

SECOND ETHICS PAPER PROMPT

DEADLINE: OCTOBER 23

The setup of this assignment will be familiar by now; as previously, there are two parts of the assignment, the “live” part and the written part, but this is about deontology.

- (1) **The “live” part:** Choose two consecutive days of a week (weekend may be the easiest), when you make all the ethical choices you have — all choices of your everyday life — according to deontology.

- Decide the days early, and mark it on your calendar. Living like a deontologist will make life seem pretty complicated at times (perhaps more complicated than living as a utilitarian!), but please make an effort.
- Please do not do anything that would seriously interfere with your formation.
- If you can, make your choices according to deontology even if you think that the deontological choice is not the right one. Remember that for deontology, your action can never be an exception!
- **Important:** keep a journal, a small notebook with you (possibly on your phone) all the time to record everything you do. These include: getting up, breakfast, what to say to your friends, etc. It might happen that there is a case when you just really can’t do what deontology would command; record that too. At this point, the journal should be very personal; you can record things that you would not necessarily share.

- (2) **The written part:** After all this, you will need to write a paper.

- Start by going over your journal. After reading it carefully, you will need to select **two** things in it: your most significant deed that you did based on deontology during those two days; and a situation, if there was any, where you thought that the deontological choice was wrong.
- In the first part of your paper, describe the *deontological action*. Describe the situation in detail, including any other alternative actions that you could have taken. Show how the deontologist would test his action, by using a form of the Categorical Imperative. Which for of the C. I. did you use? Why? Do you think it gave the right result? Why? Was your action morally right, according to deontology? Why? If you think that it was not, you should also explain why, and why you rather would have done things differently.
- In the second part of your paper, describe the *problematic situation* in a similar way. Again, describe the situation in detail, including the action that you tested by deontology. If the deontological action goes against commonsense morality or some basic moral principle you do not want to violate, state the moral principle with which deontology appears to conflict, and show which option it favors.
- Be as clear in your paper as you can. Assume that your reader does not know what deontology is; start with explaining that. (Don’t expect too much of your reader!) The

expected length of the paper is 2–3 pages maximum (Times font, 12pt, double spaced, Letter paper, 1" margins).

- (3) Finally, type in your journal and, if you wish, edit it. If you think some things in it are too personal, you can leave them out (mark it with ellipses in square brackets, like this: [...]). Otherwise, leave it relatively untouched. I will read the journals, but will not grade them; the grade is exclusively the grade of the paper.

Please bring your paper and journal in hard copy to class on the day of the due date, OR send them to me by e-mail before class. Late assignments will not be considered.

Do NOT write your name on your paper or on your journal. Submit them with a number generated by your birthday (MMDDYY) and the last two digits of the zip code where you grew up (e.g., if you were born on May 15, 1990, and lived in 10470, you should write 05159070 on your paper).