

## Humanities 11700/7: Philosophical Perspectives-3

Meets: Spring 2021

Instructor:

Writing Intern:

### Course Description and Information:

You seem to bear a kind of responsibility for your actions that a squirrel, for example, does not bear for its bits of behavior. We understand human behavior as warranting a kind of praise or blame—*moral* praise or blame—that isn't applicable to the behavior of a squirrel. What is it about human beings and our behavior that accounts for this difference? In this final quarter of Philosophical Perspectives, we'll be considering this and related questions. We'll discuss freedom, action, autonomy, duty, and morality as these topics are addressed by, or touched upon, in the writings of David Hume, Immanuel Kant, Jane Austen, and Christine Korsgaard.

You'll need three books that will be available for purchase via the Seminary Coop: David Hume's *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* (Hackett edition, edited by Schneewind), Immanuel Kant's *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (Cambridge edition, with an introduction by Christine Korsgaard), and Jane Austen's *Emma* (Penguin Classics edition).

Your course grade will be based on two short papers, each about seven pages in length. (You'll be asked to turn in a working draft of each paper in advance of the paper's due date. These drafts will not be graded, but they may be discussed in writing sections.) In addition, participation (or lack thereof) can raise or lower your final grade by half a grade i.e., from a B up to a B+ or down to a B-.

Regular attendance in class is a condition on receiving a passing grade.

If you need special accommodations, please provide a copy of your Accommodation Determination Letter (provided to you by the Student Disability Service office) so that we may discuss how to implement the determination.

Requests concerning the name and pronoun by which you would like to be addressed will be respected.

### Reading Schedule:

Week 2: David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, "Of the Idea of Necessary Connection."

Week 3: Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, Sections I, II, and V; Appendices I and IV.

Week 4: Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A1-A10, B1-B21; Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Preface.

Week 5: Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Section I.

Week 6: Christine Korsgaard, pp. xii to xxiii of the introduction to your edition of the *Groundwork*; Kant, *Groundwork...*, Section II up to p. 37.

Week 7: Kant, *Groundwork...*, pp. 38-55.

Week 8: Jane Austen, *Emma*, Volume I (i.e., Chapters I - XXVIII).

Week 9: Christine Korsgaard, "Self-Constitution in the Ethics of Plato and Kant."