

Each week you will have a required reading assignment. At the beginning of each class, you should turn in a reading response to that reading assignment. There are eleven reading assignments (there is no reading assignment for the first week of class, nor during the weeks when you have a paper due). Only your top nine scores will be recorded. That means that you are allowed to miss up to two reading responses without penalty. Since I have given you two "freebies," I will NOT allow make up reading response papers.

The reading response papers are intended to give you a chance to reflect on the material you have read for the course, and to give me the opportunity to see that you have done the required reading and have considered the material we are discussing. While they are not polished, revised papers, and they may be handwritten (but only if I can read your handwriting), you SHOULD spell check, use correct grammar, and cite your sources. If type written, they should be 12 point times font with 1 inch margins. Double spaced, you will end up with about one page (300 words).

Here are a few general topics to consider while writing your weekly response papers:

- A) What is the basis of evaluation for this moral theory? In other words, how does one address the question "what is morally right" according to this theory? Provide an example not addressed in the text that illustrates how this theory works.
- B) Why is this moral theory motivating? If you were to walk up to someone on the sidewalk and tell them to act according to this version of morality, why would they be persuaded to do so? Does it solve the problem of a true sociopath (someone who does not feel that ANY morality is binding)?
- C) Pick one of the objections presented, and discuss it in further detail (providing an example not in the text). Exactly what is this objection addressing? Does it apply to this moral theory alone, or is it a problem for all moral theories? Does this objection make sense to you? Is there a reply to this objection?
- D) What part of the text did you find most confusing? What was being explained prior to this portion of the material? How might this section fit in with the previous discussion? What is being explained immediately after this section? Does the confusing portion make any sense in relation to what is being addressed immediately after it?
- E) How does this particular moral theory compare to other moral theories we have discussed in class? Does it make more or less sense? Does it solve problems that other theories could not address? Does it seem more intuitive (is it a moral theory that most people would agree with, or one that most people generally

use without realizing it)? Evaluate a moral question with both theories to show how they compare.

- F) How might this moral theory be used "incorrectly" (provide an example not in the text)? In other words, how might this theory be used to rationalize or justify what most people might consider to be an immoral action (genocide, rape, slavery, etc.)? If this theory could be used "incorrectly," should that count against the moral theory? Is it a sign of a problem inherent in the theory? If so, what do you think the actual problem is?

You do not need to answer all of the above questions each week. These are merely ideas to help you get started when you are stuck.

Overall, your response paper should show that you:

- 1) Have done the reading,
- 2) Have tried to think through the issues raised in the material, and
- 3) Have written out a critical evaluation of text.

If you have any questions, please feel free to ask!