

## PHIL-486 & PSY-495: Virtue Ethics & Moral Psychology

# SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES, RELIGION, AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

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***COURSE SYLLABUS***

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| **Semester/Year:** Spring 2015  **Units:** 3 | **Co-Instructors:** James Van Slyke & Nathan P. Carson  **Office Hours:**  Van Slyke: Tuesdays & Thursdays 1:00 pm - 2:00pm; Wednesdays 12:00 – 2:00pm; 3:30pm – 5:00pm. By appointment only  Carson: Tues/Thurs, 1:30-3:30pm (or by appt.)  **Office Locations:**  Van Slyke: NOH 117  Carson:MCD 209  **Phone Numbers:**  Carson: (453) 559-2370 (or just x2370)  Van Slyke: (559) 453-4607  **Emails:** jav4@fpu.edu; nathan.carson@fresno.edu |
| **Length:** 15 weeks  **Schedule:** Tuesday/Thursday, 11:15-12:30  **Location:** Marpeck Center, 103 |  |

**I. COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is a philosophical and empirical analysis of the virtue ethics tradition. Different theories of ethics will be discussed as well as empirical research related to our understanding of morality. The class will focus primarily on virtue ethics and the work of Robert C. Roberts. Students will learn to evaluate different philosophical theories in ethics and empirical research in moral psychology. During the course, students will develop their own arguments regarding ethics and issues in moral psychology.

**IV. COURSE TEXTS REQUIRED** (these *exact* editions only please)

* Required Texts:
  + Robert C. Roberts, *Emotions in the Moral Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013). **ISBN:** 978-1107016828.
  + Roger Crisp and Michael Slote, eds. *Virtue Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997). **ISBN:**  978-0-19-875188-5.
  + Other Readings: Handed out in class or posted in shared files on Campus Cruiser or Moodle.

**V. COURSE ASSIGNMENTS**

**1. Attendance and Participation (12.5%; 125 points)**

Class attendance is expected, and important because philosophy involves critically examining ideas while in *dialogue* with others. So, students have as much responsibility as the teacher to be active participants in the educational process. This requires from each student a participation that involves (1) *reading* the material assigned, (2) *being present* for the discussions, and (3) *contributing* to the conversations by asking questions, expressing insights, and risking judgments on material read and ideas heard. Your contributions matter! Surfing the internet, or being largely unengaged in class discussions will result in a very low participation grade.

**Excused Absences:** Absences due to unavoidable factors such as participation in university-sponsored athletic events or musical performances, required class trips, serious illness, or family emergency may be excused if you contact me before or immediately after the absence.

**Attendance Grading Policy:** Each absence beyond the first two absences will result in a loss of 5 points from the attendance and participation grade (5 points = 3.5% of attendance and participation grade). Every two days of coming late to class will be counted as one absence. **Anyone with 8 or more unexcused absences will automatically thereby fail the course.**

**2. Seminar Reading Contributions (Two sets responses; total: 22.5%, 225 pts.)**

This is a seminar-style class, so discussion contributions from each student are expected at every session. Responses to the ***primary readings*** for each class session—in the form of a critical, reflective, and focused piece of writing of 200-300 words—**should be entered online by 10:00am on the class day that reading will be discussed, and also turned in as hard copies in class.** We will frequently call upon students to share their insights, and you will frequently share your insights with each other in discussions. In addition to meeting the **five criteria** below, each contribution should be thoughtful, well written, and demonstrate careful reading.

**Five Reading Contribution Criteria:**

1. **State a truth claim or argument:** Succinctly state/summarize a central truth claim or argument in the reading, which you find especially important or provocative. **Avoid a broad summary report that covers the whole reading. Focus on one central quotation, set of quotations, or issue raised in the text.**
2. **Critical Response:** Offer your own critical (thoughtful) response to that main claim/argument including *good reasons that support your response*
3. **Question(s)**: Offer a question or set of questions provoked by the reading. The questions can either be something you want to pose to your fellow classmates, or address something that you do not understand.
4. **Reading Percentage Completed**: At the top of your response, write the ***percentage of readings completed*,** just below your name. This will be on the honor system.
5. **Submission:** Entered online **by 10:00am** on the class day that reading will be discussed, and also turned in as hard copies in class.

