

UNIVERSITÉ SAINT-PAUL

FACULTÉ DE PHILOSOPHIE



SAINT PAUL UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY

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Philosophy 3140
Kant's Ethical Theory
Fall 2010
Tuesday: 13:15 – 16:15

Professor: Mahmoud Masaeli
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Office hours: Thursdays 13:30-17:30

Course Objective:

This course covers some of the major arguments of Kant's ethical theory, based primarily on the *Groundwork of Metaphysics of Morals*. However, since his theory should be understood in relation to a wide range of philosophical issues especially those of metaphysics and politics, the scope of discussion goes beyond the *Groundwork* and covers the issues in *Critique of Pure Reason*, *Critique of Practical Reason*, and *The Metaphysics of Morals*. The course is divided into three parts: Kant's ethical theory within his architectonic philosophy, Kant's ethical theory, and Kant's political ethics. The topics to be covered include: the place of Kant's ethical theory in his architectonic philosophy; Kant's analysis of obligation; maxims and imperatives; the formula of universal law; Kant's moral psychology; the formula of humanity; Kant's theory of value; the highest good, God and immortality, and what is the Enlightenment, and Kant's theory of perpetual peace.

Learning Outcomes: At the end of this course, students will:

- Have an understanding of the intellectual situation within which Kant developed his ethical account,
- Be acquainted with Kant's ethical theory fit into his architectonic philosophy,
- Be familiar with the key ethical assumptions concerning the moral function of reason on Kant's ethical theory,
- Have been required to examine the grounding of Kant's ethical theory in both the academic literature and the major contemporary moral practice,
- Be familiar with influence of Kant on contemporary ethical theorists.

Course Evaluation:

1. Class attendance and participation (20%): You are expected to attend all classes, to have prepared the readings prior to class, and to participate actively in the class discussion. You earn class participation marks through thoughtful contributions to the discussions and attendance.

2. Presentation (30%): You are required to give a critical analysis of the topic that you choose for your presentation and provide at least three thought-provoking questions for the entire class for further discussion. Please forward the outline of your presentation and the questions through e-mail to all participants and the instructor at least forty eight hours before the time of presentation. The questions must show evidence of intellectual effort. Presentation's length would be of maximum 30 minutes followed by 30 minutes of discussions and questions.

3. Term paper (50%): The research paper, approximately around 15 pages in length. The topic must be related to the course. In writing your paper you should follow one of the standard styles of writing (it is suggested to follow Chicago Manual of Style). It needs to a bibliography of at least six sources. Bonus points will be given for using and citing primary sources.

Late paper policy:

Papers should be handed in by the due date. For the late papers you need proven medical certificates. Late assignments will be deducted one letter-grade category per day *i.e.* a B+ paper received two days late will be downgraded to B-.

Required Texts:

1. Immanuel Kant. *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Mary Gregor trans. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998)
2. Immanuel Kant, *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch*, Ted Humphery trans. (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 2003)
3. Immanuel Kant, *What is Enlightenment?*
4. More texts will be provided depending on the discussing themes. I will email you the scanned text. A hardcopy of the text will also be available on reserve in the library.

Recommended Works:

1. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Vasilis politis ed. (London, J. M. Dent, 2002). We read introduction, pp. xxviii; pp. 3-28; and more selections,

2. Christine M. Korsgaard, *Creating the Kingdom of Ends* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996)
3. Barbara Herman, *The Practice of Moral Judgment*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993
4. John Rawls, *Lectures on the History of Moral Philosophy*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000.
5. Thomas Vernor Smith, *From Descartes to Kant; Readings in the Philosophy of the Renaissance and Enlightenment*, (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1940),
6. Manfred Kuehn, *Kant: A Biography*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Course Schedule:

Part One: Kant's Philosophical Sketch

Week 1 I) Introduction
II) Kant and the Project of Enlightenment

Required Reading:

- Frederick C. Beiser, "Kant's Intellectual Development: 1746-1781," in *The Cambridge Companion to Kant* Paul Guyer eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 26-61;

Recommended Reading:

- Christine M. Korsgaard, *Creating the Kingdom of Ends* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), Chapter one: An Introduction to the Ethical, Political, and religious Thought of Kant, pp. 3-42;
- Nathan M. Knispel, "Kant and Rousseau on the Self-Emancipation of Man," *Contemporary Philosophy* 19, no. 6 (November-December 1997): pp. 11-15;
- Michael Losonsky, *Enlightenment and Action from Descartes to Kant* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), B801 .L67 2001
- Thomas Vernor Smith, *From Descartes to Kant; Readings in the Philosophy of the Renaissance and Enlightenment*, (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1940), B790.S55

