussion Sections

Political Morality

- **Week 3. Political Action and the Problem of Dirty Hands**
 - Mon Oct 10
 - Machiavelli, *The Prince*, Chs. 7-9, 15-18, 19 (first 3 paragraphs), on
ELECTRONIC RESERVE
 - Wed Oct 12
 - Walzer, Political Action: The Problem of Dirty Hands, ELECTRONIC
RESERVE and

- <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/2265139.pdf>
- Discussion Session
 - Watch Nolan's *The Dark Knight* (2008)
 - Should click through on UCSD Electronic Reserve; otherwise available on Netflix DVD, or at Amazon Video for 3.99.
 - Or read script
 - http://www.pages.drexel.edu/~ina22/splaylib/Screenplay-Dark_Knight.HTM scrollable HTML
 - http://www.joblo.com/scripts/The_Dark_Knight.pdf pdf
 - or other link
- **Week 4. Why Government?**
 - Mon Oct 17
 - Hobbes, *The Leviathan*, Chs. 13, 14.1-7 (to “evil consequence upon the rupture”), 15.1-3 (to “that propriety begins”), 17, use any edition, this is a good one on ELECTRONIC RESERVE
<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/3207/3207-h/3207-h.htm> (helpful subheads)
 - Locke, *Second Treatise on Government*, use any edition, this is a good one on ELECTRONIC RESERVE
<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/7370/7370-h/7370-h.htm>, Ch. 1-Ch. 4, and Sec. 54
 - Wed Oct 19
 - Ceballos and Cronshaw, *The Evolution of Armed Conflict in Medellín: An Analysis of the Major Actors*
 - <http://petapixel.com/2016/08/02/26-photos-show-war-changed-syria/>
 - Discussion Sections
- **Week 5. Is Democratic Voting Stupid?**
 - Mon Oct 24
 - Caplan, *Myth of the Rational Voter*, ch. 1, ELECTRONIC RESERVE
 - Start Mackie, *Rational Ignorance and Beyond*, ELECTRONIC RESERVE
 - **Wed Oct 26, before 12 PM, midterm exam due** on TritonED
 - Wed Oct 26
 - Continued

- Discussion Sections
- **Week 6. Motivating Political Morality**
 - Mon Oct 31
 - Bogotá: Harmonizing Moral, Social, and Legal Norms
 - Wed Nov 2
 - Medellín: Justice and the Built Environment
 - Discussion Sections

Some Theories of Justice

- **Week 7. Complex Equality; Capabilities**
 - Mon Nov 7
 - Walzer, Complex Equality, in *Spheres of Justice*
 - Wed Nov 9
 - Murphy and Gardoni, The Acceptability and the Tolerability of Societal Risks: A Capabilities-Based Approach
 - and <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11948-007-9031-8>
 - Discussion Sections
- **Week 8. Fact, Value, Relativism, Capability: Female Genital Cutting**
 - Mon Nov 14
 - TO BE COMPLETED
 - Wed Nov 16
 - TO BE COMPLETED
 - Discussion Sections
- **Week 9. More Liberal Theories of Justice**
 - Mon Nov 21, Rawls, *Theory of Justice*
 - TO BE COMPLETED
 - Wed Nov 23, Libertarianism
 - TO BE COMPLETED

- NO DISCUSSION SESSIONS THIS WEEK
- Fri Nov 25, THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY
- **Week 10. Global Justice**
 - Mon Nov 28
 - “Development Ethics” Jay Drydyk
 - <http://www.ethicsofempowerment.org/papers/Drydyk%20-%20Development%20Ethics%20Framework.pdf>
 - Wed Nov 30
 - TO BE COMPLETED:
 - Ellerman
 - Total Community Sanitation
 - Discussion Sessions
 - Review
- **Final Take-Home Exam Deadline**
 - **Thu Dec 8, 11:30 AM**

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Discussion Session Preparation Questions

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Hint: “But I don’t know the answers to these questions. That’s what I’m here to learn!” A good way to learn is to start thinking about answers to a question and then to talk it over with others and pool perspectives. Your one-page paper won’t be graded on whether it’s “right.” Show us that you are learning and thinking and don’t worry about making mistakes (skipping the lectures and readings and faking answers won’t work though).

- **Week 1. Ethics and Society**

- If a public project provides the most total dollar benefits net of total costs, is that project the best or most just?
- How might your answer change if a public project redistributed some dollar benefits from those who benefit from the project to those who would otherwise be made worse off by it?
- Would a millionaire value one extra dollar as much as a person with only \$10 would value one extra dollar?
- What values in addition to dollar benefits and costs might inform a public project or design of the political institutions of a society?

- **Week 2. Moral Theories**

- TO BE COMPLETED

- **Week 3. Political Action and the Problem of Dirty Hands**

- Who is most like Machiavelli’s Prince and why?
 - Batman
 - Harry Dent
 - the Joker
 - Commissioner Gordon
- Is it nevertheless morally wrong to do a dirty deed to bring about a great good, or is it rather only sad to do so?

- **Week 4. War of All Against All vs. a Monopoly on Violence**

- Interdependent action learning exercise
- What human motivations might prompt and might support the formation and stable maintenance of a government? How and why?

- **Week 5. Is Democratic Voting Stupid?**

- What are the three biggest weaknesses or errors in Mackie's argument?
- **Week 6. Motivating Political Morality**
 - TO BE COMPLETED
- **Week 7. Complex Equality; Capabilities**
 - TO BE COMPLETED
- **Week 8. Fact, Value, Relativism, Capability: Female Genital Cutting**
 - TO BE COMPLETED
- **Week 9. More Liberal Theories of Justice**
 - Thanksgiving, no sessions
- **Week 10. Global Justice**
 - Write down at least two ideas in the course that you still don't understand; half-page is OK.

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