

Module specification Total points 85 out of 100

1. Factual information			
Including material uploaded on Moodle (13 points)			
Module title	Philosophy 203 “Ethics”		Fall 2023
Module tutor	Professor David Wisner	Credit value	3
Module type	Lecture and discussion	Notional learning hours	42 contact hours over an academic term of variable length

2. Rationale of the module within the degree scheme/Prerequisites/other entry requirements

Philosophy 203 is a General Education Requirement to be taken by all degree candidates in their junior or senior year of study.

2. Aims of the module

The purpose of the course is to guide students to develop a critical capacity for dealing with ethical problems, and to provide a practical introduction to classic and contemporary applied ethical theory. When and where applicable, the instances discussed in class will relate to ethical problems in contemporary professional life.

4. Pre-requisite modules or specified entry requirements

Philosophy 101 or permission of the instructor

5. Is the module compensatable?

N/A

6. Are there any PSRB requirements regarding the module?

N/A

7. Intended Learning Outcomes 15 points and learning activities 9 points

A. Knowledge and understanding		Learning and teaching strategy
<p><i>At the end of the module, learners will be expected to:</i></p> <p>A1: Demonstrate basic familiarity with the content and strengths of specific classic ethical theories (Aristotle, Social Contract, Kant, Utilitarianism)</p> <p>A2: Be conversant with recent problems and trends in moral philosophy, notably with regard to complex emergencies and environment ethics, respectively</p>		<p>Assigned readings (textbook, media reports, excerpts from feature films)</p> <p>Guided discussion (Socratic method), short writing assignments on pertinent material</p>
B. Cognitive skills		Learning and teaching strategy
<p><i>At the end of the module learners will be expected to:</i></p> <p>B1: Recognize, analyze, and defend or critique approaches to ethical problems</p> <p>B2: Contextualize various contemporary issues</p>		<p>Class discussions and select writing assignments conceived to test students’ capacity to frame a problem as a moral dilemma and determine the applicability of core theories</p>

A. Knowledge and understanding		Learning and teaching strategy
with reference to moral philosophy		
C. Practical and professional skills		Learning and teaching strategy
<i>At the end of the module learners will be expected to:</i> C1: relate to ethical problems in contemporary professional life.		Extended and/or sustained discussion of business and professional ethics case studies
D Key transferable skills		Learning and teaching strategy
<i>At the end of the module learners will be expected to:</i> D1. demonstrate mastery of short-form writing skills D3: engage in unguided applied research activity		Students will submit several written assessments prepared in various contexts (in-class, at-home, timed, free-form) The final assessment will be a case study designed to simulate a type of professional writing they might be expected to do upon graduation.

8. Indicative content. 13 points

The course will begin with a general overview of the structure of ethical problems. The core of our inquiry will be devoted to four classic Western approaches to ethics, with due regard to appropriate texts: social contract (Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau); moral obligation (Kant); maximization of pleasure and consequences of one's actions (Utilitarianism, particularly Bentham and Mill); and personal virtue (Aristotle). The course will also consider material from non-Western traditions and from more recent trends and concerns in moral philosophy

Indicative Topics

- Introduction to the idea of a moral order; autonomous moral agents; ethics vs morality; definitions
- Utilitarianism: happiness; cruelty to animals; euthanasia
- Kant and moral obligation; truth; crime and punishment
- Social Contract and the state of nature; game theory and enlightened self-interest
- Aristotle and virtue ethics
- Existentialism; non-Western moral traditions
- Complex emergencies
- Environment ethics

9. Assessment strategy, assessment methods, their relative weightings and mapping to module learning outcomes 13 points

Assessment Strategy:

To measure progress toward fulfillment of these outcomes, students will be required to complete the following assessments.

