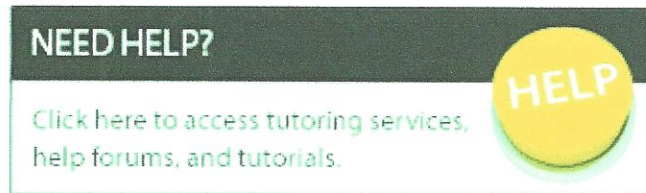


Unit 2: Module 2 - M2 Assignment 2



DROPBOX DELIVERY REQUIRED 

Please use the appropriate basket in the Dropbox area to deliver materials required for this assignment.

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Assignment 2: The Prisoner's Dilemma; What is in My Best Interest?

We learned in earlier discussions that according to Aristotle and Bentham, one's happiness was the highest goal. Enter social contract. How does one ensure one's self-interest when one has to compromise with another to achieve the goal? David Gauthier proposes that it is possible, offering the Prisoner's Dilemma as an example.

According to the story of the Prisoner's Dilemma, two people have been brought in for questioning, conducted separately, about a crime they are suspected to have committed. The police have solid evidence of a lesser crime that they committed, but need confessions in order to convict them on more serious charges. Each prisoner is told that if she cooperates with the police by informing on the other prisoner, then she will be rewarded by receiving a relatively light sentence of one year in prison, whereas her cohort will go to prison for ten years. If they both remain silent, then there will be no such rewards, and they can each expect to receive moderate sentences of two years. And if they both cooperate with police by informing on each other, then the police will have enough to send each to prison for five years. The dilemma then is this: in order to serve her own interests as well as possible, each prisoner reasons that no matter what the other does she is better off cooperating with the police by confessing. Each reasons: "If she confesses, then I should confess, thereby being sentenced to five years instead of ten. And if she does not confess, then I should confess, thereby being sentenced to one year instead of two. So, no matter what she does, I should confess." The problem is that when each reasons this way, they each confess, and each goes to prison for five years. However, had they each remained silent, thereby cooperating with each other rather than with the police, they would have spent only two years in prison.

(Note: For additional information, you can read more about Gauthier by copying the URL into your internet browser. (<http://www.iep.utm.edu/soc-cont/#SH2a>). It will take you to the Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy. The link takes you to the beginning of a great article on social contract. The outline at the beginning shows that the discussion on Gauthier and the Prisoner's Dilemma is in the middle of the article, in the "More Recent Theories" section, following Rawls. Gauthier comments on the idea that the Prisoner's Dilemma shows that it is in an individual's best interest to cooperate, even when it means that they will give up some individual freedom.)

Assignment Requirements:

Write a 3-page (650-750 word) paper addressing the following questions:

1. Consider the concepts of utilitarianism, egoism, and social contract. What moral theory—utilitarianism, egoism, or social contract—is consistent with cooperating with the other prisoner and rejecting self-interest as the best option? What is the recommended course of action for each prisoner in regard to the other two theories?
2. From your experience, is cooperation always in your best interest? Share an example. Alternatively, to state it negatively, why do selfish, self-centered people seem to prosper if cooperation is always in their best interest?

Post the 3-page (650-750 words) paper to the **M2: Assignment 2 Dropbox** by **Wednesday, July 30, 2014**. All written assignments and responses should follow citation rules for attributing sources. Please use Microsoft Word spelling/grammar checker before submitting your paper. Please remember that the plagiarism policy applies.

Assignment 2 Grading Criteria	Maximum Points
Significant critical analysis of the information requested in the assignment, which references the assigned readings and/or course concepts.	24
Used a personal, professional, and/or social issue of the day to discuss the required topic.	16
Constructed an argument that offered reasons in support of the position taken on the question posed.	24
Wrote in a clear, concise, and organized manner; demonstrated ethical scholarship in accurate representation and attribution of sources; displayed accurate spelling, grammar, and punctuation.	20
Justified ideas and responses by using appropriate examples and references from texts, Web sites, and other sources.	16
Total:	100