PHIL3041

Ethical Perspectives on Social Issues

Session 1, Online-flexible 2024

Department of Philosophy

Contents

General Information

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Credit points
10

Prerequisites
130cp at 1000 level or above

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

Humans are embedded in complex networks of social relations within which norms of practice arise, including ethical and political norms. Sometimes these are formalised (as in medicine and the military) and other times they are informal and part of interpersonal shared conventions (as in gender, race and identity relations). In both informal and formal contexts these norms continually undergo processes of validation, disruption, contestation, re-negotiation and renewal. This unit will apply ethical theory and analysis in exploring a range of contemporary and pressing social questions, each of which is undergoing some form of challenge to its existing and sometimes deeply entrenched norms and conventions. Topics will vary from year to year but include: reproduction, abortion, and ectogenesis; gender pronoun usage; cancel culture; civil disobedience and political protest; physician-assisted suicide and norms of medicine at the end-of-life; conflicts of interest and bias in healthcare contexts; and the justice and ethics of warfare and humanitarian intervention.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

ULO1: Outline key issues in the examined social contexts and institutions

ULO2: Deploy ethical concepts and theories to relevant contexts and case studies

ULO3: Critically evaluate the ethical arguments relating to key social issues

ULO4: Formulate and defend your own ideas with clarity and rigour

ULO5: Appeal to relevant concepts to clearly communicate arguments

General Assessment Information

LATE SUBMISSIONS POLICY

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, a 5% penalty (of the total possible mark) will be applied each day a written assessment is not submitted, up until the 7th day (including weekends). After the 7th day, a mark of, 0 (zero) will be awarded even if the assessment is submitted. Submission time for all written assessments is set at 11.55pm. A 1-hour grace period is provided to students who experience a technical issue.

This late penalty will apply to non-timed sensitive assessment (incl essays, reports, posters, portfolios, journals, recordings etc). Late submission of time sensitive tasks (such as tests/ exams, performance assessments/presentations, scheduled practical assessments/labs etc) will only be addressed by the unit convenor in a Special consideration application. Special Consideration outcome may result in a new question or topic.

WORD COUNTS

Unless otherwise specified, word counts include:

- Headings
- In-text citations
- Direct quotations
- Any footnotes (if used at all)

... but do NOT INCLUDE:

- Title and administrative descriptors (such as word count, student number).
- Reference list.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Use of artificial intelligence

You may find it useful and interesting to engage with generative AI to help develop your ideas and arguments in this unit. A few warnings are in order, though, about content generated by ChatGPT or similar tools:

1. It's not your work, so you can't submit it, or adapt it a bit and then submit it. This will put you in breach of the Academic Integrity Policy, and will be dealt with in accordance with that Policy. This applies to all assignments.

2. It's not reliable. It gets a lot of things right, but it also gets things wrong, makes up references, quotes etc

3. It doesn't count as research. The sources you cite should be the sources you used.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Research presentation and defence	25%	No	23:55 Sunday 7 April 2024 (end of week 7)
Participation and engagement	25%	No	Ongoing
Position Paper	50%	No	23:55 on Sunday 26 May (end of week 12)

Research presentation and defence

Assessment Type [1]: Viva/oral examination
Indicative Time on Task [2]: 20 hours
Due: **23:55 Sunday 7 April 2024 (end of week 7)**

Weighting: **25%**

Oral presentation and defence of research towards Position Paper, and submission of plan.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Outline key issues in the examined social contexts and institutions
- Deploy ethical concepts and theories to relevant contexts and case studies
- Critically evaluate the ethical arguments relating to key social issues
- Formulate and defend your own ideas with clarity and rigour
- Appeal to relevant concepts to clearly communicate arguments

Participation and engagement

Assessment Type [1]: Participatory task
Indicative Time on Task [2]: 20 hours
Due: **Ongoing**
Weighting: **25%**