Week 2 Reviewing the First Critique

Required Reading:

- *Critique of Pure Reason*: introduction, pp. xxviii and 3-28;

Recommended Reading:

- Daniel Sutherland, "The Point of Kant's Axioms of Intuition," *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 86, no. 1 (March 2005): pp. 135-159;
- Theodor Adorno and Rolf Tiedemann eds., *Kant's Critique of Pure Reason* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001);
- Paul Guyer, "The Unity of Reason: Pure Reason as Practical reason in Kant's Early Concept of The Transcendental Dialectic," *Monist: An International Quarterly Journal of General Philosophical Inquiry* 72 (April 1989): pp. 139-167;
- Ralph C.S. Walker eds., *Kant on Pure Reason* (Oxford: New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), B2779.K36
- Gerd Buchdahl, *Kant and the Dynamics of Reason: Essays on the Structure of Kant's Philosophy* (Oxford, UK: Cambridge, USA: Blackwell, 1992), B2798.B763
- Alan Schwerin, "Some Questions about Kant's Clear Question," *Southwest Philosophy Review: The Journal of The Southwestern Philosophical Society* 14, no. 2 (July 1998): pp. 1-15;
- Luis Jose Bermudez, "Scepticism and the Justification of Transcendental Idealism," *Ratio: An International Journal of Analytic Philosophy* 8, no. 1 April 1995): pp. 1-23;

Week 3 The Influence of Plato, Stoic, and Rousseau

Required Reading:

- Hand out will be distributed.

Part Two: Kant's Ethical Theory

**Weeks 4 Argument for Groundwork
I) The Notion of the Good Will
II) Analysis of Obligation**

Required Reading:

- *Groundwork*, vii-xv; preface and first section, 1-18;

Recommended Reading:

- Korsgaard, "Kant's Analysis of Obligation: The Argument of *Groundwork I*," pp. 43-76;

- Herman, "On the Value of Acting from the Motive of Duty";
- Rawls, Kant Lecture I "Groundwork: Preface and Part I";
- Lawrence Pasternack, "Intrinsic Value and Moral Overridingness in Kant's *Groundwork*," *Southwest Philosophy Review: The Journal of The Southwestern Philosophical Society* 18, no. 1 (January 2002): pp. 113-121;

Weeks 5 The Categorical Imperative and its Formulation Maxims and Imperatives

Required Reading:

- *Groundwork*, second section, pp. 19-31
- Introduction to the *Groundwork*, xv-xvii

Recommended Reading:

- *Critique of Practical Reason*, chapter I, pp. 17-24 (5: 19-26)
- Korsgaard, "Creating the Kingdom of Ends," pp. 188-224; and
- Section III of "The Normativity of Instrumental Reason"
- Leory E. Loemker, "The Metaphysical Status of regulative Maxims in Leibniz and Kant," *Southern Journal of Philosophy* 11(Spring-Summer 1973): pp. 141-147;
- Andrew Reath, "The Categorical Imperative and Kant's Conception of Practical rationality," *Monist: An International Quarterly Journal of General Philosophical Inquiry* 72 (July 1989): pp. 384-410;
- Paul Gryer, "The Philosophy of Categorical Imperative," *Philosophical Review* 104, no. 3 (July 1995): pp. 353-385;

Week 6 Humanity as End in itself

Required Reading:

- *Groundwork*, second section, pp. 32-38;

Week 7 Formula of Universal Law

Required Reading:

- *Groundwork*, Second Section, pp. 19-34;

Recommended Reading:

- *Critique of Practical Reason*, Analytic, Chapter I, pp. 24-30 (5: 27-33); Chapter II, pp. 58-62 (5: 67-72)

- Korsgaard, "Kant's Formula of Universal Law," pp. 77-105,
- Herman, "Mutual Aid and Respect for Persons";
- Rawls, Kant Lecture II "The Categorical Imperative: The First Formulation";
- David A.J. Richards, "Rights and Autonomy," *Ethics: An International Journal of Social, Political, and Legal Philosophy* 92 (October 1981): pp. 3-20;
- Samuel C. Rickless, "From the Good Will to the Formula of Universal Law," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 68, no. 3 (May 2004): pp. 554-577;

Week 8 Study week, no class

Week 9 Moral Psychology

Required Reading:

