

PHIL 462
Kant's Moral Philosophy
Tuesdays 10:00-12:30 Mundelein 515

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Office hours: Tuesday and Thursday

Course Description

In this course, we will examine both the foundations and content of Kant's moral philosophy. We will begin with works such as the *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals* and the *Critique of Practical Reason*, and then move on to discuss the manner in which Kant's moral philosophy is intertwined with his work on religion, politics, and history. To this end, we will read portions of *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*, as well as portions of the *Metaphysics of Morals* and some essays on politics.

Required Texts

Kant, *Practical Philosophy* (ed. Gregor) Cambridge University Press, 1996. (blue)
Kant, *Religion Within the Boundaries of Mere Reason* (ed. Wood & Giovanni), Cambridge University Press, 1998. (green)

Other Readings (emailed):

"Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim" (1784)
"Conjectural Beginning of Human History" (1786)
(both are from Kant, *Anthropology, History and Education* (ed. Zöllner and Loudon), CUP, 2007.)
Selection from Fiorenza, *Systematic Theology*, 2e (2011) "Transcendental Theology"

Grades/Assignments:

Your grade in this class will be based on two class presentations on the reading (15% each), one short paper (25%) and a final paper (45%), due May 1st. I reserve the right to reduce a grade due to excessive absences.

Presentations: You will sign up to present on one of the readings. These presentations should be approximately 5-10 minutes long, with the presenter opening up a discussion about the material following the presentation. You should have a handout, no longer than a single sheet of paper, front and back. Do not summarize the reading, but rather, draw attention to a particular theme of the reading and discuss or problematize that theme.

Short paper: Your short paper will be due one week following the presentation of your choice, and will be on the topic of your presentation. It will be approximately 4 pages long. If you would prefer to write on some other topic, that will be fine, just talk to me and we can arrange something. The paper should be argumentative and textually-based; i.e., it should have a clear, substantive thesis, and draw primarily on the primary text for support. It may take the form of arguing for a particular interpretation of Kant, or it may take the form of defending or refuting a particular view put forth by Kant.

Long paper: Your longer paper may expand on this shorter paper, or it may be entirely independent. The longer paper should engage with relevant secondary literature. It should be approximately 12 pages long. I suggest you speak with me about your topic well in advance of the due date, and also that you submit your paper to me for feedback. I will give feedback on any drafts received by April 18th.

WEEK 1: January 14

Introduction and Overview

“What is Enlightenment?” (1784) (pp. 17-22)

“Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim” (1784) (emailed)

WEEK 2: January 21

Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals (1785) Preface, I and II (pp. 43-93)

WEEK 3: January 28

Groundwork III (pp. 94-108)

“Conjectural Beginning of Human History” (1786) (emailed)

WEEK 4: February 4

Critique of Practical Reason (1788) Preface, Book 1 Ch. 1 (pp. 139-186)

WEEK 5: February 11

Critique of Practical Reason Book I Ch. 2-3 (186-225)

WEEK 6: February 18 –

Critique of Practical Reason Book II and Doctrine of Method (226-279)

WEEK 7: February 25 –

Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason (1793) Preface, I and II

******Spring Break**** NO CLASS MARCH 3**

WEEK 8: March 10

Religion III

WEEK 9: March 17

Religion IV / supplemental article (emailed)

Comparisons: Kant’s Moral Religion and its Aftermath

WEEK 10: March 24

“On the Common Saying ...” (Theory and Practice) (1793) (pp. 279-309)

Toward Perpetual Peace (1795) (pp. 317-351)

WEEK 11: March 31

Metaphysics of Morals, Doctrine of Right, Preface and Introduction (1797) (pp. 365-397)

WEEK 12: April 7

Metaphysics of Morals, Doctrine of Right, selections (from pp. 401-506)

WEEK 13: April 14

Metaphysics of Morals Doctrine of Virtue, Preface and Introduction (pp. 509-540)

WEEK 14: April 21

Metaphysics of Morals Doctrine of Virtue, selections (from 543-603)

“On a Supposed Right to Lie from Philanthropy” (pp. 611-615)

Final Papers: Due Friday 5/1

Bibliography (this is an *extremely short* list of books and articles on Kant's moral philosophy, intended as a starting point for a paper. Please contact me for more specific recommendations).

Allison, Henry (1990). *Kant's Theory of Freedom*, New York: Cambridge University Press.

Ameriks, Karl (2003). "On Two Non-Realist Interpretations of Kant's Ethics," in *Interpreting Kant's Critiques*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 263–282.

Engstrom, Stephen (1992) "The Concept of the Highest Good in Kant's Moral Philosophy," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 51(4): 747–80.

Firestone & Jacobs (2008) *In Defense of Kant's Religion*. Indiana U Press (Good overview and starting place for a paper on the *Religion* essay; contains an extensive and detailed literature review).

Genrty, Gerad (2019). Special Issue on Equality and the *A Priori* in Gender and Race. *SGIR Review*, 2:2. (A collection of essays on Kant, gender, and race, authors include Kleingeld, Mills, and Allais).

Herman, Barbara (1993). *The Practice of Moral Judgment*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
— (1996). "Making Room for Character," in *Aristotle, Kant, and the Stoics: Rethinking Happiness and Duty*, in S. Engstrom and J. Whiting (eds.), New York: Cambridge University Press, 36–60.

Kain, Patrick (2004). "Self-legislation in Kant's Moral Philosophy," *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie*, 86(3): 257–306.

Kersting, Wolfgang (1992). "Politics, Freedom and Order" in P. Guyer (ed.), *Cambridge Companion to Kant*, Cambridge University Press.

Pauline Kleingeld, various articles and books; her most recent book is (2011) *Kant and Cosmopolitanism: the Philosophical Ideal of World Citizenship*, Cambridge University Press. (She's written several books and a massive number of articles, too many to list here, focusing on Kant's political theory, view of history, concept of autonomy, and various other topics of the course. If you are writing a paper on anything that touches on these themes, I recommend you look her up).

Korsgaard, Christine (1996). *Creating the Kingdom of ends*, New York: Cambridge University Press.

Rawls, John. (1980). "Kantian Constructivism in Moral Theory," *Journal of Philosophy*, 77: 515–72.

Reath and Timmerman (2010; eds.) *Kant's Critique of Practical Reason: A Critical Guide*, Cambridge University Press. (A good collection of essays on the second *Critique*).

Schneewind, J. B. (1992). "Autonomy, Obligation, and Virtue" in P. Guyer (ed.), *Cambridge Companion to Kant*, Cambridge University Press.

Wood, Allen (written too much to include everything, focused on moral philosophy proper).

— (1970). *Kant's Moral Religion*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

— (1992). "Rational Theology, Moral Faith, and Religion" in P. Guyer (ed.), *Cambridge Companion to Kant*, Cambridge University Press.

— (1999). *Kant's Ethical Thought*, New York: Cambridge University Press.

— (2007). *Kantian Ethics*, New York: Cambridge University Press.