Active engagement in discussion and related activities, including presentations. Students are expected to be well-prepared and make a constructive contribution

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Outline key issues in the examined social contexts and institutions
- Deploy ethical concepts and theories to relevant contexts and case studies
- Critically evaluate the ethical arguments relating to key social issues
- Formulate and defend your own ideas with clarity and rigour
- Appeal to relevant concepts to clearly communicate arguments

Position Paper

Assessment Type [1]: Case study/analysis
Indicative Time on Task [2]: 40 hours
Due: **23:55 on Sunday 26 May (end of week 12)**
Weighting: **50%**

Application of philosophical concepts, arguments and frameworks introduced in the unit to a practical problem

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Outline key issues in the examined social contexts and institutions
- Deploy ethical concepts and theories to relevant contexts and case studies
- Critically evaluate the ethical arguments relating to key social issues
- Formulate and defend your own ideas with clarity and rigour
- Appeal to relevant concepts to clearly communicate arguments

[1] If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

- the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment
- the Writing Centre for academic skills support.

[2] Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment task and is subject to individual variation

Delivery and Resources

Technology used: You will require access to a computer and a good internet connection in order to participate in the unit effectively. The unit has an iLearn site where activities are set and unit materials distributed. Written tasks will be submitted via the plagiarism detection software turnitin.

Readings: Required readings are available for download from the library via Leganto. As well as the required reading, recommended additional readings for each topic might be listed on iLearn. You do not need to read these each week but they are highly recommended for a better understanding of the topics.

Lectures and tutorials:

For face-to-face students, the lecture and tutorial are on the same day (Monday) so:

1. all readings will need to be read before the lecture and tutorial and
2. you will need to attend the lecture in order to be able to participate meaningfully in the tutorial.

Readings and case study for the tutorial and presentations will be accessible at least one week before the relevant lecture and tutorial.

Tutorials will run from Weeks 2-12 inclusive.

In week 7, the Monday is a public holiday, so the lecture will be recorded and all students will participate in the online forum.

For distance students,

Lecture slides will be available as a PDF by 9am on the day of the lecture.

Online discussions will be held each week from Weeks 2-12 inclusive. Case studies for presentation and discussion will be posted at least one week before the relevant Monday lecture.

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from Policy Central (https://policies.mq.edu.au). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- Academic Appeals Policy
- Academic Integrity Policy
- Academic Progression Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Fitness to Practice Procedure
- Assessment Procedure
- Complaints Resolution Procedure for Students and Members of the Public
- Special Consideration Policy

Students seeking more policy resources can visit Student Policies (https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

To find other policies relating to Teaching and Learning, visit Policy Central (https://policies.mq.edu.au) and use the search tool.

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/admin/other-resources/student-conduct

Results

Results published on platform other than eStudent, (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in eStudent. For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

Academic Integrity

At Macquarie, we believe academic integrity – honesty, respect, trust, responsibility, fairness and courage – is at the core of learning, teaching and research. We recognise that meeting the expectations required to complete your assessments can be challenging. So, we offer you a range of resources and services to help you reach your potential, including free online writing and maths support, academic skills development and wellbeing consultations.

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit http://students.mq.edu.au/support/

The Writing Centre

The Writing Centre provides resources to develop your English language proficiency, academic writing, and communication skills.

- Workshops
- Chat with a WriteWISE peer writing leader
- Access StudyWISE
- Upload an assignment to Studiosity
- Complete the Academic Integrity Module

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- Subject and Research Guides
- Ask a Librarian

Student Services and Support

Macquarie University offers a range of Student Support Services including:

- IT Support
- Accessibility and disability support with study
- Mental health support
- Safety support to respond to bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual assault
- Social support including information about finances, tenancy and legal issues
- Student Advocacy provides independent advice on MQ policies, procedures, and processes

Student Enquiries

Got a question? Ask us via AskMQ, or contact Service Connect.

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy. The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Unit information based on version 2024.03 of the Handbook