

Higher Institute of Philosophy


FILO1140 Practical philosophy 1 : Moral Philosophy

[45h+15h exercises] 4.5 credits

This course is taught in the 2nd semester

Teacher(s): Laurent de Briey, Olivier Depré
Language: French
Level: First cycle

Aims

By the end of the course, the student should be able to address in a critical manner, that is to say, in a manner that is personal, informed, and well-argued, the pressing moral questions regarding happiness, the notion of duty, the idea of value, etc. The student should also be able to show the legitimacy and pertinence these questions have both for human beings and for the world of today. To this end, the student should be up to mastering the conceptual and historical reference points necessary to weigh the moral stakes inherent to all philosophical questions. In a similar vein, the student should also be able to put these reference points to work in a coherent and well thought-out manner.

Main themes

To introduce the student to the plurality of orientations encountered in moral philosophical reflection; to its history and major epochs; to its self-understanding and methods; to the questions it poses and the problems it raises.

Content and teaching methods

Content:

The eudaimonistic path. The problem of happiness. The ideal of independence. Calculative Modernity and providential pre-Modernity. The utilitarian option. The deontological path. Eudaimonism as the euthanasia of morality. Kantian morality. Morality and politics. Arendt, between Kant and Aristotle. A new ethics: the ethics of the future. The cul-de-sac of environmental ethics. Overcoming that cul-de-sac: anthropic principle, debt, and patrimony. Introduction to applied ethics: animal rights. Questioning of the correlation between rights and duties.

Method:

The course will be composed of:

- 1) Lectures that furnish the necessary tools for a reflection on moral philosophy;
- 2) Exercises tightly connected with the theoretical presentation and bearing both on the reading and on the discussion of moral philosophical texts;
- 3) An essay of ten or so pages on one problem or questions of moral philosophy.

Miscellaneous information (pre-requisites, manner of assessment, supporting material, framework, etc.).

Other information (prerequisite, evaluation (assessment methods), course materials recommended readings, ...)

Pre-requisite:

Introductory course on the history of philosophy.

Assessment:

The exam is based on the lectures.

Supporting Material:

Class notes

Course Holder/Course Supervision:

An assistant (directing the works, the library work, and helping with the essay)

Programmes in which this activity is taught

ETES9CE Certificat universitaire en éthique économique et sociale
ISPA9CE Certificat universitaire en philosophie (fondements)