**Grading:**

* **15 points (full credit):** Meets all 5 criteria above
* **10 or 7 points:** Fails to meet one (or two) of the first three criteria above
* **0 points:** A careless or effortless response, or doesn’t meet criteria 5.
* **Completion %:** 1 point deduction for each 10% of non-completed reading.
* **Grading:** After giving quick grade feedback on your first two responses, instructors will only read and grade these twice: at midterm (Feb. 26th), and at finals week.
  + **The Midterm Grade, 120 points:** given for the first 13 reading response opportunities, up to (including) **Feb. 26th.** **You are required to complete 8 out of these 13.**
  + **Final Grade, 105 points:** given for the last 12 reading response opportunities, from **March 3rd** to the end of term. **You are required to complete 7 out of the possible 12.**

**3. Short Paper (20% of course grade, 200 points)**

This is a 6-7 page expositional and argumentative paper on philosophical/empirical issues/problems in virtue ethics or moral psychology (Units I-II).Topics can be selected in consultation with your respective professor. Each paper should: (1) provide a careful exposition and analysis of your chosen issue, as it is found in the work of the various thinkers we have covered; (2) advance a clear argumentative thesis in which you either defend or oppose a given approach, thinker, or view. Finally, (3) each paper should make use of clear and careful evidence and reasons in support of your thesis. At least 4 other scholarly books or articles must be consulted, beyond the materials we have read. **Due: Friday, March 6th, by 5pm (posted to Moodle).**

**4. Critical Questions for Roberts (5%, 50 points)**

In this class we have the rare opportunity to interact personally with a world-class moral philosopher and virtue ethicist, Robert C. Roberts. Roberts has spent over 30 years examining emotions, and their contribution to the moral life, and we will spend a number of weeks reading his work (Unit III below).

For this **2-3 page** (typed, double spaced) assignment, you are to **choose a focused question or two** that you will (or we, collectively will) ask Roberts when he comes to campus on April 8th-10th. Your question(s) can either (1) be **open ended**, asking for him to comment, or (2) they can set up your own **critique of and critical response** to some aspect of his work. The professors will expect some students to take up each of these two options. This assignment can be a refinement and expansion of a previous reading response to the Roberts text, if you choose.No sources beyond Roberts need to be consulted, but students can do this if they so choose.

**5. Student Presentations (10% of course grade; 100 points)**

More information on these forthcoming. These will be ‘workshop’ presentations of the arguments and research in your final paper.

**6. Term Paper: Rough and Final Drafts [30% of course grade; 300 points total].**

**Van Slyke Students:** Paper instructions forthcoming.

**Carson Students:** This is an 8-10 page argumentative (thesis-defense) paper on the students’ topic or issue of

choice in the course. Topic must be distinct from previous paper. The paper should offer a clear, central argumentative thesis that is defended throughout the paper with relevant supporting premises/reasons. The paper should raise and respond to at least *two* strong objection against the position defended in the paper. At least 10 scholarly articles or books (beyond primary texts and other sources we’ve examined in class) should be consulted. **A graded rough draft of the paper (worth 100 points) will be submitted prior to the final draft (200 points). DUE DATES: Rough Draft, Fri. April 18th, 5pm** (uploaded to Moodle). **Final Draft: Friday May 8th, 5pm** (uploaded to Moodle).

Use proper grammar (proofread!), a good introduction and conclusion, clear transitions, and *support* your assertions with evidence. The overall main argument (conclusion and supporting premises) should be briefly stated in the introduction, and *absolutely clear* throughout the body of the paper. For footnotes and bibliography the student should follow CMS style [Guidelines for using this style can be found in the Purdue Online Writing Lab: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/01/>. Papers should be double-spaced, 12 pt. font, with 1” margins. You may exceed page limit by no more than 1 page, without penalty.

