



# PHL 242

## Practical Ethics

S1 Day 2017

*Dept of Philosophy*

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#### **Disclaimer**

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## General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

Mianna Lotz

[mianna.lotz@mq.edu.au](mailto:mianna.lotz@mq.edu.au)

Contact via [mianna.lotz@mq.edu.au](mailto:mianna.lotz@mq.edu.au)

W6A Room 734

By appointment

Credit points

3

Prerequisites

(12cp at 100 level or above) or admission to GDipArts

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit focuses on a range of topics in applied ethics, starting with ethics in the personal sphere and expanding the sphere of moral concern outwards to include those with whom we are not in a personal relationship and also non-human animals and the environment. We consider ethical questions to do with abortion, marriage, children's rights, suicide and euthanasia; questions of what we owe to those less well off than ourselves (e.g. those in poverty, refugees and asylum seekers); and ethical issues in the breakdown of moral relations (e.g. war, terrorism, torture and punishment). Discussion of the different topics is structured around key concepts, themes and questions including personhood, harm, and justice. What are the criteria for personhood, and are these criteria relevant to the morality of abortion or euthanasia? The duty to minimize harm is an important ethical principle. But what is the nature of harm? And under what circumstances (if any) might causing harm be justified? Is there such a thing as a just war? Is terrorism ever justifiable? The unit aims to encourage deep intellectual and also personal reflection on the complex ethical issues raised by such questions and to introduce students to the different positions and arguments within the relevant philosophical debates

## 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:

- An ability to recognize and describe key theories in philosophical ethics;
- Skills in applying these theories to the ethical issues discussed in class and beyond;
- The ability to develop well defended ethical arguments (both written and verbal), rather than relying on intuitions or emotional reactions;
- Skills in evaluating the relative merits of competing ethical arguments, whilst appreciating that ethical conflicts are often inevitable and sometimes insoluble;
- The ability to reflect on and critically interrogate the values you have and how they influence you as a person, student, and future professional.

## General Assessment Information

You are required to complete all of the assessment components in this unit.

The reflective journals, short papers and essays in this unit are to be submitted through the relevant Turnitin links in the unit iLearn. They will be marked through Grademark, which will allow you to access your marked assignments directly through the iLearn. Information on submitting through Turnitin and accessing your work through Grademark can be found at:

[http://www.mq.edu.au/iLearn/student\\_info/assignments.htm#turnitin](http://www.mq.edu.au/iLearn/student_info/assignments.htm#turnitin)

Participation exercises are to be submitted in hard copy to Mianna at the start of the relevant tutorial (Internal students) and online in the relevant topic discussion forum (External students).

Extensions are not available for the participation exercises, since you can choose which ones to complete.

Essay and Short Paper extensions requests of up to one week should be sent by email to Mianna (Mianna.Lotz@mq.edu.au). For extensions of more than one week, you will need to submit a 'Disruption to Studies' notification through ask.mq.edu.au. (See [http://www.students.mq.edu.au/student\\_admin/manage\\_your\\_study\\_program/disruption\\_to\\_studies/](http://www.students.mq.edu.au/student_admin/manage_your_study_program/disruption_to_studies/))

Late submissions (without approval) will be penalized one raw mark per day, including weekend days.

## Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<a href="#">Reflective Journal Part 1</a>	15%	No	Fri March 10, 5pm
<a href="#">Short paper</a>	20%	No	Friday 31 March 5pm

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<u>Essay</u>	30%	No	Friday 21 April 5pm
<u>Reflective Journal Part 2</u>	15%	No	Friday 2 June, 5pm
<u>Participation</u>	20%	No	You choose.

## Reflective Journal Part 1

Due: **Fri March 10, 5pm**

Weighting: **15%**

**IDENTIFY** - A recent or ongoing moral problem, scenario or situation that you have been confronted with and challenged by in your recent or current life, that presented you with a decision about how to act (or perhaps, not to act). It could be a 'micro-level' personal dilemma or situation, or it could be something more 'macro' and public that affects the community or society more widely but presented you with a decision of some kind (large or small, it doesn't matter, so long as it was of significance and challenging for you). Describe the challenge in as much detail as required in order to convey the key facts and elements to your reader. [Note: If you wish you can describe a current situation/decision you are facing. This may be harder to reflect abstractly upon, but you may find this process helps you to reach a sound decision/resolution.]

