PHIL 2306: Ethics
Fall 2012

Professor: John Wadhams
Office/Hrs: N 207; 10:00-11:00am MW, 8:30-9:30 TR

Description

PHIL 2306 surveys issues, concepts, methods, texts, and thinkers which are central to Western philosophical analysis of moral reasoning and behavior, with special attention to practical application. We do this by close and careful consideration of case studies, supplemented by readings, a textbook, and Internet-based instructional resources. (http://ecampus.dcccd.edu)

Texts

Required: James Rachels, The Right Thing to Do, 7th ed.
Additional assigned readings (Reserve/eCampus – noted as R/E in the Course Schedule)
Recommended: James Rachels, Elements of Moral Philosophy, 6th ed.

Goals

(1) Introduce the content and concepts of the discipline of Ethics
(2) Develop conceptual and written philosophical/ethical skills
(3) Encourage a lifelong appreciation for philosophical thinking about moral deliberation
(4) Foster a self-aware critical stance on a variety of ethical issues

As a result of successfully completing this course, students will be able to:

(1) Identify and discuss major theories, challenges, and approaches in Ethics
(2) Relate ethicists to their theories/proposals
(3) Provide content/definition, examples, and objections/responses for the theories/proposals studied
(4) Demonstrate nuanced consideration of ethical situations

Structure

After introducing foundational concepts and skills, the course is organized as follows: Theories of Ethical Deliberation; Reflections on Ethical Deliberation: Challenges to Ethics; Grounding Ethics; and Locating Ethics. Topics will be covered in these ways: (1) an introductory lecture(s) designed to prepare students for (2) subsequent student initiated discussions of cases in light of primary source readings.

Requirements

Two Unit Exams (one for Units I/II, and one for Units III/IV) and a comprehensive Final Exam

Case Study, 3-5 pages in length, focusing on a Discussion Session case

This is your opportunity to present your analysis of one of the cases we have analyzed in a Discussion Session. It offers you a chance to work through the issues involved there in some depth and a chance to integrate and synthesize the work we’ve done in class.
Two Case Presentations

This is a team presentation of your analysis of a case study supplied by the instructor. The second presentation will team interaction. Presentation sessions are mandatory attendance.

Academic Integrity

There are number of ways to talk about what I have in mind here. Many times, the notion of academic integrity is analyzed simply in terms of certain behavioral expectations – which is, in part, what I’ll do here. However, this approach is less comprehensive and insightful than an Ethics course should offer because it glosses over a more fundamental consideration – character. This section on integrity, then, is intended to guide you toward the sorts of character traits which are required in order to be successful in this class.

*Engagement*
Philosophical study is as much a matter of process as product. An engaged student will be present in class and will consistently participate in its conversation.

*Responsibility*
There are a number of assignments with associated due dates, as well as a number of opportunities to enhance your experience of PHIL 2306 on our eCampus site. A responsible student will be aware of, and will honor, those assignments and dates, in addition to availing themselves of the chance to develop their capacities to the fullest.

*Honesty*
Academic honesty is perhaps the most crucial characteristic of all. An honest student will not attempt to receive credit for work and/or ideas which are not their own. Beyond this, an honest student will gladly see to it that credit is given where credit is due. To this end, all written assignments must include a written and signed Honor Pledge: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this work.”

**Grading**

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<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>Exams – Units I/II, and III/IV</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<td>Final Examination</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Team Case Presentations</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual Case Study</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Assignments Points</strong></td>
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**Course:**

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<th>Course grade</th>
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Any instance of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of F for the assignment. While such instance may result in a course grade of F, additional academic dishonesty will result in a course grade of F.

Optional Extra Credit: A second case study for a maximum 100 points.
Protocol

Absences are of two sorts: unforeseeable and foreseeable. Within these sorts, there are two kinds: excused and unexcused. Unforeseeable absences, beyond those already anticipated in the attendance grading policy, will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis, only with adequate timely consultation with the professor. Foreseeable absences may be excused on a case-by-case basis only by prior consent of the professor and, again, only with adequate timely consultation. Foreseeable absences are likely to require additional work outside class in order to be considered excused. It is the student’s responsibility to manage their attendance status.

Opportunities for make-up exams may be offered by consent of the professor on a case-by-case basis, only with prior/timely consultation with the professor. These exams will be available for a very limited time after the scheduled examination date. It is the student’s responsibility to manage their grade status.

The last date to withdraw from this course and receive a grade of W is November 15, 2012. All students on the course roll after this date will receive a performance grade. It is the student’s responsibility to manage their enrollment status.

While it should go without saying, I will say it anyway: texts relevant to each class session must be brought with you to that class.

All written work must be computer/typewriter generated in a 10-12pt font double-spaced with 1” margins in black ink on white 8½” x 11” paper.

Cell phones, pagers, and other devices which might interfere with the class must be silenced or turned off before entering the classroom.

Students requesting accommodations due to the presence of a disability must identify themselves in a timely fashion and demonstrate/document the need for accommodation through the Disability Services Office (DSO). For information regarding the rights and responsibilities of students with disabilities, contact DSO at 972/860-8348 voice/TDD.

