

Be sure to read this syllabus before the first class.

Tentative Syllabus (subject to change)

Phil 450 Fall 2021

Wed. 5-8 p.m. **via zoom address to be provided**

Prof. F.M. Kamm, frances.kamm@philosophy.rutgers.edu; office hours by appointment

TA: Audrey Powers, amp553@scarletmail.rutgers.edu; office hours by appointment

This an advanced undergraduate class It will focus on two main topics: in normative ethical theory: (1) Rules of Rescue and (2) the Trolley Problem. In connection with the first topic, we will read several chapters of a forthcoming book by Prof. Theron Pummer who will attend several classes via zoom to discuss his views on when and in what way we are required to aid others. In connection with the second topic, we consider whether, when, and in what way we may help some when this requires us to harm others. We will read several classic articles on the trolley problem by J.J. Thomson, parts of a book by F.M. Kamm, and then consider new work on the problem by F.Woollard, P. Graham, Joshua Greene, F. Kamm and Guy Kahane (all of whom will attend the class via zoom to discuss their work). **Prerequisite:** at least 2 previous courses in philosophy

Requirements: (A) Course Participation: Do the readings, **including readings for the first class**, before coming to class. Come to class, be on time, be prepared, talk regularly and about as much as is compatible with everyone else also speaking that much. If you can't attend for some reason, please email the instructor in advance of class. **(10% of grade)** **(B) Written Questions:** All students taking the course for credit will be required to submit 2 brief questions (no more than 80 words) about the reading for the week by the day before class meeting for that week (usually Tuesday but once Sunday) at 6 pm ET USA. **This includes for the first class.** E-mail them to the instructor and post them in the discussion section of canvas by that time. These should be substantive questions, such as you might ask in class and address to any visiting speaker. You can be called on in class to ask these questions. **(15% of grade).** **(C) Papers. (1)** A short paper (about 3 double-spaced pages (about 1,000 words) with 1 inch margins, typed, no less than 12 pt font) due by **Friday Oct. 22, 2021, 11:59 p.m.** E-mail the paper to the instructor and the TA. The paper should engage with one of the readings for one of the meetings of the course up to that point. You need only offer as much description and summary as is necessary for someone to understand your own points (which might be focused entirely on one part of one argument; it should not aim to summarize the whole reading), and you should see your role as offering critical commentary on an argument or claim made by the author of the relevant reading. **(20% of grade).** **(2)** A 10 page final paper (about 3,000 words) due by **Monday Dec. 13, 2021, 11:59.** It should be typed, double spaced, with 1 inch margins ,no less than 12 pt. font. It should be e-mailed to the instructor and the TA. **The paper should be on a topic dealt with in the class. The topic must first be approved by the instructor.(55% of grade).** You will be penalized if any of the assignments are late or missing and if you fail to fulfill any other requirements (e.g., unjustified class absences). There are some excellent resources on the web for writing philosophy papers. Particularly recommended are: www.sfu.ca/philosophy/writing.htm This is brief, clear, and helpful.

<http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html> Excellent, but much lengthier.
<http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/philosophy/> For those who are serious about philosophy.
<https://www.american.edu/cas/philrel/pdf/upload/tips.pdf> Contains lots of references for further study.

Attendance and Zoom Etiquette: Attendance is mandatory. Unexcused absences will lower your semester grade. During the seminar, students should keep their video on (unless asked not to), and they should be seated, awake, and not conversing with others outside of the seminar either in person or by phones. Cell phones should be off. If you have (unenrolled) pets, please try to keep them where they will not be distracting.

ACCESSIBILITY : All of you are entitled to equal access to educational opportunities at Rutgers. Students with disabilities are encouraged to speak to **the professor** if that would be helpful and to avail themselves of the services provided by the Office of Disability Services: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>

PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: You are expected to be familiar with and adhere to the Rutgers University policies on plagiarism and academic integrity. Penalties for violations of these policies can be severe, including an automatic failing grade for the course and worse. This document provides a comprehensive overview of those policies: <http://nbacademicintegrity.rutgers.edu/home-2/academic-integrity-policy/>

Required Text: F.M. Kamm, *The Trolley Problem Mysteries* pb Oxford University Press, 2019. Other readings will be either circulated by e-mail or available on Canvas.

Tentative Class Schedule:

9/1 *The Rules of Rescue*, chaps 1 & 2. (author Theron Pummer (St. Andrews) will attend); Kamm, "Health and Equity," section II.

9/8 no class

9/15 *The Rules of Rescue*, chaps 3 & 4. " " " " " "

9/22 " " " " chap 5; Kamm, "The New Problem of Distance" (Chap 12 in Kamm, *Intricate Ethics*). Theron Pummer will attend.

9/29 P. Foot, "The Problem of Abortion and the Doctrine of Double Effect;" J. Thomson, "Killing, Letting Die, and the Trolley Problem"

10/6 Thomson, "The Trolley Problem;" "Turning the Trolley"

10/13 Kamm, *The Trolley Problem Mysteries*, Lecture 1; "Duties That Become Supererogatory or Forbidden (parts).

10/20 Kamm, *The Trolley Problem Mysteries*, Lecture 2; "Rights and Their Limits: Nonconsequentialism and the Trolley Problem".

10/22 Short paper due by 11:59 p.m.

10/27 F. Woollard, "The Trolley Problem and the Doing/Allowing Distinction"

11/3 P.Graham, "Must We Turn the Trolley"; Kamm *Intricate Ethics*, pp. 167-9

11/10 Joshua Greene, "Trolleyology: Reflections on Two Decades of Philosophically Inspired Science"; Kamm, "Neuroscience and Moral Reasoning"

11/17 G. Kahane, "Trolley Dilemmas: From Moral Philosophy to Cognitive Science and Back Again,

11/24 No Class- Thanksgiving Break

11/29 (Monday -- note day change; Rutgers Wednesday classes on Monday. 2 questions due Sunday by 6 p.m. ET USA) F. Woollard, "The New Trolley Problem: Driverless Cars and Deontological Distinctions"; Kamm, "The Use and Abuse of the Trolley Problem: Self-Driving Cars, Medical Treatments, and the Distribution of Harm"

12/1 G. Pincione, "The Trolley Problem as a Problem for Libertarians"; Kamm, "The Trolley Problem and Economic Policy"

12/8 D. Parfit, *On What Matters*, vol. 3 (sel); Kamm, "The Irrelevance of Deontological Distinctions?"