**VI. COURSE POINTS, COURSEWORK TIME & GRADING SCALE**

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| ***Course Points*** |  | | |
| Attendance/Participation | 125 pts. (12.5%) | | |
| Seminar Reading Contributions #1 | 120 pts. (12%) [8 @ 15pts./each] | | |
| Seminar Reading Contributions #2 | 105 pts. (10.5%) [7 @ 15pts./each] | | |
| Response to Roberts | 50 pts. (5%) | | |
| Short Paper | 200 pts. (20%) | | |
| Term Paper Rough Draft | 100 pts. (10%) | | |
| Paper Workshop Presentation | 100 pts. (10%) | | |
| Term Paper, Final Draft | 200 pts. (20%) | | |
| ***TOTAL:*** | ***1,000 points (100%)*** | | |
| ***Estimated Coursework Time*** | | ***GRADING SCALE*** | |
| ***READING*** | ***Hours*** | ***Letter*** | ***Percentage*** |
| *Crisp & Slote* | 20 | A | 94-100% |
| *Roberts* | 30 | A- | 90-93.9% |
| *Other Assigned Readings* | 30 | B+ | 87-89.9% |
| ***ASSIGNMENTS*** |  | B | 84-86.9% |
| Papers (research & writing for all) | 35 | B- | 80-83.9% |
|  |  | C+ | 77-79.9% |
| ***IN-CLASS INSTRUCTION*** |  | C | 74-76.9% |
| Lectures & Discussion | 35 | C | 70-73.9% |
| ***TOTAL*** | **150** | D+ | 67-69.9% |
|  |  | D | 64-66.9% |
|  |  | D- | 60-63.9% |
|  |  | F | 0-59.9% |
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**VII. OTHER OPPORTUNITIES**

**1. Friday Mornings: Doughnuts & Coffee with Carson**

Every Friday morning, from 10:00-11:00am, I will be in the forest in the middle of campus at a table, ***with coffee and donuts,*** ready to hang out and talk life or philosophy with anyone. On cold days, I will relocate to the SCC lobby and notify students ahead of time (by email) if this happens.

**2. Philosophy Club (extra credit)**

Once a month (or so) there will be a philosophy club gathering to debate philosophy topics! For every philosophy club attended, with a 1 page write up on the discussion, I will give 5 extra credit points toward your final grade. For information on Philosophy Circle gatherings, contact Shiniece Owens (slo5@fpu.edu)

**3. Philosophy Lecture Series: April 8th-10th**

The Philosophy Program will host two or three philosophers at FPU for consecutive evening lectures on April 8th and 9th (BC Lounge, 6:00-8:00pm), and a discussion on April 10th, 10am-Noon. Students from this course are expected to be in attendance, and there may be additional assignments associated with this series (such as preparing questions for speakers, or presenting one’s work as a response to them)

**VIII. COURSE POLICIES**

***1. Deadlines:***

**Acceptance of late work:** Late papers will be penalized 1/3 letter grade per late day. Non-penalized extensions may be granted on a case-by-case basis, but only for extenuating circumstances. Plan ahead and backup your documents.

***2. Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism:***

**All projects must be your own work**. Plagiarism can result in an F for the assignment and even result in an F for the course. Plagiarism can include submitting work:

• written by means of inappropriate collaboration;

• written by you for another course and submitted without the permission of both instructors;

• purchased, downloaded, or cut and pasted from the Internet;

• or that fails to properly acknowledge its sources through standard citations.

***3. Class Communication Tools & Practices***

***-Email & Phone:***Please be in the habit of checking your Fresno Pacific email account DAILY as we may relay important course information through email. **The best way to contact us outside of class time and office hours is by email** (nathan.carson@fresno.edu).

***-Campus Cruiser:***Online readings, links, and course grades will be available on Campus Cruiser.

***-Electronics Etiquette:*** We welcome the use of laptops and tablets in class for note-taking and discussion purposes. Cell phones should be put away during class. **E-readers for course texts are not allowed** (mainly because their page numbers do not typically correspond to our printed course texts, and this makes shared analysis of texts and discussion very difficult).

**IX. COURSE SCHEDULE** *(subject to change)*

**ABBREVIATIONS:** V = Van Slyke; C = Carson; CVS = both instructors; *Crisp* = Crisp and Slote’s *Virtue Ethics*; Roberts = Roberts’s *Emotions in the Moral Life*; CC = On Campus Cruiser