Please note that grade reports are no longer mailed. Convenient access is available online (http://econnect.dcccd.edu) or by telephone (972.613.1818).
Philosophy 2306 is a part of the Core Curriculum and addresses the following Exemplary Educational Objectives and Core Curriculum Intellectual Competencies as set forth by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board:

**Exemplary Educational Objectives in Philosophy**

1. To demonstrate awareness of the scope and variety of works in the arts and humanities.
2. To understand those works as expressions of individual and human values within an historical and social context.
3. To respond critically to works in the arts and humanities.
4. To articulate and informed personal reaction to works in the arts and humanities.
5. To demonstrate knowledge of the influence of literature, philosophy, and/or the arts on intercultural experiences.

**Core Curriculum Intellectual Competencies**

1. Reading – the ability to analyze and interpret a variety of printed materials – books, documents, and articles – above 12th grade level.
2. Writing – the ability to produce clear, correct and coherent prose adapted to purpose, occasion and audience – above 12th grade level.
3. Speaking – the ability to communicate orally in clear, coherent, and persuasive language appropriate to purpose, occasion, and audience – above 12th grade level.
4. Listening – analyze and interpret various forms of spoken communication, possess sufficient literacy skills of writing, reading – above 12th grade level.
5. Critical Thinking – think and analyze at a critical level.
Course Schedule

Orientation to PHIL 2306

I. ETHICS: What Is It and How Is It Done?

What is ETHICS?

How is ETHICS done?

Discussion Session Case 1: “Are Losers Weepers?”

II. Theories of Ethical Deliberation

Teleological Ethics—Virtue
Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, *RTD*
[“The Ethics of Virtue,” *EMP*]

Nietzsche, “Selections” (R/E)

Teleological Ethics—Utilitarianism
Mill, “Utilitarianism,” *RTD*
[“The Utilitarian Approach, “*EMP*]

Deontological Ethics
Kant, “The Categorical Imperative,” *RTD*
[“Are There Absolute Moral Rules?” *EMP*]

Discussion Session Case 2: “Howwww Much for that Doggie…?”

Review

Exam – Units I & II

III. Reflections on Ethical Deliberation—Challenges to Ethics

Ethical Relativism
Sumner, “Cultural Relativism,” *RTD*
[“The Challenge of Cultural Relativism, “*EMP*]

Ethical Subjectivism
Hume, “Morality as Based on Sentiment,” *RTD* 59-63
[“Subjectivism in Ethics,” *EMP* 32-47]

IV. Reflections on Ethical Deliberation—Grounding Ethics

Discussion Session Case 3: “Riding in Cars With Boys – The Cartman Files”

Ethics & Religion
Aquinas, “Ethics and Natural Law,” *RTD*
[“Does Morality Depend on Religion?” *EMP*]

Discussion Session
Leiser, “Is Homosexuality Unnatural?” *RTD*
Mohr, “Gay Basics: Some Questions, Facts, and Values,” *RTD*
**Ethics & Individuals**

- Sartre, *Existentialism* (R/E)
- Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus and Other Essays* (R/E)
- Rand, *Atlas Shrugged* (R/E)
- Narveson, “Feeding the Hungry,” *RTD*
- Singer, “The Singer Solution to World Poverty,” *RTD*

Discussion Session

Case 5: “Keeping Up the Jones’”

**Ethics & Societies**

- King, “Letter From the Birmingham City Jail,” *RTD*
- Rawls, “The Justification of Civil Disobedience,” *RTD*

Discussion Session

Case 6: “The Price as Right”

**Case Presentations**

**Exam – Units III & IV**

V. Reflections on Ethical Deliberation—Locating Ethics

**Ethics & Gender**

- Frye, “Sexism,” *RTD*
- Grimshaw, “The Idea of a Female Ethic,” *RTD*
- [“Feminism and the Ethics of Care,” *EMP*]

Discussion Session

Case 7: TBD

**Ethics & Race**

- Appiah, “Racisms,” *RTD*
- Mosley, “The Case for Affirmative Action” (R/E)
- Pojman, *The Case Against Strong Affirmative Action*” (R/E)
- Pojman, *The Case Against Strong Affirmative Action*” (R/E)

Discussion Session

Case 8: TBD

**Ethics & Persons**

- Niebuhr, “The Responsible Self”
- [“What Would A Satisfactory Moral Theory Be Like?” *EMP*]

Discussion Session

Case 9: “Banana Republix”

Hill, “Preserving the Environment,” *RTD*

**Case Presentations**

**Course Review**

**Course Exam**
**PHIL 2306: Ethics**  
*Final Exam Study Guide*

In order to be fully prepared for the Final Exam, you should be able to: (1) identify each of the items on this list; (2) relate ethicists and terms to the appropriate theories/proposals; and (3) provide examples, content/definition, and objections/responses for each of the theories/proposals.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Terms, Theories, and Proposals</th>
<th>Ethicists</th>
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<tr>
<td>Teleological Ethics</td>
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<td>Virtue ethics</td>
<td>Aquinas</td>
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<td>Utilitarianism</td>
<td>Aristotle</td>
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