INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS

Dr. Rona Cohen

Spring Semester

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Office Hours: By appointment

Course description

Ethical theory is concerned with questions of rightness and wrongness, obligation and permissibility, moral decision-making, virtue, and so on. At its grandest and most ambitious, ethics tells us how to live and explain why we should live that particular way. Most of us engage in intuitive ethical theorizing all the time, when we think about what we ought to do, read about a certain government policy, make major life decisions, or just ask questions about the rightness or wrongness of our decisions and actions. Ethical theorists pursue these kinds of questions systematically and thoroughly.

This course is an introduction to philosophical ethics that have puzzled and provoked thinkers for hundreds of years. Throughout the semester, we will discuss major Western ethical theories and important moral philosophers such as Seneca, Kant, Nietzsche, Levinas, Nussbaum as well as debate controversial moral dilemmas such as animal rights, the morality of medical decisions, genetic engineering and more.

Assessment:

Mid Term: A short paper 15%

Final requirement: Paper 70%

Participation: 15%

Attendance:

Attendance is mandatory. Students are permitted a maximum of three absences without penalty. Any additional absences will affect the final grade and may result in failure of the course.

Academic conduct:

Plagiarism is taken extremely seriously. Any instance of academic misconduct which includes: submitting someone else's work as your own; failure to accurately cite sources; taking words from another source without using quotation marks; submission of work for which you have previously received credit; working in a group for individual assignments; using unauthorized materials in an

exam and sharing your work with other students, will result in failure of the assignment and will likely lead to further disciplinary measures.