**REFLECT** - How have you approached this difficulty in trying to work out what you would do or what your response would be? Answer this by considering questions like the following: Was/is it the way you always approach these kinds of situations, or a different way? Did you engage in a conscious strategy, deliberation or thought process? Or has your response been more intuitive, falling back on 'gut instinct' or emotion in some way? Alternatively, did you turn to prior experience and conditioning, or perhaps some kind of authority figure in your life for guidance (e.g. parents, teacher, professional practitioner, church or other community leader...)? Describe the process in as much detail as you can.

**EVALUATE** - How did that approach work out for you (or how are you currently finding it?) Was/ is it helpful, and in what ways, specifically? Do you think it will be helpful in future? Were there any drawbacks that you could identify at this point? Would you recommend this approach to others?

**Assessment** will be based on clarity, expression, and depth of self-reflection. A rubric will be provided on iLearn.

**Word length:** You choose.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Skills in applying these theories to the ethical issues discussed in class and beyond;
- The ability to reflect on and critically interrogate the values you have and how they influence you as a person, student, and future professional.

## Short paper

Due: **Friday 31 March 5pm**

Weighting: **20%**

Select, explain and critically evaluate what you regard to be one strong objection to an argument contained in one of the core readings from Weeks 2-5. You may choose an objection from the reading(s) or develop one of your own. In critically evaluating your chosen objection, you must explain why you regard it to be a good objection, and whether you regard it to be ultimately successful against the argument (or part of argument) that it is an objection to. **Maximum: 800 words.**

**Assessment** will be based on clarity, expression, selection of a quality objection and the quality of your critical evaluation of it. A rubric will be provided on iLearn.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- An ability to recognize and describe key theories in philosophical ethics;
- The ability to develop well defended ethical arguments (both written and verbal), rather than relying on intuitions or emotional reactions;
- Skills in evaluating the relative merits of competing ethical arguments, whilst appreciating that ethical conflicts are often inevitable and sometimes insoluble;

## Essay

Due: **Friday 21 April 5pm**

Weighting: **30%**

Write an essay of **1500 words**, on one of the questions provided in class/on ilearn.

**Assessment** will be based on clarity, expression, structure/organisation, and quality of exposition and quality critical argument and evaluation. A rubric, and essay writing guidelines, will be provided on iLearn.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- An ability to recognize and describe key theories in philosophical ethics;
- Skills in applying these theories to the ethical issues discussed in class and beyond;
- The ability to develop well defended ethical arguments (both written and verbal), rather than relying on intuitions or emotional reactions;
- Skills in evaluating the relative merits of competing ethical arguments, whilst appreciating that ethical conflicts are often inevitable and sometimes insoluble;

## Reflective Journal Part 2

Due: **Friday 2 June, 5pm**

Weighting: **15%**

Review your first Reflective Journal discussion. Address the following questions:

**Reflect, analyze and evaluate:** How do you now view and evaluate the approach you took to resolving the moral scenario when you first confronted it? How would you approach this scenario if you confronted it for the first time now? Has your approach to deliberating about moral challenges like this one changed in any way as a result of the work you've done in this unit? If so, how? If not, comment on that.

**Assessment** will be based on clarity, expression, and depth of self-reflection. A rubric will be provided on iLearn.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Skills in applying these theories to the ethical issues discussed in class and beyond;
- Skills in evaluating the relative merits of competing ethical arguments, whilst appreciating that ethical conflicts are often inevitable and sometimes insoluble;
- The ability to reflect on and critically interrogate the values you have and how they influence you as a person, student, and future professional.

## Participation

Due: **You choose.**

Weighting: **20%**

**There are two components to participation, for both Internal and External students.**

**Important note:** You must fulfill both components in order to receive a mark for Participation. If you do not complete both components, you will forfeit 20% of your overall result.

**ASSESSMENT:** You will not receive marks or feedback on your individual prepared contributions. They will be assessed as a 'bundle', at the end of semester, and an overall mark out of 20 will be allocated, based on the overall effort and quality of the contributions. There are no right/wrong answers to these questions. So long as your contributions indicate serious engagement with the question, you can receive full or near-full marks, depending on the quality and clarity.