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| **DATE** | **TOPICS** | **READINGS/ASSIGNMENTS** |
| **UNIT I: Ethical Theory & Virtue Ethics** | | |
| **Week 1**  Jan. 13  Jan. 15 | CVS: Intro to Ethics    C: Ancient Virtue Ethics | None  Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics,* Book I.1-5, 7-8, 13; Book II.1-7; Book VI.1, 5, 13; Book X.6-8 (on CC) |
| **Week 2**  Jan. 20  Jan. 22 | C: Modern moral theories  C: Virtue Ethics: Motivating a different approach | Normative Theories Overview (CC); Melchert, 421-425 (CC) [more reading may be added to Melchert, before class]  -Anscombe, “Modern Moral Philosophy” (in *Crisp*)  -Stocker, “The Schizophrenia of Modern Ethical Theories” (in *Crisp*) |
| **Week 3**  Jan. 27  Jan 29 | C: Virtue Ethics: Theoretical Issues  C: Virtue Ethics: Moral Knowledge, psychology, and intelligible agency | Hursthouse, “Virtue Theory and Abortion” (in *Crisp*)  McDowell, “Virtue and Reason” (in *Crisp*) |
| **Week 4**  Feb. 3  Feb. 5 | C: Virtue Ethics: Continued Issues  CVS: Situationalism as a critique of virtue ethics | -Foot, “Virtues and Vices” (in *Crisp*)  -Annas: Living Virtuously, Living Happily (Ch. 9), 146-152; 163-168 (on CC)  -Doris, *Lack of Character,* selections (on CC)  -Harman, Gilbert (1999). "Moral Philosophy Meets Social Psychology: Virtue Ethics and the Fundamental Attribution Error” (on CC) |
| **Week 5**  Feb 10 | CVS- Replies to Situationalism | Responses: Tiberius, *Moral Psychology* (114-125). Annas, “Comment on John Doris’s’ *Lack of Character*” (CC). **One other reading (Adams) may be added before class.** |
| **UNIT II: Empirical Moral Psychology** | | |
| Feb 12 | VS: Moral Psychology: Historical Perspectives | Haidt: “Righteous Minds”, Chapter 1 (On reserve) |
| **Week 6**  Feb 17  Feb 19 | VS - Understanding Haidt’s Perspective  VS - Neuroscience and Ethics: Greene and others | Haidt: “Righteous Minds”, Chapter 2 (On reserve)  Greene - Beyond Point and Shoot Morality *Ethics* (On reserve) |
| **Week 7**  Feb. 24  Feb. 26 | Critical Responses  VS - Neuroeconomics: Understanding Human Valuation  **Midterm Reading Responses Graded** | Tiberius, *Moral Psychology*, 22-26, 97-106, 189-201 (on CC)  Zak: “The neurobiology of trust” (On reserve) |
| **Week 8**  March 3  March 5  **Fri. March 6** | VS - Moral Exemplarity  VS - Importance of Moral Identity  **Short Paper Due** | Peterson, “Exemplarism: Some Considerations” (On reserve)  Monroe, “Morality and a Sense of Self” (On reserve)  **Submitted to Moodle** |
| **SPRING BREAK: March 9-13** | | |
| **UNIT III: Philosophical Moral Psychology & Emotion Theory** | | |
| **Week 9**  March 17  March 19 | CVS- Moral Outlooks & Emotions (Roberts)  Roberts Cont. | EM Ch. 1 (brief selections) & Ch. 2 (against Stoic *apatheia*)  EM Ch. 3 (the perception thesis) (Questions JVS) |
| **Week 10**  March 24  March 26 | Roberts Cont.  Roberts Cont. | EM Ch. 5 (Emotional Truth) JVS  EM Ch. 6 (Emotions & Actions) JVS |
| **Week 11**  March 31  April 2 | Roberts Cont.  Roberts Cont.  **Critical Questions for Roberts Due in class** | EM Ch. 8 (Emotions and Happiness)  EM Ch. 9 (Emotions & Virtues) |
| **Week 12:**  **Tues. April 7**  Wed. April 8  **Thurs. April 9**  Fri. Apr. 10 | **Philosophy Lecture Series**  Individual Meetings with respective professors  Roberts, “Virtues & Emotions” Lecture, 6-8pm (with student replies?)  **Bob Roberts Visiting: Extended Seminar Session**  6-8pm: Intellectual Humility lectures, Roberts & Van Slyke  10am-Noon, Roberts & other speaker on virtues/vices | None (bring Roberts responses to class) |
| **UNIVT IV: Group Presentations & Loose Ends!** | | |
| **Week 13**  April 14  April 16  **Fri. April 18** | No Class (due to last weeks’ high commitments)  C- Putting the Pieces Together: Moral Psychology, Agency, & Virtue  **Rough Drafts Due, 5pm** | None. Work on Rough Drafts!!  Readings: TBA (on CC)  Submitted via Moodle |
| **Week 14**  April 21  April 23 | Student Paper Presentations  Student Paper Presentations | None.  None. |
| **Week 15**  April 28  April 30 | Student Paper Presentations  CVS- Last Class: Summing up the issues | None.  None. |
| **Fri. May 8th** | **Final Paper Due, 5pm** | Submitted on Moodle |

**UNIVERSITY POLICY SUMMARIES**

For complete policy details check the current Academic Catalog.

