

# HBCSE

Short course on introductory themes in Philosophy of Education

## Ethics and Education

(10 lectures of one and half hours each; 6-11 February 2017)

Study of individual moral judgements, moral actions and of ethical life in general – understanding its meaning and structure, or the nature of its content. It is a study of the relation between belief and action – description and evaluation, judgement and action: how to comprehend the truth-seeking and action-guiding components of our moral judgements. It is also conceptualized as a study of the grounds of moral judgements and action, and nature of ethical life: is it natural or normative or intuitive. Alternatively, what is the determinant of an ethical life?

Morality has the “action-guiding character” and hence is a part of ‘practical rationality’. There are two canonical conceptions of ‘practical reason’ that we study in this course: one exemplified in the philosophy of Aristotle while the other in that of Kant. Understanding moral action consists in the “recognition of a [practical] reason for acting”, recognition of the necessity of that action. This is neither a logical nor a natural necessity, but a practical necessity of a human being and a good human life.

### Introductory reading:

The following readings will familiarize you with the terrain. You may begin here and then move on to the required readings.

#### *Required:*

Blackburn, S. 2001. Being good, Oxford. (Part-III: Foundations, pp. 108-135)

Annas, J. 2000. Happy life, Ancient and modern. In her Ancient Philosophy. Oxford (pp. 36-54)

#### Suggested:

Feldman, F. 1978. Introductory ethics. Pearson.

Williams B. 1972/1993. Morality. Cambridge/Canto

[Note: We will have a Skype meeting (probably on 30 Jan) to discuss these readings and the course plan]

### Lecture 1, 2 and 3: Aristotle

#### *Required Readings:*

Broadie, S. 2002. Philosophical Introduction. In Christopher Rowe (Tr.) Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics. Oxford. (pp. 9-91) *OR* Nussbaum, M. 1988. Non-Relative Virtues: An Aristotelian Approach. Midwest studies in Philosophy xiii, pp.32-53

Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book II. Chap 5 to 9 (Translated by W D Ross).  
<http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/nicomachaen.2.ii.html>

## Lecture 4, 5 and 6: Kant

### *Required Reading:*

Christine M. Korsgaard's introduction to Kant's *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*. From Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997

### *Suggested Reading:*

Korsgaard, C. M. 1996. *Creating the kingdom of ends*. Cambridge. Part-I, pp. 1-221

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Every notable conception of education has to worry about the relationship between reason and character, between persuasion, truth and who we are. Reason and character, or rational and ethical, come together in the excellence of practical reason, demonstrating the necessity of ethical in the rational practical deliberations. Liberal conception of education is no exception: though its central concerns are the values of rationality, personal autonomy and equality of respect. Liberals recognize the necessity of "consistent rationality" as a mediator between individual liberty and the value of respect for liberty of all the individuals.

In these lectures we will also study examples of some of the particular problems that may demand our engagement *qua* students of philosophy of education.

## Lectures 7 and 8

### *Required Readings:*

1. Peters, R S. Values in education. In Langford G. et al. (eds.) *New essays in the philosophy of Education*. Routledge (pp.102-110)
2. Halstead M J. 1996. Liberal values and liberal education. In Halstead et al, *Values in education and education in values*, Routledge. (pp. 17-32)
3. Halstead M J. 1996. Values and values education in schools. In Halstead et al, *Values in education and education in values*, Routledge. (pp. 3-14)

## Lectures 9 and 10

### *Required Readings*

4. Reiss M J. 1996. Food, Smoking and Sex: Values in Health Education. In Halstead et al, *Values in education and education in values*, Routledge. (pp. 90-100)
5. Stanovich, K E. 2001. The Rationality of Educating for Wisdom. *Educational Psychologist* 36(4), 247–251
6. Noddings, N. 2002. *Educating Moral People*. Teachers College Press (Chp 2: pp.25-38).
7. Nash, R J. 2005. A Letter to Secondary Teachers: Teaching About Religious Pluralism in the Public Schools. In N Noddings (ed) *Educating Citizens for Global Awareness*. Teachers College Press. (pp. 93-106)

## Assessment

There will be total two assessments. [Please note that plagiarism of any sort to any degree, minor or major, will be considered as a voluntary non-submission/ non-completion of the required course assessment and stands no chance of re-submission.]

### Assessment 1:

#### Part A

Choose one of the philosophers – either Kant or Aristotle – and write your understanding of his conception of ‘moral judgement’ in no more than 1750 words.

#### Part B

Choose any one of the readings 1 to 7 listed above. Reflect on what is discussed in this reading and whether it relates to what you have studied in the first six lectures. Write down your reflective note in no more than 750 words.

You will have to submit the complete draft write up of this assessment (both the parts) before 4<sup>th</sup> February. And, you are expect to present this during the course of lectures (6-11 February).

After we complete the first ten lectures. You will rework on these drafts and submit the final version of it before 24<sup>th</sup> February.

Both your submissions (pre and post lectures), and your presentation will be assessed together. The due dates are non-negotiable, please do not send me any requests to this effect.

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