

# Kant's Ethics (Prospective Syllabus)

## Course Description

Immanuel Kant provided the foundations for the modern version of one of the main branches of ethical theory: deontology. In this class, we shall examine and evaluate Kant's own attempt to lay out his version of ethical theory. In addition to seeing how Kant's ethical theory might be used for understanding what is morally right and wrong, we shall investigate Kant's moral psychology as well as his thought's relation to religion.

## Required Texts

*Practical Philosophy* by Immanuel Kant.

## Recommended Texts

*Immanuel Kant's Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals: A Commentary* by Dieter Schönecker and Allen W. Wood.

*Kantian Ethics* by Allen W. Wood.

## Schedule of Readings [each "\*" corresponds to 1-3 class sessions]

### Introduction

**Recommended:** Allen W. Wood, "Ethical Theory" (43-65)

### Unit 1: Kant's Groundwork

#### *The Good Will, Moral Worth, and Duty*

\* *Groundwork* 4: 387-405

**Recommended:** Korsgaard, "Kant's Analysis of Obligation: The Argument of *Foundations I*"; Allen W. Wood, "Moral Worth" (24-42)

#### *Objections to Kant's Moral Psychology*

\* *Groundwork* 4: 393-405

**Recommended:** Anne Margaret Baxley, *Kant's Theory of Virtue*, Chapter 1

#### *Imperatives and the Formula of Universal Law*

\* *Groundwork* 4: 406-425

**Recommended:** Allen W. Wood, "The Moral Law" (66-84)

#### *The Formula of Humanity*

\* *Groundwork* 4: 426-437

**Recommended:** Allen W. Wood, "Humanity" (85-105)

#### *Autonomy and the Kingdom of Ends*

\* *Groundwork* 4: 433-445

**Recommended:** Allen W. Wood, "Autonomy" (106-122)

### Unit 2: Building Atop the Groundwork

#### *The Highest Good*

\* *Critique of Practical Reason* 5: 113-132

*Kant's System of Duties*

\* *Metaphysics of Morals* 365-390, 394-397, 512-518

**Recommended:** Allen W. Wood, "Duties" (158-181)

*Virtue and Duties to Oneself*

\* *Metaphysics of Morals* 518-536, 546-567

*Duties to Others*

\* *Metaphysics of Morals* 568-588

**Recommended:** Allen W. Wood, "Social Justice" (193-205)

*Radical Evil*

\* *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone* 6: 19-53

**Recommended:** Henry Allison, "Radical Evil"

**Unit 3: Ethical Issues**

*Lying*

\* Kant, "On a Supposed Right to Lie from Philanthropy"; Allen W. Wood, "Lies" (240-258)

*Punishment*

\* *Metaphysics of Morals* 455-461, 472-478

**Recommend:** Allen W. Wood, "Punishment" (206-223)

*(Additional Topics Based on Interest and Time)*