Assessment Task	Weighting	Week submitted	Grading (Pass / Fail / %)	Module Learning Outcome(s) the assessment task maps to
Four tests (outcomes 1 and 2)	20% each – total 80%	Throughout the term	%	See below
Final in-class workshop or case study (30%; outcomes 2 and 3)	20%	During finals week	%	

10. Teaching staff associated with the module	
Tutor's name and contact details	Contact hours
David Wisner, Office no. 1, phone number: 2310-398227, email: drd@act.edu	TBA

11. Required Reading (all material available digitally via Moodle)

12 points

- Rachels, James, *The Elements of Moral Philosophy*, 4th Edition (McGraw-Hill, 2003)
 - Available in pdf format via the Moodle shell for this course.
- O'Hagan, Andrew "The Tower," *London Review of Books*, 2017
 - (https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v40/n11/andrew-o-hagan/thetower?referrer=&utm_campaign=4011&utm_content=ukrw_nonsubs_issue&utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter)
- "Traditional Ethical Theories and Contemporary Environment Ethics," in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, part 4 of the entry on "Environmental Ethics"
 - (<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ethics-environmental/#TraEthTheConEnvEth>).
- *The Good Lie* (feature film by John Howard)
 - Site and trailer here: <http://www.thegoodliemovie.com/>

12. Other indicative text (e.g. websites)

Additional material uploaded on MOODLE

13. List of amendments since last (re)validation

Area amended	Details	Date Central Quality informed

GRADING & ACADEMIC POLICIES 10 points

ASSESSMENT DEADLINES Students must submit work by the deadlines set in the module outline. Where coursework is submitted late and there are no accepted extenuating circumstances it will be penalized by a grade penalty.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS: If you have specific physical, psychological, or any other learning disabilities that you believe may require accommodations for this course, you should visit the Dean's office by bringing the appropriate documentation.

The Writing Center (1st floor, Bissell Library) is staffed by experienced English faculty. You are encouraged to use its services.

Absence policy: Maximum Allowed Number of Absences The maximum allowed number of absences for all ACT courses stands at 10 (ten) hours per course. **Excusing Absences** To excuse absences for good cause (such as medical reasons or personal crises), the student should contact the Registrar's office and, ahead of time or at the latest within a week from the time the absences took place, provide written proof of the cause of the absences. The documents submitted are then evaluated by the Associate Dean for Administration and Student Affairs, who decides whether there are valid grounds for excusing the absences. **Successful Attendance** A student is considered to have successfully attended a course if he/she has attended 75% of the course lectures. Thus, the maximum number of absences (excused or not) stands at 11 hours per course. In case of an unsuccessful attendance, the student is administratively withdrawn from the course. The student has the right to appeal the decision to be administratively withdrawn from a course due to excessive absences and seek reinstatement. In this case, the student, within three working days, must fill in a 'mitigating circumstances' form in the Registrar's office, where the reasons of the appeal should be explained. Following this, a formal hearing of the Academic Standards and Performance Committee (ASPC) takes place. The decision of the Committee is final.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY All academic divisions at ACT, both undergraduate and graduate, will apply the following policy on academic integrity and be included in the syllabus: "A student committing an act of Academic Dishonesty in a given course will receive an F (0 percentage points) in the assignment where the academic infraction took place. If a student commits an act of Academic Dishonesty for a second time in the same course, this student will receive a failing grade in that course".

Policy on the Use of Artificial Intelligence

Philosophy 203 is writing intensive. Your taking the course is an opportunity for you to improve and refine your academic writing skills. You are expected to produce your own work, and encouraged to submit extra work when invited. The use of artificial intelligence (AI) is strictly prohibited in all written assignments. The use of information technology in the classroom will be monitored; I reserve the right to assign absences for excessive use of laptops, tablets, and smartphones during class sessions.

For further guidance, below you will find the policies of ACT's Division of Humanities and Social Social Sciences on the use of technology and artificial intelligence.

All assignments you submit, including examinations, must be your own original work; as a result, the use of artificial intelligence (AI) is strictly prohibited in all written assignments on this course. Submissions are checked; if the use of AI is detected and confirmed, your assignment may receive a failing grade. Where a course allows AI use for learning purposes, your instructor will provide specific guidelines.

Policy on the Use of Technology in the Classroom

Students are expected to attend class sessions with a means of taking notes, such as a notebook, a tablet or a laptop. Smartphones are **only** allowed with the instructor's permission, and must be kept out of sight for the duration of the class. Therefore, please place your phone on mute before you come to class; violating this policy will negatively impact your grade.

GRADING SCALE

Grade Description	US Letter Grade	US point grade
Excellent	A	4.0
Very Good (high)	A-	3.67
Very Good (low)	B+	3.33
Good (high)	B	3.0
Good (low)	B-	2.67
Satisfactory (high)	C+	2.33
Satisfactory (low)	C	2.0
Fail	F	0