

# Philosophy



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Part The decision to suddenly raise CSU tuition rates by a sweeping 50% will unfairly and unwisely single out the higher education sector to bear the burden of the budgetary deficit, and leave other areas virtually untouched. If such an inconsiderate step is taken, I think that purely nonviolent, albeit slightly disobedient, protests will be due. There are many of us who will be absolutely devastated by such a radical increase. We are already working very hard to make our ends meet, and will have no means whatsoever for generating the extra funds in time. Our careers will be over, our dreams shattered and our voices ignored. Therefore, we are certainly not planning to take the legislation lying down. There are also those who will manage to pay the extra tuition fee one way or the other, and will not be forced to leave college. But they too realize that this increase will result in wastage of talent and violation of merit. It will also reduce opportunities for young people and promote economic inequality in a society which is already haunted by its ill-effects (such as unsettling urban crime rates). Protests can be very effective as they can demonstrate clearly to lawmakers the unpopularity of certain legislation. They can perchance sway them, and force them to reconsider their allegiances. Protests and acts of civil disobedience are sure to swiftly put the issue in media spotlight, which will get it the attention that it deserves. Protests can provide an effective means of mobilizing public opinion for a particular cause, and can help earn support from a wide range of people. Nonviolent protests and acts of civil disobedience have been carried out for worthy causes in the past. I intend to participate in such activities to make myself heard, and draw attention to this pressing concern.

Part 2 The realm of ethics (not unlike other branches of knowledge) is fraught with conundrums and complications. But ethical decision-making is a

necessity. Society must reach conclusion about right and wrong, if it is to survive. Often, it must stick to them and insist upon them with great zeal. The idea that every ethical precept must be backed up by inviolable logic and/or incontrovertible evidence is quite clearly absurd. However, the practice of supporting our ethical conclusions with rational arguments is crucial. If we do not question our moral precepts, society will fall into dogmatism and moral absolutism. Also, whenever two individuals or groups arrive at disparate ethical conclusions then we can only appeal to reason (as a criterion) in order to resolve the conflict. It is a given then that the Socratic inquiry into the grounds of our moral values has immense utility. Moreover, all our ethical precepts can be objectively derived through reason, or (as some people call it) the Logic of the Situation. But the legitimate demand of backing up one's ethical precepts with reasons is not to be conflated with the impossible demand for an unassailable foundation upon which morality can be based. Debates and arguments will continue till eternity, but in the meantime humanity must reach conclusion about several crucial issues (about which indecision is not a possibility). Reason, though, is only half the story. All human beings have an inner moral sense which helps them arrive at ethical conclusions. For centuries this has been the driving force behind moral judgments (as opposed to Socratic reasoning), and it is not likely to change anytime soon in the future. Therefore Euthyphro would be justified in prosecuting his father even though he could not come up with an unassailable definition of justice and fairness.