

Faculty of Business
IBH 2BD3
Moral Issues
Winter 2024



Instructor Information

Alexander Leferman

Email: lefermaa@mcmaster.ca

Office: UH-305

Office Hours:

Wednesdays 11:30-1, or by appointment

Course Information

Lectures:

Labs:

Tutorials:

Course Dates: 01/08/2024 - 04/10/2024

Units: 3.00

Course Delivery Mode: In Person

Course Description: An introduction to moral philosophy through a consideration of issues in professional ethics (e.g., health care and energy). Topics such as abortion, human experimentation, euthanasia, genetic screening, sustainability and pollution will be investigated. Lectures (two hours), tutorial (one hour) Prerequisite(s): Registration in Level 2 of the Integrated Business and Humanities Program.

Instructor-Specific Course Information

To be dehumanised is one of the most significant harms that can happen to a person. To be treated as if one is not human is not just wrong, it is *morally wrong*. In this course, we will focus on a variety of moral issues through the lens of dehumanisation. What is dehumanisation? What causes it? What are our obligations towards those who have been dehumanised? After covering recent discussions of dehumanisation, we will move on to discuss moral issues involved in poverty and hunger, work, disability, and free speech. Each of these issues is a site for dehumanisation. For instance, the conditions of work can be unfit for human beings; language can be used to objectify others; or letting people to starve to death reveals a lack of moral consideration. We should not dehumanise people, but what should we do beyond that minimum standard?

Throughout the course, we will make use of various moral theories to evaluate the cases and problems that we discuss.

Meeting Details

Lecture Times: Tuesday 12:30-2:20

Tutorial Time: Thursday 8:30-9:20

Locations: please check mosaic for locations.

Important Links

- [Mosaic](#)
- [Avenue to Learn](#)
- [Student Accessibility Services - Accommodations](#)
- [McMaster University Library](#)
- [eReserves](#)

Course Learning Outcomes

- To understand the complexities involved in moral issues
- To be able to apply moral theories to complex moral issues

- To be able to write strong argumentative essays
- To employ rigorous critical thinking skills in discussion and writing

Required Materials and Texts

Textbook Listing: <https://textbooks.mcmaster.ca>

All materials will be posted to Avenue to Learn as Pdfs.

Optional Course Materials

Textbook Listing: <https://textbooks.mcmaster.ca>

Routledge Handbook of Dehumanization

ISBN: ISBN 9780367637132/ ISBN 9780429492464

Authors: Maria Kronfeldner

Publisher: Routledge

Publication Date: 2021

Class Format

In Person

Course Evaluation

Participation 10%

Paper 1 20% Due: Mar. 12 at 11:59PM

Paper 2 20% Due: Mar. 26 at 11:59PM

Midterm 15% Feb. 13

Exam 35% TBD

Papers will be submitted via A2L and scrutinised by Turnitin. Absolutely no use of AI technologies will be permitted.

Course Evaluation Details

Participation: Students will receive participation marks by contributing to discussion in tutorial.

Paper: Students will write a 4-page argumentative essay that defends a thesis. Prompts will be provided in advance.

Exam: Students will write an in-person exam organised by the registrar's office.

Grading Scale

Grade	Equivalent Grade Point	Equivalent Percentages
A+	12	90-100
A	11	85-89
A-	10	80-84
B+	9	77-79
B	8	73-76
B-	7	70-72
C+	6	67-69
C	5	63-66
C-	4	60-62
D+	3	57-59
D	2	53-56
D-	1	50-52
F	0	0-49

Course Schedule

Week 1: Intro and review of moral theories (Jan. 9)

Dehumanisation

Week 2: Frick- dehumanisation and human rights (Jan. 16)

Week 3: Mikkola-dehumanisation objectification (Jan. 23)

Poverty

Week 4: Hardin-"Lifeboat Ethics"; Singer-"Famine, affluence, and morality" (Jan. 30)

Week 5: Amartya Sen: "Property and Hunger"; Onora O'Neill: "A Kantian Approach to Famine Relief" (Feb. 6)

Week 6: Midterm (Feb. 13)

Reading week (Feb 19-25)

Work

Week 7: Swartz-"Meaningful Work" (Feb. 27)

Week 8: Waheed-"Pitting people against each other" (Mar. 5)

Disability

Week 9: Barnes-Valuing disability, causing disability (Mar. 12) ***Paper 1 Due***

Week 10: Kahane-Disability and mere difference (Mar. 19)

Free Speech

Week 11: Mill-chapter 2 (Mar. 26) ***Paper 2 Due***

Week 12: Langton-Speech acts and unspeakable acts (Apr. 2)

Week 13: Conclusion (Apr. 9)

Late Assignments

Late Assignments

All deadlines in this course are firm. Extensions and/or rewrites will only be granted for students with approved accommodation requests submitted according to the MSAF, Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities, or RISO policies (described below). Late assignments without extension receive a penalty of 3% per day and may not receive comments.

Email Policy

Any questions received over email may take me up to 2 days to respond, but usually less. If you do not receive a response in 2 days, please send your question again. When writing to me, please use the course title as the subject line and use your full name to identify yourself.

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

Students are required to be available for all mid-term and final exams listed in your course syllabus. If a student misses a test due to illness, extensions and/or rewrites will only be granted for students with approved accommodation requests submitted according to the MSAF, Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities, or RISO policies (described below). Vacation, job-related, or any other travel plans are not excuses for missing tests or exams. Students are also responsible for completing all course requirements on the dates specified on their syllabus. Specific accommodations can be negotiated for students registered with Student Accessibility Services, but it is the responsibility of the student to make these arrangements ahead of time.

Turnitin.com

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

Generative AI: Use Prohibited

Students are not permitted to use generative AI in this course. In alignment with [McMaster academic integrity policy](#), it “shall be an offence knowingly to ... submit academic work for assessment that was purchased or acquired from another source”. This includes work created by generative AI tools. Also state in the policy is the following, “Contract Cheating is the act of “outsourcing of student work to third parties” (Lancaster & Clarke, 2016, p. 639) with or without payment.” Using Generative AI tools is a form of contract cheating. Charges of academic dishonesty will be brought forward to the Office of Academic Integrity.

APPROVED ADVISORY STATEMENTS

Academic Integrity

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. **It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.**

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on

the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- improper collaboration in group work.
- copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Authenticity / Plagiarism

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. Avenue to Learn, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

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Courses with an On-line Element

Some courses may use on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn, LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that

uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

Online Proctoring

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online.**

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make

arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University's [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar "[Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work](#)" and the link below;

<http://ug.degrootemcmaster.ca/forms-and-resources/missed-course-work-policy/>

Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous, or Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO](#) policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office *normally within 10 working days* of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

Copyright and Recording

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors.

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, Avenue to Learn and/or McMaster email.