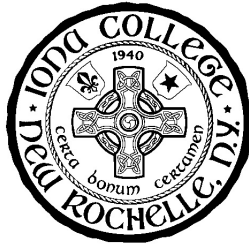


DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

IONA COLLEGE



PHL 210 A & B

Moral Philosophy

*Spring 2010*

A Tu-Th-Fri 10-10:52 Doorley 110

B Tu-Th-Fri 11-11:52 Doorley 110

*Dr. Adam M. Goldstein*

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Ofc Hr Tu-Thu 3:30-5:30 (914) 637-2717

<http://www.iona.edu/faculty/agoldstein>

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The texts of this course include some of the most important in the canon of moral philosophy: Plato's *Republic*, Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, Mill's *Utilitarianism*, and Kant's *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*. These texts represent a range of moral positions: The virtue ethics of Plato

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and Aristotle, Mill's consequentialism, and Kant's deontological theory. Two central threads run through the course as a whole: Plato's question, Why be good? and the role of *autonomy* in ethical action.

## Course Texts

All texts assigned for this class are available online at

<http://www.iona.edu/faculty/agoldstein>.

No texts need to be purchased for this course.

## Evaluation

**Course readings** Students are required to complete all assigned course readings in time for the appropriate class meetings. Consult the schedule of course readings and assignments below. No particular grade weight is assigned to course readings; but students that do not keep up will most likely not be able to complete graded assignments, and will not be able to make good contributions to class discussion. If it becomes apparent that the class as a whole is not consistently keeping up with the readings, random quizzes will be instituted.

Students are expected to bring a copy of the reading being addressed in a given class session with them to that session. Failing to do so will result in a penalty to a student's class participation grade. Whether a student has brought his or her reading to class will be checked by way of random inspections: students will be asked, on randomly selected days, to produce the reading assigned for that week.

**Attendance (10% of the grade)** Students are required to be present and on time for every class meeting, and to remain for the full class period. Please inform Dr. Goldstein if there is some reason you cannot or did not attend class on a given day. Student athletes must present written documentation of their participation to Dr. Goldstein if they wish for their participation in these events to be given consideration when determining their attendance grade. The same is true of those who have missed class due to a medical or family emergency. The College's attendance policies, stated in the most recent edition of the *Iona College Undergraduate Catalog*, will be strictly adhered to. See Table 1 below for more information about how attendance will affect a student's grade. Students absent nine or more times will be failed in the course with a grade of "FA." Absences for athletic events and in general other events that are not emergencies will not be excused for the purpose of assessing whether a student fails the course with an "FA" grade.

Table 1: How will absences affect my grade?

Absences	Penalty to att. & part. grade (units: letter grades)
0–3	none
4–5	-2
5–6	-3
7–9	-4
$\geq 9$	FA course grade

**Class participation (15% of the grade)** Students must engage in an active manner with the course material during class in order to understand it. At a minimum, a student must be an engaged listener, prepared to respond to questions asked by the instructor or comment on classmates' contributions. Students should aim, however, to originate lines of thought or questioning in class. Friday class sessions will be devoted to work in small groups; every student is expected to contribute significantly to his or her group. As mentioned above, students failing to bring the appropriate reading material to class will receive a penalty to their participation grade.

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On random occasions, students will be asked to present their class reading for the day.

It is clear that no one reading the newspaper, text messaging, surfing the WWW, or holding private conversations with other students can be engaged with course material during class. *The use of phones or other telecommunications devices for text messaging or talking is strictly forbidden in this class. The use of phones, laptops or any other device for purposes not directly related to class activities is also strictly forbidden. There are no exceptions to these rules.* A student failing to comply with this rule will receive a penalty to his or her participation grade. Students will not be warned or notified when such penalties are applied. Those whose distracting and uncivil activities become a problem during a particular class session or who engage in a pattern of such activities may be asked to leave that class session, and will be referred to the Dean or other campus services that aim to help students struggling with college-level work.

All students will begin the semester with a participation grade of “B.” Students must fully participate in class in order to attain a higher grade at the end of the semester. Those using cell phones for text messaging or talking *even once* should expect their participation grade to suffer.

**Homework (2.5% each, 10% total)** Five homework assignments will be distributed during the semester; see the schedule of reading and assignments below for their due dates. A student’s lowest homework grade will be dropped: a student’s best four homework scores will be the basis for his or her semester homework grade.