### INTERNAL STUDENTS:

**1. ATTENDANCE:** at least 75% of tutorials (7/10) must be attended.

**2. PREPARED CONTRIBUTIONS:** Submit a prepared contribution to *FOUR tutorials*, two from the first half of semester (Weeks 2-7) and two from the second half (Weeks 8-12). To meet the requirements for the prepared contribution you need to submit a short typed response (150-200 words) to me in person at the start of your 4 chosen tutorials, addressing the Discussion Questions (provided online in advance), *and contributing constructively to the tutorial discussion on that topic*. This contribution should be based on your understanding of the weekly reading but may be supplemented by your response to lecture content. *No late submissions will be accepted.*

## EXTERNAL STUDENTS:

**1. PREPARED CONTRIBUTIONS:** Post a response of 150-200 words to the External Students Discussion Forum, for *no less than FOUR* online discussion topics, two from each half of the semester. This contribution should be based on your understanding of the weekly reading but may be supplemented by your response to lecture content.

Deadline for each submission: 11:59pm on the Sunday night following each topic/lecture. *No late posts will be accepted.*

**2. PEER ENGAGEMENT:** Post a Discussion Forum response to *no less than 7 posts by other students*, on different topics and spread across the semester, i.e. not 7 consecutive posts from one half only (you may do more if you wish). Deadline for each week's posts: 11:59pm on the Sunday night following each topic/lecture. *No late responses will be counted.*

**NOTE FOR EXTERNAL STUDENTS:** At the end of semester you must email me to tell me which weeks you posted your responses (this can be hard to keep track of otherwise, so I need a record of the dates for cross-checking purposes, to avoid overlooking any of your posts).

On successful completion you will be able to:

- An ability to recognize and describe key theories in philosophical ethics;
- Skills in applying these theories to the ethical issues discussed in class and beyond;
- The ability to develop well defended ethical arguments (both written and verbal), rather than relying on intuitions or emotional reactions;

## Delivery and Resources

There will be two 1-hour lectures per week, and for internal students, one 1-hour tutorial per week.

External students listen to lectures via the ilearn Echo link, and participate in online discussions (see assessment requirements).

Please check Timetables for confirmation of days/times and venues.

All materials, including lecture recordings, discussion questions and assessment details, will be available on the unit ilearn site.

**Required Reading:** All students must purchase the PHL242 Practical Ethics 2017 Unit Reader (available from the Co-op Bookstore). There is one required reading per lecture. This reading must be completed on a weekly basis, prior to attending tutorials, preparing contributions and participating in online discussion.

**Please note that each week the content from that week's lectures (Thursday and Friday) will be the subject of the Thursday and Friday tutorials.** This means you will need to have read the readings and attended the lecture prior to attending the tutorial. **You are expected to**

attend lectures unless you have a reason for missing them.

## Unit Schedule

### PART ONE - ETHICS IN THE PERSONAL SPHERE: LIFE, LOVE, DEATH

- Week 1 (Mar 2 & 3): Introduction to course and ethical reasoning. *No tutorials this week.*
- Week 2 (Mar 9 & 10): Abortion

**\*\* Friday 10 March 5pm Assessment 1 due: Reflective journal submission 1 (15%)**

- Week 3 (Mar 16 & 17): Family, children, parenting
- Week 4 (Mar 23 & 24): Death: (a) Suicide
- Week 5 (Mar 30 & 31): Death: (b) Euthanasia

**\*\* Friday March 31 (5pm): Assessment 2 due: Short paper (20%) 800 words.**

### PART TWO: EXPANDING THE CIRCLE OF MORAL CONCERN

- Week 6 (Apr 6 & 7): What we owe to those less fortunate: (a) Poverty
- Week 7 (April 13 only): What we owe to those less fortunate: (b) Refugees and asylum seekers

(No Friday lecture or tutorial due to Good Friday public holiday).

