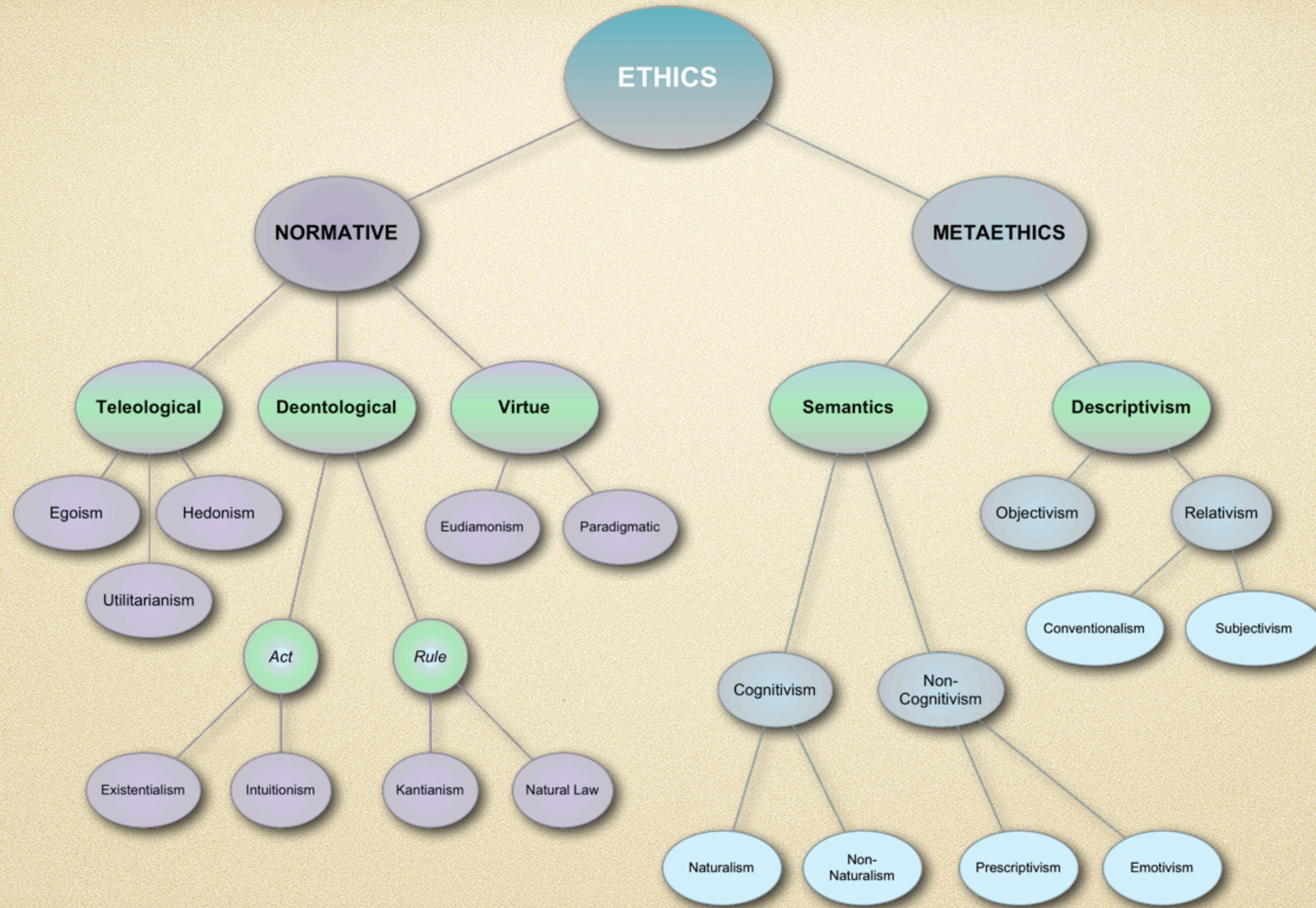


PHI 105 - Introduction  
Lecture 2

Overview of Ethics



# Ethics

## an Overview

### I. Basic Questions of Ethical Theory:

- A. How should we *live*?
- B. What *is* the Good?
- C. How do we *achieve* the Good?
- D. What does 'good' *mean*?

