

COURSE SCHEDULE: CONSEQUENTIALISM AND ITS DEMANDS

(Note: the list below indicates the order of discussion and the material to be discussed. The exact seminar structure might, however, change, in the course of the three days of the block seminar.)

1. Utilitarianism

Bykvist, *Utilitarianism*, Chapters 2 and 3

2. The (Over-)Demandingness Objection

Wolf, "Moral Saints", in. *The Journal of Philosophy*

3. Extremism

Singer, "Famine, Affluence and Morality", in. *Philosophy and Public Affairs*

4. Restructuring I

Slote, "Satisficing Consequentialism", in. *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*

5. Restructuring II

Hooker, "Rule Consequentialism", in. LaFollette (ed.), *Blackwell Guide to Ethical Theory*, Chapter 10

6. Restructuring III

Scheffler, *The Rejection of Consequentialism*, Chapter 2

7. Restructuring IV

Murphy, "The Demands of Beneficence", in. *Philosophy and Public Affairs*

8. *A priori* arguments I

Sobel, "The Impotence of the Demandingness Objection", in. *Philosophers' Imprint*

9. *A priori* arguments II

Cullity, "Demandingness and Arguments from Presupposition", in. Chappell (ed.), *The Problem of Moral Demandingness*

10. Morality, reasons, and overridingness I

Stroud, "Overridingness and Moral Theory", in. *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly*

11. Morality, reasons, and overridingness II

Hurley, "Does Consequentialism Make Too Many Demands?", in. *Ethics*

12. Morality, reasons, and overridingness III

McElwee, "Impartial Reasons and Moral Demands", in. *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*

13. Institutions and demands

Murphy: 'Institutions and the Demands of Justice' in. *Philosophy and Public Affairs*

CONSEQUENTIALISM AND ITS DEMANDS

*University of Bayreuth
Winter Semester 2012/13
Block seminar*

For BA students, 3rd, 5th, 7th semester

Course overview

The aim of this course is to assess the truth of the Overdemandingness Objection (OD). The primary subject of this objection is act-consequentialism, the view that the right thing to do in any situation is the act with the best consequences as judged from an impersonal point of view. OD is built upon two pillars: one, that act-consequentialism is extremely demanding and two, that an adequate morality cannot be extremely demanding. The course will, accordingly, investigate whether consequentialism is – or, need to be - extremely demanding, and whether it is really so that no morality can be so demanding.

The two most influential responses to OD deny one or both of these claims. Concerning the first pillar, there are several attempts in the literature that try to restructure consequentialism in such a way that it ceases to be too demanding. And, concerning the second pillar, there are also those who argue that there is no problem with an extremely demanding morality. There are, in addition, ‘outlier’ responses that take neither of these routes and we will investigate some of these. Thus we will deal with the claim that it is enough if consequentialism is not an overriding morality in order to avoid OD. And we will also question the empirical premise of OD, namely, that people would reject, on the basis of a considered judgment, any overly demanding morality.

Course requirements and evaluation

The course can be taken either for 2 ungraded credits, or for 6 graded credits. Since this will be a block-seminar, students will not be required to give a presentation. Instead, active seminar participation will become one major factor in the grade (50%). The other important part of the grade (50%) will be a final paper for the course (10-20 pages long, 12 points, Times New Roman, double spaced, default margins) that each student will be required to submit.

Registration and course materials

Registration for the course will be done using Google Forms.