Short Syllabus

Course Title

Contemporary Moral Problems

Lecturer

Dr. Rona Cohen

Contact details

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Semester

Spring

Short Description

Ethical theory is concerned with questions of rightness and wrongness, obligation and permissibility, moral decision-making, virtue, and so on. At its grandest and most ambitious, ethics tells us how to live and explain why we should live that particular way. Most of us engage in intuitive ethical theorizing all the time, when we think about what we ought to do, read about a certain government policy, make major life decisions, or just ask questions about the rightness or wrongness of our decisions and actions. Ethical theorists pursue these kinds of questions systematically and thoroughly.

Throughout the seminar, we will discuss major Western ethical theories such as Aristotle, Kant, Nietzsche, Nussbaum, John Stewart Mill, John Rawls, Emmanuel Levinas, Catharine MacKinnon, and others vis-à-vis case studies pertaining to the moral status of animals, the morality of medical decisions, capital punishment, consumption and the environment, free speech, pornography, biotechnological enhancement, abortions and more.

Final grade components

Midterm 15%
Participation and discussion 15%
Seminar paper/Referat 70%

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. Students are permitted a maximum of three absences without penalty. Any additional absences will affect the final grade and may result in failure of the course.

Academic Conduct

Plagiarism is taken extremely seriously. Any instance of academic misconduct which includes: submitting someone else's work as your own; failure to accurately cite sources; taking words from another source without using quotation marks; submission of work for which you have previously received credit; working in a group for individual assignments; using unauthorized materials in an exam and sharing your work with other students, will result in failure of the assignment and will likely lead to further disciplinary measures.

Additional requirements