Homework must be turned in at the start of the class session on the day it is due. Homework cannot be accepted after class starts on the day the homework is due: late homework cannot be accepted, except in case of documented family or medical emergency. Student athletes or those engaging in other campus events are expected to turn homework in before the due date, or have a classmate or friend deliver the assignment to class on the day it is due. Homework cannot be accepted by email, and homework attached to an email or included in its message body submitted in advance of the hard copy

as evidence that the assignment was completed on time will be ignored.

**Midterm exam (25%)** A midterm exam will cover material from the first half of the course. The date of this exam is indicated below; see the schedule of readings and assignments.

**Final exam (40%)** A cumulative final exam will be administered during the final exam period assigned to the course by the registrar. The date of this exam will be announced shortly after the registrar has published the final exam schedule, which is at

<http://www.iona.edu/admin/sfs/register/finalExamSchedule.cfm>.

## Policies

**Minimal work for passing** A student must take the midterm and final exam to pass the course.

**Alternative exam administration** Students having registered with the CAP program or with other campus offices and who have obtained permission from those offices to take exams in a setting other than the usual classroom should notify Dr. Goldstein of their need for such an alternative setting. It will gladly be provided.

## Academic Integrity

In the context of this class, a student cheats by turning in work to fulfill an assignment requiring that he or she be the work's sole creator, but was not. Copying another student's homework or exam paper are central examples of cheating, though not the only ones. Cheating is morally wrong, and is destructive for the person cheating and the Iona community, and is strictly forbidden in this class. Moreover, Dr. Goldstein particularly dislikes cheating and considers it his duty to punish it. Disciplinary action in accord with college policies on academic dishonesty, stated in the most recent edition of

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the *Iona College Undergraduate Catalog*, will be pursued against those found cheating. Note that these policies allow that an instructor may fail a student cheating; and Dr. Goldstein believes that, except in a very few types of cases, failing a student is the appropriate remedy.

### Course & teacher evaluation

Iona College now uses an on-line course and teacher evaluation system (“CTE”), which is administered by a corporate subcontractor, not by the College itself. Data are confidential; no instructor will be able to identify which of his or her students is responsible for any response entered into the system. The corporate subcontractor will provide the College and the instructor with information derived from the aggregation of student input. Students using the CTE system will also be provided with some of this information. The College and its faculty value students’ feedback about courses and their instructors, which is essential to the College’s ongoing effort to improve instruction and to assess its course offerings. Students will be notified by email about how and when the CTE will be administered.

## Schedule of Readings & Assignments

Week no.	Date	Readings and Assignments
1	19 Jan	<i>Republic.</i>
2	25	<i>Republic.</i>
3	01 Feb	<i>Republic.</i>
4	08	No new reading. <b>HW #1 due Friday.</b>
5	15	Aristotle.
6	22	Aristotle. No class Thursday & Friday.
7	01 Mar	Aristotle.
8	08	No new reading. <b>HW #2 due Tuesday.</b>
	15	Spring Break. Yay! Be good ...
9	22	Mill. <b>Midterm Thursday.</b>
10	29	Mill.
11	05 Apr	No new reading <b>HW #3 due Friday.</b>

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Week no.	Date	Readings and Assignments
12	12 Apr	Kant.
13	19	Kant. <b>HW #4 due Friday.</b>
14	26	Kant.
15	03 May	No new reading. <b>HW #5 due Friday.</b>
	TBA	Final exam.

## Appendix: Course Learning Goals

Upon completion of this course, it is expected that every student will be able to do the following.

1. Understand the nature of moral reasoning and the metaphysical and epistemological foundations upon which that reasoning relies.
2. Know some moral positions and arguments in favor of and against those positions.
3. Recognize, express, and analyze arguments in philosophical texts.
4. Read and interpret philosophical texts.
5. Summarize and explain difficult ideas and concepts.
6. Write philosophical essays that have theses and reasonable supporting arguments.
7. Understand different intellectual perspectives and thus be able to understand that different people will describe a moral issue in different ways.
8. Develop a sense of the value and limits of philosophy.
9. Develop a reflective attitude and sensitivity to the subtleties and complexities of moral judgments.

Each of the assignments, together with course lectures and discussion, contribute to the accomplishment of each of these learning goals.