

**Philosophy 115: Methods Seminar for Majors
Responsibility and Emotions
Winter 2015**

Dana Kay Nelkin
Office: HSS 8004
Office Hours: Tuesday 10-11, 12:30-1:30, and by appointment
Phone: (858) 822-0472
E-mail: dnelkin@ucsd.edu
Web site: <http://philosophyfaculty.ucsd.edu/faculty/dnelkin>

Course Description: This course is designed for majors to hone their skills in understanding, constructing, evaluating, presenting, and discussing philosophical arguments and writing about them in a clear and careful way. The small seminar setting will provide lots of opportunity to practice in all of the above. The format of each class will be discussion of the views and arguments expressed in the readings assigned for that day, with everyone prepared for a constructive class discussion. We will use the rich and evolving literature on responsibility and emotional capacities as our starting point, and we will explore two related questions:

- (1) What emotional capacities, if any, are required for being morally responsible agents?
We will use recent research on psychopathology, autism, and frontotemporal dementia to explore what role the capacity to care and the capacity to respond with responsibility-presupposing attitudes plays in moral agency.
- (2) What is the relationship between being morally responsible for an action and the appropriate responses (emotional and otherwise) to such an action?

Specific course topics and readings

All readings are available through the course web site. You simply need access to the UCSD library, which you have automatically on campus, and which you can also receive from anywhere by changing your computer settings. For instructions on how to do this, see <http://libraries.ucsd.edu/resources/course-reserves/course-reserves-from-off-campus.html>.

Date	Reading
January 6	
January 8	Peter Strawson, "Freedom and Resentment"
January 13	Harry Frankfurt, "Free Will and the Concept of a Person"
January 15	Susan Wolf, <i>Freedom Within Reason</i> , excerpt
January 20	Fischer, Kane, Pereboom, and Vargas <i>Four Views on Free Will</i> , excerpts
January 22	T.M. Scanlon, <i>What We Owe To Each Other</i> , excerpt; <i>Moral Dimensions</i> , excerpt; Matthew Talbert, "Blame and Responsiveness to Moral Reasons: Are Psychopaths Blameworthy?"
January 27	Gary Watson, "The Trouble With Psychopaths"
January 29	Neil Levy, "The Responsibility of the Psychopath Revisited"; Shaun Nichols and Manuel Vargas, "Psychopaths and Moral Knowledge" and

	“How to Be Fair to Psychopaths”
February 3	David Brink, “Responsibility, Incompetence, and Psychopathy”
February 5	Dana Kay Nelkin, “Psychopaths, Incurable Racists, and Faces of Responsibility”
February 10	Jeanette Kennett, “Autism, Empathy and Moral Agency”
February 12	David Shoemaker, “Moral Address, Moral Responsibility, and the Boundaries of the Moral Community”
February 17	Agnieszka Jaworska, “Frontotemporal Dementia and the Capacity to Care”
February 19	Gary Watson, “Two Faces of Responsibility”
February 24	Paul Russell, “The Conditions of Moral Sense”
February 26	R. Jay Wallace, <i>The Moral Sentiments</i> , excerpt
March 3	Michael McKenna, <i>Responsibility and Conversation</i> , excerpt
March 5	Justin D’Arms and Daniel Jacobson, “The Significance of Recalcitrant Emotion”
March 10	Angela Smith, “Moral Blame and Moral Protest”
March 12	No New Reading

Requirements:

- (1) Weekly short 2-3 page papers responding to the readings, from week 2-week 8.
Your grade will be based on the top five grades, so you can turn in all seven and use the top five, or just turn in five. You will be given prompts for the first weeks (25%).
- (2) 1 term paper (about 10-15 pages), preceded by a prospectus that includes the main ideas and a bibliography (1-2 pages). I will provide feedback on the prospectus before you get started on the paper. (50%)
Prospectus due: March 3, start of class;
Term paper due: Thursday, March 19, 5 pm.
- (3) Attendance and participation (15%). If you have a valid excuse and cannot make it to class, you need to let me know as soon as you can.
- (4) 2 presentations (10%)

Notes

- If accommodations are needed for a disability or for religious reasons, please notify me during the first class period or as soon as possible.
- The **Academic Honor Code** must be observed in this course. Violations will be reported, and an “F” on the assignment and possibly the course will result.
- In order to foster discussion, electronic devices may not be used in class except with special permission of the instructor.
- Please note that readings described above are subject to minor change.
- If you need any help or want to pursue a topic in further depth, please see me in office hours or feel free to make an appointment if those times do not work. I am always happy to see students in my office.