

Ethics and Families

PHIL 168

UCR Winter 2014

Syllabus

Meeting: MWF 2:10-3:00 Olmstead Hall 420

Instructor: Andrew Hall

Contact: andrew.hall@ucr.edu

Office Hours: T 10:00-12:00 and W 10:00-12:00 Humanities and Social Sciences Building
3206

Course Summary

This course will address philosophical issues about the ethics of family life and the relationship between the family and other social institutions like the economic sphere and the state through readings of both historical and contemporary authors. Questions to be addressed will include:

- *Should families constitute a “private sphere,” to some extent separate from the rest of society?*
- *Should there be same-sex marriage? What about polygamous marriage? Should the law recognize marriage at all? Is marriage even a good idea in the first place?*
- *Who is a parent?*
- *Should women be permitted to abort her pregnancy?*
- *Should women be permitted to “rent” out their wombs as surrogate mothers?*
- *Should there be different family roles for men and women? Do contemporary roles unjustly disadvantage women?*
- *What rights do children have against their parents and the rest of society?*
- *What do parents owe their children?*
- *What do children owe their parents?*

Course Requirements

Reading Regular Attendance

Discussion Board Posting	10%
Paper 1	20%
Paper 2	30%
Final Exam	40%

Grading Scheme

100-97%	A+	89.99...-87%	B+	79.99...-77%	C+	69.99...%-60%	D
96.99...-93%	A	86.99...-83%	B	76.99...-73%	C	<59.99...%	F
92.99...-90%	A-	82.99...-80%	B-	72.99...-70%	C-		

The lower boundary for each letter grade is the cut-off. (The cut-off has to come somewhere.) So, I don't generally round grades up.

Reading

You are expected to read the assigned reading before each class. If I feel that people are not reading, I reserve the right to give pop quizzes. All readings will be available as pdf files on the Blackboard.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. You are permitted three unexcused absences. Each additional absence will lower your final grade by 3%. Attendance means "mental attendance." Being physically present but asleep or otherwise inattentive does not count. Bring readings (either in paper or electronic form) to class.

Classroom Etiquette

Please turn your phones off during class and refrain from texting or other fiddling with your phone. You *may* use your computers to take notes, but if I observe that you are surfing the web or otherwise not paying attention, this will negatively impact your attendance grade.

In class discussions, you are encouraged to articulate your point-of-view, even if this is controversial, but please be respectful of others.

Discussion Board Posting

At least 1 hour before class, you should either (a) reply to one of the study questions, (b) post your own question or objection you have regarding the assigned reading, or (c) briefly respond to, or expand upon, a question or objection already posted on the Discussion Board by another student. These may be as short as two or three sentences or as long as a paragraph. Posts are credit/no-credit. Credit may be withheld for responses that do not reflect having actually read the assigned text.

Posts are worth 10% of the final grade. To receive the full 10%, you must post for 20 classes; that works out to about twice per week. Therefore, each post is worth .05% of your final grade.

No late posts will be accepted for any reason – even extremely good reasons – with the exception of the sorts of reasons that require you to contact your dean (hospitalization, death in the family, zombie apocalypse, etc.).

Papers

Papers will address assigned topics based on the assigned readings. Topics will be distributed at least two weeks in advance of the due date. In length, each paper should be not less than 1500 words (about 5 double-spaced pages). Papers should be submitted via iLearn or emailed to me by 11:59 PM on the due dates (2/2) and (3/8).

Plagiarism Policy: Unless otherwise instructed, you are advised not to do outside research for these papers. That said, any text taken verbatim from other sources must be quoted and cited. Paraphrases and the borrowing of ideas from other sources should also be cited. Plagiarism will be dealt with severely and may result in both failing the course and having the incident permanently recorded on your academic transcript. You may talk with other students about your papers, but you must do the actual writing yourself. You are encouraged to have friends or writing tutors read over your work to proofread and give you feedback.

Exams

There will be an in-class final exam on Thursday, March 20, 3:00-6:00 PM in our regular classroom (Olmstead 420). The exam will feature a combination of short-answer and essay questions. A study guide will be provided at least one week before the date of the exam.

Reading Schedule

Part I: Classic Texts

M – Jan 6	Introduction; Confucius, <i>Analects</i>
W – Jan 8	Plato, <i>Republic</i>
F – Jan 10	Plato, <i>Republic</i>
M – Jan 13	Locke, <i>Second Treatise</i>
W – Jan 15	Hegel, <i>Encyclopedia of Sciences, Pt. III: Philosophy of Mind</i>
F – Jan 17	Hegel, <i>Philosophy of Right</i>
M – Jan 20	Hegel, <i>Philosophy of Right</i>
W – Jan 22	No class
F – Jan 24	Engels, <i>Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State</i>
M – Jan 27	Beauvoir, <i>The Second Sex</i>
W – Jan 29	Beauvoir, <i>The Second Sex</i>
F – Jan 31	Beauvoir, <i>The Second Sex</i>
Sun. – Feb 2	<i>First Paper Due, 11:59 PM</i>

Part II: Contemporary Debates

- M – Feb 3 Calhoun, “Who’s Afraid of Polygamous Marriage?”
- W – Feb 5 Calhoun, “Who’s Afraid of Polygamous Marriage?”
- F – Feb 7 Thomson, “A Defense of Abortion”
- M – Feb 10 Thomson, “A Defense of Abortion”
- W – Feb 12 Hale, “Abortion and Father’s Rights”
- F – Feb 14 Anderson, “Is Woman’s Labor a Commodity?”
- M – Feb 17 No class
- W – Feb 19 Anderson, “Is Woman’s Labor a Commodity?”
- F – Feb 21 Richards, “The Autonomy of Children”
- M – Feb 23 Richards, “The Autonomy of Children”
- W – Feb 25 Keller, “Filial Duties”
- F – Feb 27 LaFollette, “Licensing Parents”
- M – Mar 3 Schoeman, “Rights of Children, Rights of Parents, and the Moral Basis of the Family”
- W – Mar 5 Feinberg, “The Child’s Right to an Open Future”
- F – Mar 7 Brighouse, “The Case for Educational Equality”
- Sun – Mar 8 *Second paper due, 11:59 PM***
- M – Mar 10 Brighouse, “The Case for Educational Equality”
- W – Mar 12 Fraser, “After the Family Wage”
- F – Mar 14 Fraser, “After the Family Wage”
- R – Mar 20 Final Exam – 3:00-6:00 PM Olmstead 420**