- *Groundwork*, Second Section, pp. 34-36;

Recommended Reading:

- *Critique of Practical Reason*, Chapter III up to the "Critical Elucidation," 62-75 (5: 71-89)
- Rawls, Kant Lecture IX "The Moral Psychology of the *Religion*";
- Josefine Nauckhoff, "Incentives and Interests in Kant's Moral Philosophy," *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 20, no. 1 (January 2003): pp. 41-60;
- Talbot Brewer, "The Character of Temptation: Towards a More Plausible Kantian Moral Psychology," *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly*. 83, no. 2 (June 2002): pp. 103-130;
- David E. ward, "Explaining Evil Behavior: Using *Kant* and M. Scott Peck to Solve the Puzzle of Understanding the *Moral Psychology* of Evil People," *Philosophy, Psychiatry, and Psychology* 9, no. 1 (March 2002): pp. 1-12;

Weeks 10 The Formula of Humanity

Required Reading:

- *Groundwork*, Second Section, pp. 36-51 (4: 428-445)

Recommended Reading:

- *Critique of Practical Reason*, Chapter II, pp. 50-58 (5: 57-68)
- *The Metaphysics of Morals*, pp. 173-218 (6: 417-474)
- Korsgaard, "Kant's Formula of Humanity," and "The Right to Lie: Kant on Dealing with Evil"

- Rawls, Kant Lecture III “The Categorical Imperative: The Second Formulation”;
- Kant Lecture IV “The Categorical Imperative: The Third Formulation”;
- Samuel J. Kerstein, “Korsgaard's Kantian Arguments for the Value of Humanity,” *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 31, no. 1 (March 2001): pp. 23-52;
- Samuel V. Bruton, “Establishing Kant's Formula of Humanity,” *Southwest Philosophy Review: The Journal of The Southwestern Philosophical Society* 16, no. 1 (January 2000): pp. 41-49;
- Lawrence Pasternack, “Intrinsic Value and Moral Overridingness in Kant's Groundwork,” *Southwest Philosophy Review: The Journal of The Southwestern Philosophical Society* 18, no. 1 (January 2002): pp. 113-121;

Week 11 Kant's Theory of Value

Required Reading:

Groundwork, second section, pp. 40-47;

Week 12 The Highest Good, God and Immortality

Required Reading:

- *Groundwork*, third section, pp. 52-59;
- *Critique of Practical Reason*, pp.110-14;

Recommended Reading:

- Korsgaard, “Two Distinctions in Goodness,” pp. 249-274;
- A.T. Nuyen, “Kant on God, Immortality, and the Highest Good” *Southern Journal of Philosophy* 31, no. 1 (Spring 1993): pp. 121-133;
- Stephen Engstrom, “The Concept of the Highest Good in Kant's Moral Theory” *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 52, no. 4 (December 1992): pp. 747-780;
- Curtis Bowman, “A Deduction of Kant's Concept of the Highest Good,” *Journal of Philosophical Research* 28 (2003): pp. 45-63;
- Lance Simmons, “Kant's Highest Good: Albatross, Keystone, Achilles Heel,” *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 10, no. 4 (October 1993): pp. 355-368;

Part Three: Kant's Political Ethics

Week 13 I. Kant's Political Ethics II. Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch

Required Reading:

- Immanuel Kant, *What is Enlightenment?*
- Immanuel Kant, *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch*, Ted Humphery trans., (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 2003);

Recommended Reading:

- Metaphysics of Morals, 6:221-33;
- Ciaran Cronin, "Kant's Politics of Enlightenment," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 41, no. 1 (January 2003): pp. 51-80;
- James Schmidt, *What Is Enlightenment? Eighteenth-Century Answers and Twentieth-Century Questions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996);
- William James Booth, *Interpreting the World: Kant's philosophy of History and Politics* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986), B2798.B668
- Louis P. Pojman, "Kant's Perpetual Peace and Cosmopolitanism," *Journal of Social Philosophy* 36, no. 1 (Spring 2005): pp. 62-71;
- Pauline Kleingeld, "Approaching Perpetual Peace: Kant's Defence of a League of States and His Ideal of a World Federation," *European Journal of Philosophy* 12, no. 3 (December 2004): pp. 304-325;
- Thomas Mertens, "From 'Perpetual Peace' to 'The Law of Peoples': Kant, Habermas and Rawls on International Relations," *Kantian review* 6 (2002): 60-84.