### MID-SESSION BREAK (Apr 17-28)

**\*\* Friday 21 April (5pm) Assessment 3 due - Essay (30%) 1500 words.**

- Week 8 (May 4 & 5): Non-human animals
- Week 9 (May 11 & 12): The environment

### PART THREE: WHEN MORAL RELATIONS BREAK DOWN

- Week 10 (May 18 & 19): War and Humanitarian Intervention
- Week 11 (May 25 & 26): Torture
- Week 12 (June 1 & 2): Punishment and capital punishment

**\*\* Friday 2 June (5pm): Assessment 5 due - Reflective journal submission 2 (15%)**

- Week 13 (Jun 5 & 6): *No classes this week.*

### END OF SESSION



## Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy [http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic\\_honesty/policy.html](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html)

Assessment Policy [http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy\\_2016.html](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy_2016.html)

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public [http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/complaint\\_management/procedure.html](http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/complaint_management/procedure.html)

Disruption to Studies Policy (in effect until Dec 4th, 2017): [http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption\\_studies/policy.html](http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html)

Special Consideration Policy (in effect from Dec 4th, 2017): <https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/special-consideration>

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

## Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: [https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student\\_conduct/](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/)

## Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, 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](http://ask.mq.edu.au).

## Student Support

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

## Learning Skills

Learning Skills ([mq.edu.au/learningskills](http://mq.edu.au/learningskills)) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

## Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide

appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

## Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au)

## IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit [http://www.mq.edu.au/about\\_us/offices\\_and\\_units/information\\_technology/help/](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.

## Graduate Capabilities

### Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- The ability to develop well defended ethical arguments (both written and verbal), rather than relying on intuitions or emotional reactions;
- Skills in evaluating the relative merits of competing ethical arguments, whilst appreciating that ethical conflicts are often inevitable and sometimes insoluble;
- The ability to reflect on and critically interrogate the values you have and how they influence you as a person, student, and future professional.

### Assessment tasks

- Reflective Journal Part 1
- Essay
- Reflective Journal Part 2
- Participation

### Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative

We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcome

- The ability to reflect on and critically interrogate the values you have and how they influence you as a person, student, and future professional.

## Assessment tasks

- Reflective Journal Part 1
- Reflective Journal Part 2

## Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcomes

- An ability to recognize and describe key theories in philosophical ethics;
- Skills in applying these theories to the ethical issues discussed in class and beyond;
- The ability to develop well defended ethical arguments (both written and verbal), rather than relying on intuitions or emotional reactions;
- Skills in evaluating the relative merits of competing ethical arguments, whilst appreciating that ethical conflicts are often inevitable and sometimes insoluble;

## Assessment tasks

- Reflective Journal Part 1
- Essay
- Reflective Journal Part 2
- Participation

## Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcomes

- Skills in applying these theories to the ethical issues discussed in class and beyond;
- The ability to develop well defended ethical arguments (both written and verbal), rather than relying on intuitions or emotional reactions;
- Skills in evaluating the relative merits of competing ethical arguments, whilst appreciating that ethical conflicts are often inevitable and sometimes insoluble;
- The ability to reflect on and critically interrogate the values you have and how they influence you as a person, student, and future professional.

## Assessment tasks

- Reflective Journal Part 1
- Essay
- Reflective Journal Part 2
- Participation

## Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcomes

- Skills in applying these theories to the ethical issues discussed in class and beyond;
- The ability to develop well defended ethical arguments (both written and verbal), rather than relying on intuitions or emotional reactions;

## Assessment tasks

- Reflective Journal Part 1
- Essay
- Reflective Journal Part 2
- Participation

## Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication

technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## **Learning outcomes**

- The ability to develop well defended ethical arguments (both written and verbal), rather than relying on intuitions or emotional reactions;
- Skills in evaluating the relative merits of competing ethical arguments, whilst appreciating that ethical conflicts are often inevitable and sometimes insoluble;

## **Assessment tasks**

- Essay
- Reflective Journal Part 2
- Participation

## **Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens**

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## **Learning outcomes**

- Skills in evaluating the relative merits of competing ethical arguments, whilst appreciating that ethical conflicts are often inevitable and sometimes insoluble;
- The ability to reflect on and critically interrogate the values you have and how they influence you as a person, student, and future professional.

## **Assessment tasks**

- Reflective Journal Part 1
- Essay
- Reflective Journal Part 2

## **Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible**

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcome

- The ability to reflect on and critically interrogate the values you have and how they influence you as a person, student, and future professional.

## Assessment tasks

- Reflective Journal Part 1
- Reflective Journal Part 2

## Changes since First Published

Date	Description
08/03/2017	-
16/02/2017	--