You should write **8 essays** in total. Please email me your essays by **2pm on the day before our meeting.** Your essay should be about **1,000 to 1,500 words** in length. Don’t tackle everything in a single essay and be selective about your readings. The reading lists below are quite extensive, so that you can follow up on the issues you find interesting. Pick one interesting aspect of the topic, pick an argument/view that you like or dislike, and try to come up with interesting arguments. Try to have a clear structure and write in a simple and concise manner.

Useful resources:
- https://philpapers.org
- https://plato.stanford.edu

Podcasts:
- http://www.philosophybites.com

Advice on writing philosophy essays:
- http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html
**Week 1**

**Moral Realism and Non-Cognitivism**

Essay topic (pick one):

1. ‘If we deny realism about moral facts, we must by parity of reasoning deny it about mathematical and epistemological facts. That would be unacceptable. So, we should not deny realism about moral facts.’ Is this a good argument?

OR

1. ‘Morality is a useful fiction.’ Do you agree?

**Key reading**


**Further reading**

Week 2

Moral Relativism

Essay topic:

1. Can a moral relativist give a compelling account of cross-cultural moral criticism?

Key reading


Further reading

Week 3

Egoism and Amoralism

Essay topic (pick one):

1. ‘The answer to the question “Why be prudent?” is neither more nor less clear than the answer to the question “Why be moral?”’ Is that true? What does your answer imply, if anything, about the plausibility of egoism as opposed to moralism?

OR

2. ‘There is no essential conflict between morality and self-interest because a good life is one that involves attention to the interests of others.’ Discuss.

Key reading


Further reading

Week 4

Utilitarianism and Consequentialism: Overview

Essay topic:

1. ‘There exists no plausible theoretical account of how we could fail to be obligated to bring about the best available outcome whenever doing so is permissible. Therefore, the objection that consequentialism is too demanding is ineffective.’ Discuss.

Key reading


Further reading

Week 5
Utilitarianism, Integrity and Character

Essay topic (pick one):

1. What is the integrity objection to utilitarianism? How good is it?

OR

2. Can consequentialists make adequate sense of moral dilemmas?

Key reading


Further reading


Week 6
Deontology and Contractualism

Essay topic (pick one):

1. ‘Contractualists tie the wrongness of an action to whether all principles for the general regulation of behavior which permit it can be reasonably rejected. However, whatever explains why those principles can be reasonably rejected can on its own explain why the action is wrong. So, contractualists should drop the talk about reasonable rejection and just talk about what makes actions right or wrong.’ Do you agree?

OR

2. Does contractualism imply that we have no obligations to beings who do not understand what it means to enter into a contract? What does your answer imply about the plausibility of contractualism?

Key reading


Further reading


### Week 7

**Happiness and Well-being**

Essay topic (pick one):

1. ‘As a theory of which things make a person’s life go well, the objective list account is attractive. But, unlike its competitors, this account does not adequately explain what makes them good.’ Assess.

   OR

2. Does wanting something suffice to make it good for you to get it?

### Key reading


### Further reading

Week 8

Equality, Fairness, and Desert

Essay topic (pick one):

1. ‘The Levelling Down Objection to egalitarianism depends upon scepticism about impersonal value. Prioritarians are also committed to impersonal value. So the Levelling Down Objection does not favour prioritarianism over egalitarianism.’ Assess this argument.

   OR

2. ‘The important thing is not whether I have as much of some good as you but whether I have enough of it. Hence, equality is not in itself significant.’ Discuss.

Key reading


Further reading
