**COURSE POLICIES**

**Introduction to Ethics**

*Summer Session A*

Sam Berstler

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Class time: T/Th 9 am-12:15 pm

Location TBD

Office hours: T/Th 2-4 pm and by appointment

Location: Bass Library cafe

**INSTRUCTOR AVAILABILITY POLICIES**

**1. How to Contact Me Outside the Classroom**

I commit to returning your emails within **2 calendar days** (48 hours). Since I’m human, some emails will inevitably fall through the cracks. If 48 hours have passed, feel free to pester me. I will be grateful for the reminder.

If you need something urgently, for example, you have been locked out of the classroom building or you cannot find me during office hours, feel free to text or call me. My number is not listed on my website but is listed on canvas.

**2. Office Hours**

Unless otherwise noted, I commit to being physically present for my scheduled office hours in the cafe of Bass Library. You do not need an appointment to see me, but students with scheduled appointments will have priority. I will post the appointment times on Canvas, so you will be able to see my availability. Assume that all reserved slots are for 30 minutes.

**3. Reserving Office Hours Time**

To reserve time during office hours, use the “discussion” feature in Canvas and reply to the relevant thread with your name, the date you wish to attend, and when you will **arrive** during office hours. Assume that you have 30 minutes “reserved” for you. (You can stay longer, of course, but that’s the “reserved” period.)

**4. Scheduling Ad Hoc Appointments**

All else being equal, it’s best to schedule appointments during office hour periods. But if, for whatever reason, you cannot meet during my regularly scheduled office hours, email me. No promises, but I’ll do my best to work something out.

**CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE**

**1. Eating and Drinking**

Feel free to drink whatever beverage suits your fancy. Try to keep eating at a minimum, if you can. It’s distracting and can pose problems for people with allergies.

**2. Lateness and leaving early**

This is a small class, so it’s very important that you attend **on time** and stay for the duration of the class. We have an early start time, so make sure to set your alarms accordingly. Please don’t be late! It hurts you, your classmates, and the learning environment.

If you have to arrive late or leave early, then let me know in advance.

**3. Missing class**

The Dean informs me that you cannot miss class. I do not have the power to change this policy.

**4. Breaks**

We’ll take an official break around halfway through each course meeting. If I have any high school students: in the college classroom, you do not need to request permission to briefly leave the classroom (for example, to go to the bathroom or use the water fountain).

**5. Hand raising**

If you’d prefer to raise your hand, that’s fine, but the best philosophy discussions happen organically, so you don’t *need* to raise your hand. Follow basic etiquette here: don’t be a jerk.

**5. Electronic devices**

They’re fine. But if you easily give into electronic temptation, put the electronics away. It is distracting to others around you when you spend the class on Facebook messenger, and it will hurt your own participation score…

**ASSIGNMENTS**

**1. Word Counts / Page Length**

I’m going to give you a word count for each of your essays. I care about the word count, not the page length. You don’t have to be too precise, but if you significantly under or over the word count (+/- 300 words or so), I’ll deduct points.

**2. Formatting**

Your metric is: will it make my instructor cry when she tries to read it? If not, the formatting is fine.

**3. Submitting**

Email me your essay as an attachment at [sam.berstler@yale.edu](mailto:sam.berstler@yale.edu). Please do this by 5 pm on the due date.

**4. Extensions during term time**

Because of the condensed nature of the summer course, extensions are not your friend. They will impede your ability to work on the upcoming paper. That said, you should feel free to reach out to me to discuss taking **small** extensions (i.e., one or two day extensions).

**5. Extensions outside of term time**

I do not have power to grant these extensions. You must hand in your work by the end of term. As far as I know, the Dean does not have power to grant these extensions either.

**6. Late policy**

If you have any papers outstanding by the end of term, you will receive a zero for those papers. I don’t have the power to change this.

**5. Plagiarism**

Don’t do it. If you do it, I will have to get administration involved, and you will face disciplinary procedures. This will be unfortunate for everyone involved.

Here is Yale’s detailed policy on the matter: <http://catalog.yale.edu/undergraduate-regulations/policies/definitions-plagiarism-cheating/>

Here are some helpful resources: <https://ctl.yale.edu/writing/using-sources/understanding-and-avoiding-plagiarism/what-plagiarism>

If you’re confused or worried about any of this, you can always email me.

**SENSITIVE CONTENT WARNING**

This is a course in philosophical ethics. While none of our discussions will be graphic, we will most likely discuss disturbing topics, including but not limited to: murder; euthanasia; suicide and self-harm; genocide and state-sponsored violence; domestic violence; rape. While it’s my hope and expectation that all of our discussions will be appropriately respectful, both to the members of the course and to those who have suffered these forms of harm, it is important to emphasize upfront that ethical analysis can be very abstract and dispassionate. Sometimes, this can be perceived as insensitive or callous.

You can always reach out to me privately to discuss any concerns you have about this, especially if you think that discussion of any of these topics may be particularly upsetting to you.

If you don’t want to reach out to me directly, you should feel free to reach out to any of the offices listed below (see Academic Accommodations). People in those offices can, in turn, reach out to me anonymously on your behalf.

**ACADEMIC ACCOMODATIONS**

If you need any kind of accommodation, you can always reach out to me privately.

If you don’t want to reach out to me directly, you should feel free to reach out to any of the following offices. Some of these offices may be able to reach out to me anonymously on your behalf. I’ve worked with some of these offices in the past, so I’m also happy to help you contact them for any reason:

**Summer Sessions Staff**

<https://summer.yale.edu/contact/yale-summer-session-staff>

**Resource Office on Disabilities**

<https://rod.yale.edu/>

**Office of LGBTQ Resources**

<https://lgbtq.yale.edu/>

**Office for Equal Opportunity Programs**

<https://equalopportunity.yale.edu/>

**Yale Chaplain’s Office**

<https://chaplain.yale.edu/>

**Sexual Harassment and Assault Response and Education (SHARE)**

<https://sharecenter.yale.edu/>