

PHIL 703S  
**Proseminar in Ethics**  
Spring 2024

Thursdays, 110 - 340  
East Duke 204B

David Wong  
Gopal Sreenivasan

**Schedule**

- January 11 Hume, *Treatise* (1739), last paragraph of Book III, part I, sec. 1;  
Moore, *Principia Ethica* (1903), ch. 1.
- Jan 18 Mackie, *Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong* (1977), ch. 1.
- Jan 25 Smart and Williams, *Utilitarianism: For and Against* (1973).
- February 1 Kagan, *Limits of Morality* (1989), ch. 1.
- Feb 8 Kamm, *Intricate Ethics* (2007), ch. 5
- Feb 15 Anscombe, "Modern Moral Philosophy," *Philosophy* (1958);  
Williams, *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy* (1985), pp. 1, 4-13, ch. 10, and  
postscript.
- Feb 22 McDowell, "Virtue and Reason," *Monist* (1979);  
Gilligan, *In a Different Voice* (1982), pp. 24-39 and 49-63.
- Feb 29 Mengzi, *Mencius* (4th c. CE), pp. 1-3, 12-16; 1A7, 2A2, 2A6, 4A27, 6A1-6A15;  
Xunzi, *Xunzi* (3rd c. CE) "Human Nature is Bad"; "Discourse on Ritual" (excerpt)
- March 7 Street, "A Darwinian Dilemma for Realist Theories of Value," *Philosophical  
Studies* (2006);  
Tomasello, "The Ultra-Social Animal," *European Journal of Social Psychology*  
(2014).
- Spring break*
- March 21 Frye, "Oppression," in her *Politics of Reality* (1983);  
hooks, "A Movement to End Sexist Oppression," in her *Feminist Theory* (1984).
- March 28 Hart, "Are there any natural rights?," *Philosophical Review* (1955)

- April 4 Dworkin, *Freedom's Law* (1996), Introduction.
- April 11 Waldron, "The core of the case against judicial review," *Yale Law Journal* (2006)

## Readings

Readings will be made available in Canvas.

## Assignments

Everyone will be required to write a weekly 600 word essay on the assigned topic. Essays will be due at 9 am in the Canvas dropbox on Thursdays (i.e., class day). Topics will be posted in Canvas the week before. Everyone has **three** free passes on the short essays, i.e. you may elect not to submit an essay on three weeks of your choosing.

Everyone is also required to write a 3000 word essay at the end of the term. Students should propose their own topics. 1 page topic proposals are due by e-mail on Friday, March 29. The essay itself is due Monday, April 29.

## Grading

From each student's 9 short essays (there will be no essay in week 1), we will count your highest 6 grades. These 6 grades will count for 60 percent of your final grade; your longer essay will count for 30 percent; participation will count for the remaining 10 percent.

## Office hours

David Wong  
West Duke 203E  
[\*\*d.wong@duke.edu\*\*](mailto:d.wong@duke.edu)

*After class, for an hour*

Gopal Sreenivasan  
West Duke 210  
[\*\*gopal.sreenivasan@duke.edu\*\*](mailto:gopal.sreenivasan@duke.edu)

*By appointment*

9 January, 2024