Being human involves both knowing and acting (at the very least, in addition to being or existing). In the first half of the course (IDH 3005), we dealt with several approaches to knowledge, from Cartesian Foundationalism to Naturalized Epistemology and Relativism. Some serious thinkers suggest we know very little or nothing (Socrates: “I only know that I know nothing”). Are we animals trapped in a struggle of survival in which human values and knowledge have a provisional or instrumental value, or are we rational agents capable of ascending to realm of values and concepts that yield what we normally call “knowledge” that transcends our animal or biological nature? In addition, we will explore the possibility of “knowing” from a non-scientific perspective that invokes both God and feelings (the “sense of the heart,” as Jonathan Edwards would put it) as the very foundation of knowledge itself. This course is designed to encourage students to become self-conscious thinkers, who can reflect critically about the nature of knowledge, not only as understood by the Western intellectual tradition but by the Eastern as well.

In the second half of the course (IDH 3006) we will approach the concept of an examined life via the exploration of selected views of human values and conduct: 1) “Might Makes Right,” 2) Kantian ethics, 4) Utilitarianism or Consequentialism, 4) Ethical Relativism, Naturalism, and Subjectivism, 5) Contemporary rejections of subjectivism, et al.: David Wiggins and Thomas Nagel.

**Honors Fellows**

Professor Dan Alvarez  
DM 458A  
MW, 11:00-11:45 a.m.  
alvarezd@fiu.edu

**Required Texts/Readings:**

Callicles, “Might Makes Right” (handout).  
John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*.  
Thomas Nagel, *The View from Nowhere*.  
Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*.  
John Rawls, “Kantian Constructivism in Moral Theory.”  
Folke Tersman, “Quine on Ethics.”

**Requirements**

Two exams (essay format) based on questions distributed by the instructor.
Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism is one form of academic misconduct, and the Honors College adopts the definition of the university’s Code of Academic Integrity, according to which plagiarism is:

*The deliberate use and appropriation of another’s works without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the student’s own. Any student who fails to give credit for the ideas, expressions or materials taken from another source, including internet sources, is guilty of plagiarism.*

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

1. Term papers acquired online or from other sources;
2. Copying of original material without attribution;
3. Use of other students’ work;
4. Copying and pasting, verbatim, information from Internet sources, without quotation marks and correct citation.

Charges of Academic Misconduct may be brought against an Honors student by an Honors faculty member. For more information concerning this matter, all students are urged to review the following website:

[http://honors.fiu.edu/plagiarism.htm](http://honors.fiu.edu/plagiarism.htm)

Course Evaluation will be based on the following:
Spring 08

Tuesday  Introduction, Syllabus, Requirements

Thursday  Survey: Ways of Acting
Required Reading: Frankena, 1-11; “Might Makes Right” (handout).

Tuesday  Survey, continued
Required Reading: 12-28

Thursday  Survey, concluded

Tuesday  Subjectivism: J. L. Mackie

Thursday  Mackie, continued

Tuesday  Mackie, continued

Thursday  Mackie, concluded

Tuesday  Naturalism: Gilbert Harman
Required Reading: Harman, The Nature of Morality.

Thursday  Harman, continued

Tuesday  Harman, continued

Thursday  Harman, continued

Tuesday  Harman, concluded

Thursday  Consequentialism: John Stuart Mill, Utilitarianism

Tuesday  Mill, continued

Thursday  Mill, continued

Tuesday  Mill, continued

Thursday  Mill, concluded

Tuesday  Kantian Ethics: Immanuel Kant, Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals.

Thursday  Kant, continued
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<td>Thursday</td>
<td>David Wiggins, “Objectivity in Ethics: Two Difficulties, Two Responses”</td>
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