

Lecturer: Dr. Alessandra Marra

MCMP/ LMU Munich

Summer Semester 2024

Deontic Logic and Formal Ethics

Seminar Description and Objectives

What is the logical structure of obligations? Which sort of reasons do logically ground obligations, and how? What is the logical connection between individual obligations and group obligations? What is the conceptual difference between a moral norm, a social norm and a convention? Under which conditions do these norms emerge? What does it take for them to change?

Deontic Logic and, more generally, Formal Ethics apply tools from modal logic, decision and game theory, and natural language semantics to provide an answer to the above-mentioned questions. In the seminar, we will discuss a representative selection of frameworks within Deontic Logic and Formal Ethics. These include formal frameworks that deal with individual obligations, deontic reasoning under uncertainty, the logical structure of reasons, and game-theoretical models of social norms and conventions.

At the end of the seminar, students will have a working knowledge of those formal frameworks and will be able to critically evaluate their application to the analysis of the underlying ethical and meta-ethical notions.

Schedule

Please note that the schedule might be subject to change.

Part 1: Deontic Logic and Conditional Obligations

03.05 Introduction

Optional reading: Shyam Nair: *Deontic Logic and Ethics*. In Gabbay, John Horty, Xavier Parent, Ron van der Meyden & Leon van der Torre (eds.), *Handbook of Deontic Logic and Normative System*, Volume 2. College Publications (forthcoming)

10.05 [Type 1 meeting] Deontic Logic and Challenges Surrounding Conditional Obligations

Required Reading: Roderick M. Chisholm: *Contrary-to-Duty Imperatives and Deontic Logic*, 1963

Optional readings: Risto Hilpinen and Paul McNamara: *Deontic Logic: A Historical Survey and Introduction*. In Dov Gabbay et al. editors, *Handbook of Deontic Logic and Normative Systems*. College Publications, 2013. Only pages 36-43, 45-47, 54-55, 83-91. Henry Prakken and Marek Sergot: *Contrary-to-duty obligations*, 1996; Jennifer Carr: *The 'If p, ought p' Problem*, 2014.

17.05 [Type 1 Meeting] *Introduction to Angelika Kratzer's Semantics*

No required readings. Optional reading: Paul Portner: *Modality*, 2009, Ch.3.1

24.05 [Type 2 Meeting] *Angelika Kratzer's Semantics: Deontic Modals and Conditionals*

Required Reading: Angelika Kratzer: *Conditionals* (chapter 4 in Kratzer: *Modals and Conditionals*, 2012).

Optional readings: Justin Khoo: *A Note on Gibbard's Proof* (2013); David Lewis: *Counterfactuals* (pp. 96-104), 1973; Angelika Kratzer: *What Must and Can must and can mean* (chapter 1 in Kratzer: *Modals and Conditionals*, 2012); Angelika Kratzer: *The Notional Category of Modality* (chapter 2 in Kratzer: *Modals and Conditionals*, 2012); Johan van Benthem, Davide Grossi, Fenrong Liu: *On the Two Faces of Deontics: Semantic Betterness and Syntactic Priority*, 2010.

31.05 [Type 2 Meeting] *The Miners' Puzzle*

Required Reading: Niko Kolodny and John MacFarlane: *Ifs and Oughts*, 2010.

Optional readings: Malte Willer: *A Remark on Iffy Oughts*, 2012; Jennifer Carr: *Subjective Ought*, 2015; Fabrizio Cariani, Magdalena Kaufmann, Stefan Kaufmann: *Deliberative modality under epistemic uncertainty*, 2013. Moritz Schulz: *Modus Ponens Under the Restrictor View*, 2018.

Part 2: Reasons and Deontic Conflicts

07.06 [Type 1 Meeting] *John Horty's Theory: Reasons as Defaults*

Background Reading: John Horty: *Reasons as Defaults*, 2007 (article available online), pages 1-10, 19-26.

14.06 [Type 2 Meeting] *Reasons and Deontic Conflicts*

Required Reading: Shyam Nair: *Consequences of Reasoning with Conflicting Obligations*, 2014.

21.06 [Type 2 Meeting] *John Horty's Theory: Reasons as Defaults, Continued*

Required Reading: John Horty: *A Contrario Argument and Default Reasoning*, 2021. (article available on the author's webpage).

Optional Reading: John Horty: *Reasons as Defaults*, 2007, pages 10-19; Luís Duarte de Almeida: *Arguing A Contrario*, 2024; André Fuhrmann: *Deontic Modals: Why Abandon the Default Approach*, 2017

Part 3: Social Norms

28.06 [Type 2 Meeting] *Introduction to Norms, Conventions and Game Theory*

Required Reading: Cristina Bicchieri: *The Grammar of Society*, 2006, Ch.1.

05.07 [Type 2 Meeting] *Cristina Bicchieri's Theory of Social Norms: The Grammar of Society*

Required Reading: Cristina Bicchieri: *The Grammar of Society*, 2006, Ch.5.

12.07 *Social Norm: A Case Study*

Required Reading: Bicchieri, Marini: *Female Genitalia Mutilation. Fundamentals, Social Expectations and Change*, 2015.