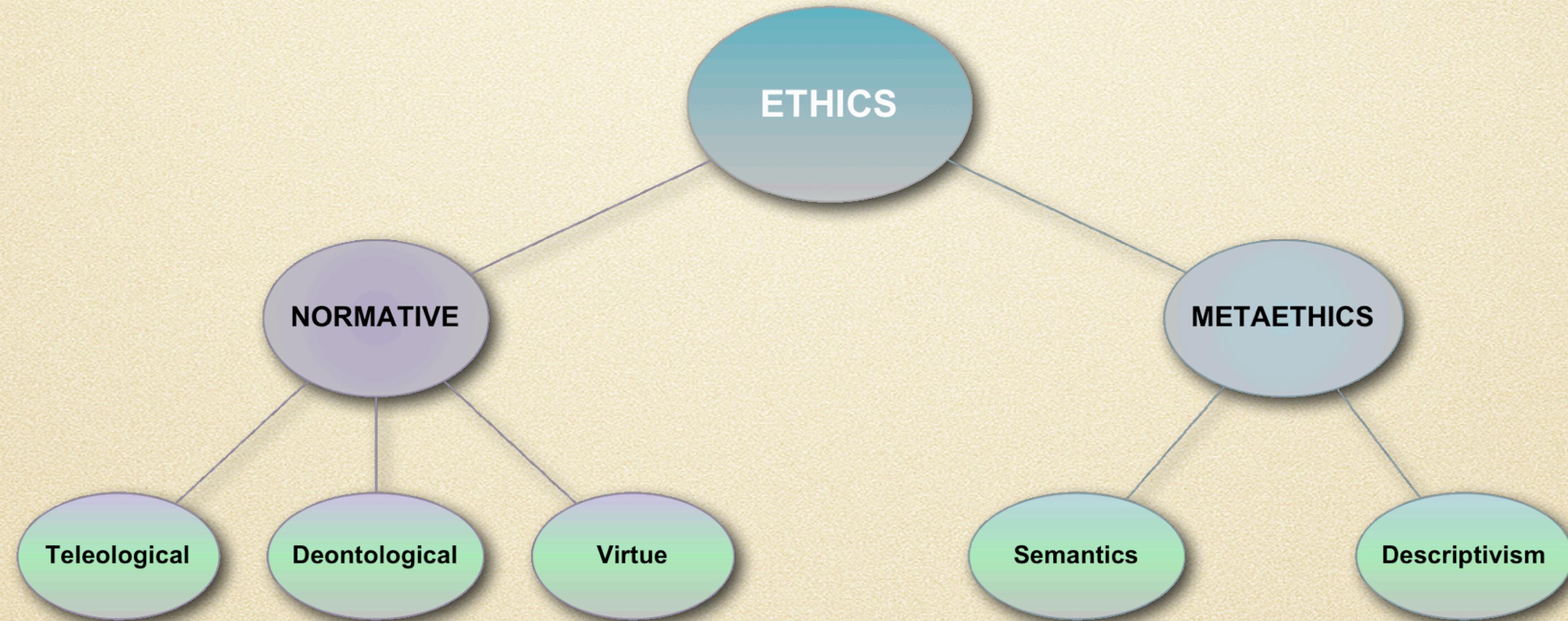
### II. The Major Subdivisions of Ethical Theory

- A. **Normative Ethics** - the systematic justification of moral intuitions
  - 1. **Teleological (Consequentialism)** - rightness is determined by the *consequences* of an action

# Ethics

## an Overview

- 2. **Deontological** - rightness is an *intrinsic feature* of actions or will
  - 3. **Virtue** ('Aretaic') - rightness is determined by the *character*
- B. **Metaethics** - the nature and meaning of ethical concepts
- 1. **Descriptivism** - the nature of moral values
  - 2. **Semantics** - the meaning of moral language



