

## PHI 200A: PRO-SEMINAR

David Copp

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

The pro-seminar has two central goals: (1) to acquaint you with the pace and expectations on graduate-level work and (2) to develop writing and analytic skills that you will need over the course of your graduate career.

In this course, we will try achieve those ends by looking at selected works in value theory, and mainly in the theory of personal good or well-being. We will address a mixture of normative, methodological, and meta-ethical issues that arise in the theory of value.

### READINGS

The readings listed below for weeks 1 and 6 will be posted in PDF form on the department's smart site.

The following books are required:

James Griffin, Well-Being  
L.W. Sumner, Welfare, Happiness and Ethics  
Richard Kraut, What is Good and Why  
Stephen Darwall, Welfare and Rational Care

The following are recommended:

Fred Feldman, Pleasure and the Good Life  
Thomson, Judith Jarvis. Goodness and Advice  
J. David Velleman, The Possibility of Practical Reason  
Robert Merihew Adams, Finite and Infinite Goods  
Phillipa Foot, Natural Goodness  
Susan Wolf, "Meaning in Life and Why it Matters," Tanner Lectures I & II  
Robert Nozick, Anarchy, State and Utopia, pp. 42-5

### ASSIGNMENTS

Each week, you will write a short sharply focused paper of about 3 pages, and not more than 5 pages, on a central issue that arises in that week's assigned reading. These papers are due 24 hours before the beginning of class – that is, normally, at 3 p.m Wednesday. Send your paper by email attachment to me and to the other students in the class.

In each class, we will discuss two or more of the submitted papers. You should be prepared to present your paper and to explain how the issue you discuss in the paper fits into the overall argument of the assigned reading and why it is central to that argument.

## TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

1. Sept. 24: T.M. Scanlon, What We Owe to Each Other, chapter 3, “Well-Being.”  
Recommended: Derek Parfit, Reasons and Persons, Appendix I, “What Makes a Life Go Better?”
2. Oct. 1: James Griffin, Well-Being, chapters I-II.
3. Oct. 8: Griffin, chapters III-IV.
4. Oct. 15: L.W. Sumner, Welfare, Happiness and Ethics, chapters 1-4
5. Oct. 22: Sumner, chapters 5-7.
6. Oct. 29: Is there such a thing as being good for a person?  
G.E. Moore, Principia Ethica, revised edition, pp. 78-87, 148-157, 236-273.  
Donald Regan, “Why am I My Brother’s Keeper?”  
Thomas Hurka, “Good and ‘Good For’”  
Connie Rosati, “Objectivism and Relational Good” and “Relational Good and the Multiplicity Problem”  
Recommended: Mark LeBar, “Good for You.”  
Thomas Hurka, “Two Kinds of Organic Unity.”
7. Nov. 5: Richard Kraut, What is Good and Why, chapters 1-2.
8. Make-up date to be announced. No class Nov. 12.  
Kraut, chapters 3-4.
9. Nov. 19: Stephen Darwall, Welfare and Rational Care, chapters I-II.
10. Dec. 3: Darwall, chapters III-IV.