



PHIX242

Practical Ethics

S2 OUA 2019

Dept of Philosophy

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General Information

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Prerequisites

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. 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. All enrolment queries should be directed to Open Universities Australia (OUA): see www.open.edu.au

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.open.edu.au/student-admin-and-support/key-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

Late Submission Penalty Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, (a) a penalty for lateness will apply – two (2) marks out of 100 will be deducted per day for assignments submitted after the due date – and (b) no assignment will be accepted more than seven (7) days (incl. weekends) after the original submission deadline. No late submissions will be accepted for timed assessments – e.g. quizzes, online tests.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<u>Reflective Journal Part 1</u>	15%	No	Sunday Week 2
<u>Short paper</u>	20%	No	Sunday Week 6
<u>Essay</u>	30%	No	Monday Week 8
<u>Reflective Journal Part 2</u>	15%	No	Friday Week 13
<u>Participation</u>	20%	No	Ongoing

Reflective Journal Part 1

Due: **Sunday Week 2**

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 should write between 900-1000 words in response to this task.

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: **Sunday Week 6**

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.

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.

Word length: 800 words.

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: **Monday Week 8**

Weighting: **30%**

Write an essay on one of the questions provided 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.

Word length: 1500 words.

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 Week 13**

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.

Word length: You should write between 700-800 words in response to this task.

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: **Ongoing**

Weighting: **20%**

Participation will be assessed by the following criteria: quality of your posts in discussion forums and their timeliness (you should post within a week of the topic). Quality is not just measured by the philosophical content of your posts, but by your willingness to engage in discussion with your peers. Much of what you learn in philosophy you will learn by involving yourself in discussion and argument. So while we would like to see some well thought out responses to the topics for each week and to the questions posed, we would also really encourage you to respond to the messages of other students, ask questions, post your thoughts and engage fully in the philosophical community.

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

Readings: All required and additional readings are available through the Leganto link on the iLearn site.

Unit Schedule

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

- Week 1: Introduction to course and ethical reasoning.
- Week 2: Abortion
- Week 3: Family, children, parenting
- Week 4: Death: (a) Suicide
- Week 5: Death: (b) Euthanasia

PART TWO: EXPANDING THE CIRCLE OF MORAL CONCERN

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

MID-SEMESTER BREAK

- Week 8: Non-human animals
- Week 9: The environment

PART THREE: WHEN MORAL RELATIONS BREAK DOWN

- Week 10: War and Humanitarian Intervention
- Week 11: Torture
- Week 12: Punishment and capital punishment

Policies and Procedures

Late Submission - applies unless otherwise stated elsewhere in the unit guide

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, (a) a penalty for lateness will apply – two (2) marks out of 100 will be deducted per day for assignments submitted after the due date – and (b) no assignment will be accepted more than seven (7) days (incl. weekends) after the original submission deadline. No late submissions will be accepted for timed assessments – e.g. quizzes, online tests.

Extension Request

Special Consideration Policy and Procedure
(<https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/special-consideration>)

The University recognises that students may experience events or conditions that adversely affect their academic performance. If you experience serious and unavoidable difficulties at exam time or when assessment tasks are due, you can consider applying for Special Consideration.

You need to show that the circumstances:

1. were serious, unexpected and unavoidable
2. were beyond your control
3. caused substantial disruption to your academic work
4. substantially interfered with your otherwise satisfactory fulfilment of the unit requirements
5. lasted at least three consecutive days or a total of 5 days within the teaching period and prevented completion of an assessment task scheduled for a specific date.

If you feel that your studies have been impacted submit an application as follows:

1. Visit [Ask MQ](#) and use your OneID to log in
2. Fill in your relevant details

3. Attach supporting documents by clicking 'Add a reply', click 'Browse' and navigating to the files you want to attach, then click 'Submit Form' to send your notification and supporting documents
4. Please keep copies of your original documents, as they may be requested in the future as part of the assessment process

Outcome

Once your submission is assessed, an appropriate outcome will be organised.

OUA Specific Policies and Procedures

Withdrawal from a unit after the census date

You can withdraw from your subjects prior to [the census date](#) (last day to withdraw). If you successfully withdraw before the census date, you won't need to apply for Special Circumstances. If you find yourself unable to withdraw from your subjects before the census date - you might be able to [apply for Special Circumstances](#). If you're eligible, we can refund your fees and overturn your fail grade.

If you're studying Single Subjects using FEE-HELP or paying up front, you can [apply online](#).

If you're studying a degree using HECS-HELP, you'll need to [apply directly to Macquarie University](#).

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central \(https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central\)](https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central). 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](#)
- [Grade Appeal Policy](#)
- [Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#) (**Note:** *The Special Consideration Policy is effective from 4 December 2017 and replaces the Disruption to Studies Policy.*)

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

If you would like to see all the policies relevant to Learning and Teaching visit [Policy Central \(http://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central\)](http://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/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/study/getting-started/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

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) 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

If you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@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/.

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
- Short paper
- 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
- Short paper
- 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
- Short paper
- 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
- Short paper
- 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

- Short paper
- 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