# Ethics

## an Overview

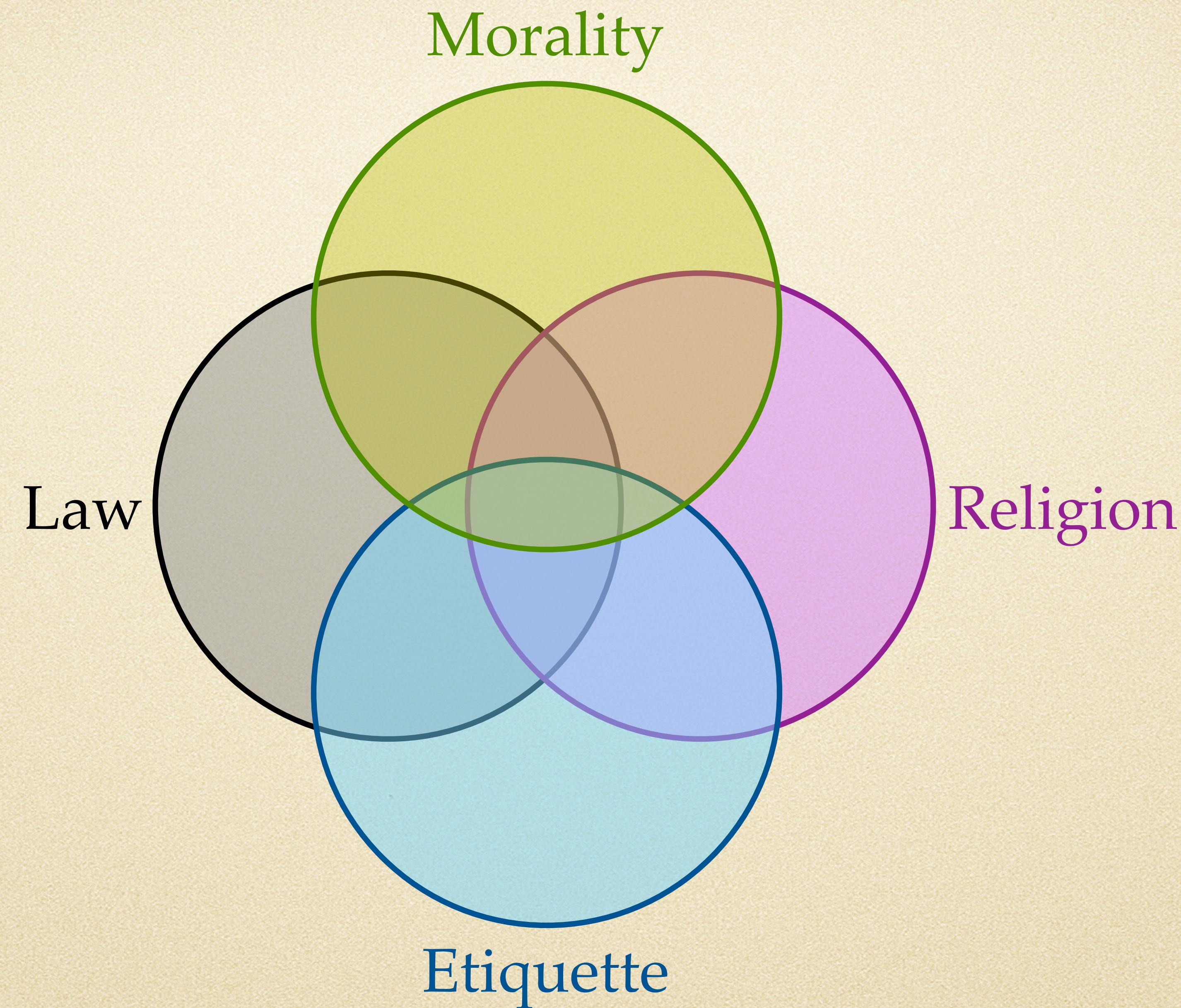
### III. Some Basic Concepts in Ethical Theory

**Definition:** **Ethics** - the *philosophical* investigation of moral codes

**Definition:** **Morality** - the normative *moral* code of accepted / prohibited behavior within a group

#### A. Four Types of Normative Systems:

1. Etiquette -
2. Religion -
3. Law -
4. Morality -



# Ethics

## an Overview

### B. Moral Designators:

1. '**Right**' - any action which is justified by, and is consistent with, a moral theory; it always implies an *obligation*
2. '**Wrong**' - any action which fails to be justified by, and is inconsistent with, a moral theory; it is always *forbidden*
3. '**Permissible**' - any action which is not inconsistent with a moral theory, but which carries *no obligation*
  - a. '**Neutral**' - actions which have *no moral implication*
  - b. '**Supererogatory**' - actions which are *praiseworthy*, but carry no obligation

# Ethics

## an Overview

C. Moral Principles - rules of action or guidelines that arise from a given moral theory

**Five Necessary Features** of a moral principle:

- **Prescriptive** - must be in imperative form
- **Universal** - must apply to all moral agents equally
- **Overriding/Compelling** - must be our primary consideration
- **Public** - presupposes social interaction
- **Practicable** - must be achievable by ordinary moral agents

# *Summary*

- \* Ethics is the part of Axiology that investigates the nature of the **Good**
- \* Ethical Theory is the *philosophical* or *logical* investigation of moral codes
- \* Ethical Theory has two main divisions: Normative Ethics and Metaethics
- \* Morality is a *normative* system that is distinct from religion, law, and etiquette
- \* An *adequate* moral principle should meet five necessary features