Evaluation report Fil2302 - Applied Ethics

Spring 2021

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This is a bachelors level philosophy course. It deals with specific moral problems of fundamental importance for today's individual and society. This branch of ethics covers areas such as animal rights, medical ethics, environmental ethics and corporate ethics.

The course covers questions such as: do humans and animals have a different moral status? Can eating meat be morally justified? Are there any moral reasons for allowing euthanasia? How should one balance different values and demands in care work when it comes to the sharing of resources? Are we morally obliged to fight climate change? How should we as individuals deal with the environmental as well as the economic changes which the globalization makes us face? Can today's economic system be justified?

Learning outcomes are as follows:

Students who have completed the course are expected to

- be able to demonstrate identify and analyse problems of applied ethics, and also be able to discuss different views critically in writing
- be able to demonstrate an overview of differences, similarities and connections between different views within applied ethics and to give critical assessments of the different views

Format: the course consists of 12 x 2-hour seminars. The seminars are split between an informal lecture followed by group discussion. Coursework includes a mandatory commentary on a

bioethics article, submission of an abstract in advance of the term paper, and the term paper itself. In previous years there was a mandatory attendance requirement, but in 2021 we have not been able to insist on attendance. Despite this, a good proportion of students attended at each seminar.

The course is taught primarily in English, since the staff member giving the teaching is not yet fluent in Norwegian. Students are advised when they sign up for the course that the teaching and assignments will be in English. This means also that Erasmus students and foreign exchange students and those who don't speak Norwegian can take the course.

In spring 2021, the teaching was shared between Anna Smajdor and Aksel Brannen Sterri. Anna's teaching was done in English, Aksel's in Norwegian. (We checked first that all students were able to speak Norwegian – this hasn't been the case in previous years, but possibly because of Covid in 2021, we had fewer international students.) The Covid situation also meant that we had to offer a 'hybrid' course, which was challenging both for teachers and students. Even so, a large number of students continued through to completion of the course, and evaluations were positive.

Fil2302 is a consistently popular course that attracts many students and which scores well in student evaluations. Next time Fil2302 runs, it will be taught by a different person, who is putting together a new reading list to keep the themes abreast of current topical issues.