

PHIL 500 A03
CRN#12755

September ó December 2022
TWF: 10:30am ó 11:20am

Advanced Ethics: Consequentialism

Instructor: Scott Woodcock [he/they]
Office: CLE B316
Phone: 472-4462
Email: woodcock@uvic.ca
Office Hours: Open hours Wednesdays 1:30pm ó 2:30pm
Individual meetings via Zoom by appointment

Course Description:

Consequentialism sometimes looks like a theory so plagued with difficulties that it is not worth serious consideration. Indeed, many students complete their undergraduate degrees in philosophy wondering why anyone still defends the view. They view it as a historical artifact that was put to sleep in the late 20th century when contractualist forms of deontology gained widespread acceptance and virtue ethics began its modern reincarnation. One reason for students adopting this view is that introductory courses expose them to simple formulations of the theory and the many objections that consequentialism invites. Rarely is there time for students to explore the complexity of the theory's contemporary formulations. Our aim will be to correct this deficiency so that students become familiar with the many complicated variations of consequentialism that are currently available. Of course, many students will still not be persuaded that consequentialism is a viable ethical theory. This is entirely acceptable. The aim of the course is not to persuade anyone that consequentialism ought to be endorsed; the aim is rather to ensure that students are fully aware of the resources available to consequentialism when they make their own decision about what normative ethical theory they consider most persuasive.

Course Website: Online course materials will be available via Uvic *Brightspace*.

Texts: *Consequentialism* by Julia Driver

Introduction to Utilitarianism by MacAskill, Chappell & Meissner (online)

Readings available online via Uvic *CourseSpaces*

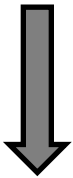
Requirements: Ten Quote & Comment Assignments (10%)

First Writing Assignment (20%)

Class Participation (10%)

Seminar Presentation (10%)

Term Paper Assignment (50%)



Note: Writing assignment due dates and midterm test dates are posted below in the weekly schedule. *You are responsible for knowing these dates.* Plan ahead, and manage your overall personal workload accordingly.

Grading System

Percentage	Letter Grade	Grade Point	Grade Definition
90 ó 100	A+	9	An A+, A, or A- is earned by work which is technically superior , shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of an A+ offers original insight and/or goes beyond course expectations. Normally achieved by a minority of students.
85 ó 89	A	8	
80 ó 84	A-	7	
77 ó 79	B+	6	A B+, B, or B- is earned by work that indicates a good comprehension of the course material, a good command of the skills needed to work with the course material, and the student's full engagement with the course requirements and activities. A B+ represents a more complex understanding and/or application of the course material. Normally achieved by the largest number of students.
73 ó 76	B	5	
70 ó 72	B-	4	
65 ó 69	C+	3	A C+ or C is earned by work that indicates an adequate comprehension of the course material and the skills needed to work with the course material and that indicates the student has met the basic requirements for completing assigned work and/or participating in class activities.
60 ó 64	C	2	
50 ó 59	D	1	A D is earned by work that indicates minimal command of the course materials and/or minimal participation in class activities.

Late Policy: Late assignments (except Q&Cø) will be accepted for five working days after the due date; however, late assignments *will not receive any written comments*. After five working days, submitted assignments would require serious extenuating circumstances to be accepted.

Plagiarism: Review the [University Policy on Academic Integrity](#) *very carefully*, and be aware that anti-plagiarism software may be used in this course. Resources will be provided via *Brightspace* for students seeking guidance about what constitutes plagiarism and how they can avoid it, but *it is the responsibility of each student* to be informed about these details.

Counseling: Many students experience difficulties with mental health during their years as undergraduate students. Make sure you are familiar with Uvic [Student Wellness](#), which is an excellent resource on campus. It is hard to shake the stigma associated with problems like depression and anxiety, but if you can benefit from help with mental health issues, then why not take advantage of this free resource? They are understaffed, but they genuinely want to help.

Important Dates: Please consult the Uvic calendarø [Academic Year Important Dates](#) for information about last possible dates to withdraw from courses without penalty, examinations period start/end dates, etc.

Tech in Class: Some students require laptops/tablets for their learning strategies, so I do not prohibit their use in class. However, studies prove that multi-tasking *reduces performance for nearby students*, so anyone who distracts others will be asked to leave and potentially subject to disciplinary action.

Academic Advising: For information about declaring a program or interpreting a CAPP report, please make an appointment with [Undergraduate Advising](#).

Uvic Sexualized Violence Prevention:

Learn more about preventing sexualized violence by visiting www.uvic.ca/svp. If you or someone you know has been impacted by sexualized violence and needs advice, and/or support, please contact the [Sexualized Violence Resource Office](#).

Territory Acknowledgment

The University of Victoria is committed to acknowledging and respecting the Lekwungen peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands, and the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSf NE peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

Note: Dates are subject to change. Page numbers refer to the Driver text. IU sections refer to the *Intro to Utilitarianism* text online. Material should be read *before* class in which it is discussed. Access .pdf's in advance to avoid technical problems. If citation information for readings is not available on first pages, it should be easy to find online.

Week 1 Introduction to Utilitarianism

Sept. 7 First Meeting

Sept. 9 pp. 5 ó 16 + Gerald J. Postema: "Bentham's Utilitarianism"
IU: ch. 2

Nov. 4

Elizabeth Ashford: "Severe Poverty as an Unjust Emergency"
Suggested = Andreas L. Mogensen: "Maximal Cluelessness"

Week 10

Nov. 8

Nov. 9-11