Ethics Reading List
With a Specialty in Normative Moral Theory

The purpose of this list is to inform a graduate student contemplating focusing on normative moral theory as a major or minor area for his or her comprehensive examinations of some basic reading relevant to the subject. A student may use this information for one or more of two purposes: To decide whether to take a comprehensive exam in this area, and if so, to get started early on reading central texts in preparation for a comprehensive exam in this area. Students must also supplement this list with additional readings in the specific areas mentioned below. The supplementary list should make up roughly 15-20% of the total exam reading list and must be approved by the student’s normative moral theory examining committee.

The core readings for the major exam in normative moral theory are organized into A. Historical Sources & Perspective and B. Normative Moral Theories. Core readings for the minor exam in this area include the readings under A, plus the starred readings under B.

Students who wish to take either their major or their minor exam in this area are strongly encouraged to contact one or more members of the area committee for advice about the area’s readings and exam.

A. Historical Sources & Perspectives
Hume, *Treatise* Book II, part 3, sect. 1-3; Book III, part 1, sect. 1-2; part 2, sect. 1-2; part 3, sect. 1 and 6; *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals.*
J. S. Mill, *Utilitarianism.*
H. Sidgwick, *Methods of Ethics* Book I, chap. 1; Book IV; Concluding chapter.

B. Normative Moral Theories:

Virtue Ethics
*Plato and Aristotle sections.
Julia Annas, *The Morality of Happiness,* part 1, chap. 1 and chap 2, parts 1-3 and 5-7 (OUP, 1993).
*Rosalind Hursthouse, On Virtue Ethics* (OUP, 1999).

**Consequentialism**
*Mill, Hume, and Sidgwick selections.*

**Deontology and Kantian Ethics**
*Kant selections.*
*W. D. Ross, *The Right and the Good* (OUP, 1930), chap. 2.
Thomas Nagel, *The View From Nowhere* (OUP, 1986), chap. IX.

**Contractarianism/Contractualism**
*Note: We assigned Scanlon’s early article on contractualism, because it provides a clear and concise statement of the view. You should be aware, however, that Scanlon's book, *What We Owe to Each Other* (HUP, 1998), in many respects supersedes the original essay. Although not required for the major or minor exams, we encourage students who intend to work in either normative ethics or metaethics to familiarize themselves with Scanlon's more recent ideas.*

**Particularism**