Foundations of Moral Philosophy  
Course No. 202-02  
Fall 2015-16, Tu/Thur 2-3:15  
Gosnell, Room 1305  
Mr. Robison, Hale Chair in Applied Ethics  
wade.robison@gmail.com  
http://people.rit.edu/wlrgsh/  

Week 1  
**Tuesday, August 24th**  
**Topic:** Requirements and aims of course; providing reasons for beliefs  
**Assignment** for August 26th: Clifford, "The Ethics of Belief"; Robison, Beliefs  
**Thursday, August 26th**  
**Topic:** Providing reasons for beliefs  
**Assignment** for September 1st: Arguments  

Week 2  
**Tuesday, September 1st**  
**Topic:** Logic quiz and the nature and distinctions between deduction and induction  
**Assignment** for September 3rd: Morality and God  
**Thursday, September 3rd**  
**Topic:** What does not justify ethical behavior -- appeals to your beliefs, to conscience, to God, to what is standardly done, to what is prudent, to codes of ethics  
**Assignment** for September 8th: Mill, Utilitarianism, Chapters 1; see the outline of this chapter  

Week 3  
**Tuesday, September 8th**  
**Topic:** Overview of ethical theories, introduction to utilitarianism  
**Assignment** for September 10th: Lecture notes (sent as pdf via email)  
**Thursday, September 10th**  
**Topic:** Continuation of introduction to utilitarianism  
**Assignment** for September 15th: Mill, Utilitarianism, Chapter 2 and outline  
**QUIZ #1**  

Week 4  
**Tuesday, September 15th**  
**Topic:** Mill responds to possible objections  
**Assignment** for September 17th: Mill, Utilitarianism, Chapter 3 and outline  
**Thursday, September 17th**  
**Topic:** Conscience  
**Assignment** for September 22nd: Mill, Utilitarianism, Chapter 4; see outline  

Week 5  
**Tuesday, September 22nd**  
**Topic:** Mill's justification of the theory  
**Thursday, September 24th -- NO CLASS**  
**Assignment** for September 29th: Mill, Utilitarianism, Chapter 5; see Formal Principle of Justice  

Week 6  
**Tuesday, September 29th**  
**Topic:** Perfect and imperfect duties and where justice fits in  
**Assignment** for October 1st: Mill's mistake and procedural Justice  
**Thursday, October 1st**  
**Topic:** Justice, procedural and substantive  
**Assignment** for October 6th: Theories of justice  
**QUIZ #2**
Week 7
Tuesday, October 6th
Topic: Justice continued

Thursday, October 8th -- NO CLASS

Week 8
Tuesday, October 13th -- NO CLASS
Assignment for October 15th: For the history of utilitarianism, see Julia Driver, "The History of Utilitarianism," and for some helpful guidance, see Section 12 of Fred Wilson's essay on John Stuart Mill.

Thursday, October 15th
Topic: Overview of utilitarianism, its advantages and disadvantages
Assignment for October 20th: The Subprime Primer, figure out what "tranche" means for rating agencies;

Week 9
Tuesday, October 20th
Topic: So what difference does all this make? Systematic problems and public policy.
Assignment for October 22nd: Libor (Libor, Barclays Justice Department, Fixing Libor, Libor background, Libor Rate-Rigging Restitution)

Thursday, October 22nd
Topic: Continuation of 'Inside Job' and discussion, Libor
Assignment for October 27th: Robison, Vaccinations

QUIZ #3

Week 10
Tuesday, October 27th
Topic: Particular problems -- e.g. vaccination
Assignment for October 29th: Kant, Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals, Introduction; remember to look at the outline! You will find a somewhat helpful overview from Robert Johnson's "Kant's Moral Philosophy"

Thursday, October 29th
Topic: Kant's moral theory, an overview
Assignment for November 3rd: Kant, Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals, Chapter 1

Week 11
Tuesday, November 3rd
Topic: Inclinations are irrelevant; we must think before we act
Assignment for November 5th: Kant, Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals, Chapter 1 again

Thursday, November 5th
Topic: Counsels of prudence, rules of skill, categorical imperative
Assignment for November 10th: Kant, Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals, Chapter 2

Week 12
Tuesday, November 10th
Topic: More Kant
Assignment for November 12th: Kant's theory

Thursday, November 12th
Topic: Kingdom of ends and summary
Assignment for November 17th: Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, Book I

QUIZ #4

Week 13
Tuesday, November 17th
Topic: Onto Aristotle, Vices and Virtues
Assignment for November 19th: Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, Book II
Thursday, November 19th
  **Topic:** Aristotle on achieving the mean
  **Assignment** for November 24th: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book III ,

Week 14
Tuesday, November 24th
  **Topic:** Aristotle on vices and virtues
  **Assignment** for December 1st: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book IV

Thursday, November 26th -- THANKSGIVING

Week 15
Tuesday, December 1st
  **Topic:** Aristotle on vices and virtues
  **Assignment** for December 3rd: see also Richard Kraut, "Aristotle’s Ethics"

Thursday, December 3rd
  **Topic:** Overview of Aristotle
  **Assignment** for December 8th: Compare the three theories and ask, "Which one is morally better?", providing reasons for your decision

**QUIZ #5**

Week 16
Tuesday, December 8th
  **Topic:** Discussion and comparison of the three theories
  **Assignment** for December 10th: Review the three theories

Thursday, December 10th
  **Topic:** Discussion and comparison of the three theories continued

**Final Exam, #6** Tuesday, December 15th, 12:30-2:30, Gosnell 1305: no early finals, no incompletes!!

**Quizzes:** September 10th & 29th, October 22nd, November 12th, December 3rd