

PHI 3601: Ethics  
University of North Florida

Course description

From the course catalog: "Ethics considers questions such as 'How should I live?' and 'How do I decide the right thing to do and why should I do it?' This course deals with those questions in the areas of moral metaphysics, meta-ethics and normative theories of moral conduct which come from the history of philosophy back to the time of Plato and Aristotle. Other theorists to be discussed include Immanuel Kant and John Stuart Mill, and may include figures such as Thomas Hobbes, David Hume and John Dewey, as well as contemporary theorists."

This course will be taught as a relatively advanced and ambitious engagement with ethical theory, including discussions of normative ethical theories, moral metaphysics, and meta-ethics. We'll begin by considering the historical foundations of ethical theory. In this portion of the class, we will cover the following figures chronologically: Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas, Hobbes, Rousseau, Hume, Kant, Mill, Nietzsche, and Dewey.

With this foundation in place, we will move into topical discussions in contemporary ethical theory. Topics we will cover include contemporary Kantianism, contemporary utilitarianism, contemporary virtue ethics, care ethics, intuitionism, cultural relativism, psychological egoism, subjectivism, moral relativism, realism, emotivism, moral saints, moral luck, and moral standing.