**Attendance Policy**

The university expects regular class attendance by all students. Those students who will be absent for an extended period of time should contact their program director or advisor who will discuss the options available, such as a leave of absence. Students may view their attendance records on CampusCruiser.

**Registration**

Only individuals who are registered may attend classes. Non-registered students may not turn in assignments, take tests or receive grades.

**Course Drop Policy**

Refunds and grades for dropped courses are based on the last day of attendance. Each week the refund amount decreases. Students who do not attend at least one class during the first week of a course will be administratively dropped from the course by the Registrar’s Office. After the first week of class, failure to drop courses in a timely manner will result in failed grades and financial responsibility for payment.

**Academic Honesty/Integrity**

Everyone who participates in the educational process at FPU is expected to pursue honesty and integrity in all aspects of their academic work. Cases of academic dishonesty are first handled between instructors and students. Depending upon the severity of the case, consequences may range from partial credit after work is redone to expulsion from the university. As in all situations where a member of the university violates the behavioral and academic expectations of the community, opportunity for restoration and restitution will be extended to those willing to work to correct the situation and reconcile with the university community.

**Turnitin**

Fresno Pacific University is committed to preserving academic integrity. Students should presume that all their written work will be checked against international electronic databases of student work and published sources to detect plagiarism. These electronic databases often add the submitted material to their sources to compare against other student work. Faculty may require both digital and hard copy of assignments to facilitate the evaluation. By submitting assignments, a student agrees to these processes.

**Behavioral Standards**

Student behaviors disruptive to the educational process may result in the student being dismissed from a class or a program.

**Sexual Harassment Policy**

Harassment of a student or an employee of the University by other students, employees, supervisors, or agents of Fresno Pacific University will not be tolerated. All reports of harassment will be taken seriously, promptly investigated and addressed by FPU in accordance with university policies and procedures.

**Responsible Use of Technology**

The use of campus computing resources at Fresno Pacific University is a privilege, not a right. Violations of university guidelines on computer use will result in disciplinary action, which may include any of the following: warnings, loss of computer privileges, suspension, or legal prosecution.

**Disability**

Students with disabilities are eligible for reasonable accommodations in their academic work in all classes. In order to receive assistance, the student with a disability must provide the Academic Support Center with documentation which describes the specific disability. The documentation must be from a qualified professional in the area of the disability (i.e. psychologist, physician or educational diagnostician). Students with disabilities should contact the Academic Support Center to discuss academic and other needs as soon as they are diagnosed with a disability. Once documentation is on file, arrangements for reasonable accommodations can be made.

**Incompletes**

Incomplete grades are to be issued only in the case of absence from classes due to unexpected and unavoidable circumstances, such as illness, accident or death in the immediate family, which have made it impossible for the student to complete all course requirements as scheduled. A grade of incomplete is not to be issued for unsatisfactory work or failure to submit work through negligence. Student must submit the appropriate form, available online from Registrar’s Office.

**Satisfactory Academic Progress**

Students are expected to make satisfactory progress toward completion of their program by maintaining a cumulative grade-point average of 2.0 or higher for associate/baccalaureate students, 3.0 or higher for graduate students and 2.5 or 3.0 (for seminary students, depending on the program). Cumulative grade-point average is based on FPU coursework only.

**CampusCruiser**

CampusCruiser is the university’s Web portal and should be used to access everything related to university online content, including event calendars, schedules, classes, campus life and email. Students are expected to check their fpu.edu email on a frequent and consistent basis (at least weekly.)

**Student and Faculty Dispute Resolution**

Occasionally a student may find cause to question the action of a professor regarding requirements of a course, teaching effectiveness, comments made in a class that seem derogatory or inflammatory, criticism of the student, general performance or sanctions given for academic dishonesty. Students should first discuss their concerns with the instructor. If the student and faculty member cannot resolve the issue satisfactorily or if the student does not feel comfortable speaking directly with the instructor the student should consult with the chair of the division in which the course is lodged, who will attempt to resolve the issue. Decisions may be appealed to the dean of the appropriate school for a final resolution.

**Right to Petition**

Request for exception to academic policies may be made when there are extenuating circumstances such as a serious medical condition, a death in the immediate family or other traumatic, unforeseen events. Students should complete a petition form, along with the nonrefundable fee, and submit it to the Registrar’s Office. Petitions will be forwarded to the appropriate academic official or committee for consideration and decision.

**Privacy**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords students certain rights with respect to their education records. Check the university website for details.