

FOUNDATIONS OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

Philosophy 3340.002
Spring 2008
Lecture CI-113
TR 2:00-3:15

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Office Hours: Monday 2:30-5:00; Tuesday 11:00-1:30; and by appointment.

Course Description

This course is an introduction to contemporary ethical theories and their application to a number of practical issues. We will begin with an overview of ethics and discuss the nature of ethical reasoning. Next we will examine several major ethical theories. These theories will provide us with a critical basis for exploring a number of current ethical problems and debates.

Course Objectives

Successful completion of the course will provide you with a deeper understanding of nature of ethical reasoning and an improved set of skills for evaluating and justifying actions. The instructors hope that you will strengthen your interest in ethical thought and issues, continue thinking about ethical values, and continue to develop your own views on ethical issues.

Course Organization

Class meetings will be divided into two types: (1) lectures and (2) discussion section meetings. The lectures, given by Glenn Tiller in CI 113 on Tuesday at 2:00, will be concerned with general philosophical and ethical issues related to professional activity. There will be six discussion sections, focusing on issues that arise in specific areas of professional life. These sections meet on Thursday at 2:00.

The following list indicates the discussion section leaders, the section numbers, the places where the sections will meet, and the main focus of each section:

Catherine Albert: section 115, CCH 116, Liberal Arts
Office: MB 106.
Phone: 438-1608
Email: texwexer@yahoo.com

M. Balasubramanya: section 116, ST 106, Science & Technology
Office: ST 313
Phone: 825-6020
Email: mirley.balasubramanya@tamucc.edu

Tracy Calley: section 114, CCH 110, Education
Office: FC 253
Phone: 825-6084
Email: tracy.calley@tamucc.edu

Lois Huff: section 112, CCH 104, Business
Office: Modular Building, Room 109
Phone: 825-3951
Email: Lois.Huff@mail.tamucc.edu

Andy Piker: section 113, CI 108, Science & Technology
Office: Faculty Center, Room 276
Phone: 825-6035
Email: andrew.piker@tamucc.edu

Stefan Sencerz: section 111, CI 106, Environmental Issues & Medicine
Office: Faculty Center, Room 261
Phone: 825-2392
Email: stefan.sencerz@tamucc.edu

Attendance & Participation

Official class roll for the main lecture will not be taken; and each discussion section leader determines the attendance policy for his or her section. However all materials discussed in the lectures and covered in the readings are the potential basis for test and exam questions. Students are therefore expected to attend all lectures and keep up with assigned readings. In general, if you don't attend class, don't expect to pass. Since participation can only help one's grade and never hurt, it is important to attend class and engage with the weekly readings and discussions.

Freedom of Speech & Classroom Etiquette

You are free to ask any question you please about the material. In many cases if you did not understand something, this is because it was not explained clearly to you, so you will be doing your colleagues and yourself a service if you request clarification. You are also free to argue for any ethical position you find compelling, *as long as you provide reasons for your point of view*. It is inevitable that during discussions individual points of view will differ. When they do, our reaction will *always* be to patiently listen to the reasons offered for a particular ethical conclusion and cooperatively evaluate those reasons.

E-etiquette

Please turn off all cell phones, pagers, etc, before entering the classroom. If your cell phone rings (or sings) during class, I will stop the lecture and answer it for you. If you feel the urge to text message or make a call, please leave the classroom and do not return (until next class). The lectures are for lecturing and discussion. Any student who disrupts a lecture by using a personal electronic device will be asked to leave. : o(

Make-up Tests & Incompletes

Students who miss a test for a good reason (e.g. medical) will have a chance to take a make-up test during the week after the original test, at a time arranged with the instructor. Discussion section leaders will determine policies governing late work on discussion section assignments. An incomplete for the course is possible only in cases where course work is nearly complete, and the student has a legitimate reason for not completing the course work by the end of the semester.

Text

The required text for the main lecture is *The Elements of Moral Philosophy* 5th edition, eds. James and Stuart Rachels, New York: McGraw-Hill, 2007. Your discussion group leader will determine readings for your discussion group.

Graded Assignments

First test (10% of your overall grade); second test (15%); final exam (25%); discussion section assignments to be determined by the section leaders (totaling 50% of your overall grade). Many of the above assignments will involve material covered only in the lectures, so lecture attendance is likely to have a significant impact on students grades. All grades will be assigned on the standard scale: 90%-100%=A, 80%-89%=B, 70%-79%=C, 60%-69%=D, 59% and below=F. Each student's assignments will be graded by her/his discussion section instructor.

Course Schedule

*All readings refer to *The Elements of Moral Philosophy* 5th edition.

January

- 17 *Discussion Section Meetings*
- 22 **Introduction & Course Mechanics**
- 24 *Discussion Section Meetings*
- 29 **What Is Morality? (chpt. 1)**
- 31 *Discussion Section Meetings*

February

- 5 **The Challenge Of Cultural Relativism (chpts. 2)**
- 7 *Discussion Section Meetings*
- 12 **Does Morality Depend On Religion? (chpt. 4)**
- 14 *Discussion Section Meetings*
- 19 **Ethical Egoism (chpt. 5)**
- 21 **TEST #1**

26 **The Utilitarian Approach (chpt. 6)**
28 *Discussion Section Meetings*

March

4 **The Debate Over Utilitarianism (chpt. 7)**
6 *Discussion Section Meetings*

11 **Are There Absolute Moral Rules? (chpt. 8)**
13 *Discussion Section Meetings*

25 **Kant And Respect For Persons (chpt. 9)**
27 *Discussion Section Meetings*

April

1 **The Idea Of A Social Contract (chpt. 10)**
3 *Discussion Section Meetings*

8
10 **TEST #2**

15 **Feminism And The Ethics Of Care (chpt. 11)**
17 *Discussion Section Meetings*

22 **The Ethics Of Virtue (chpt. 12)**
24 *Discussion Section Meetings*

29 **What Would A Satisfactory Moral Theory Be Like? (chpt. 13)**

May

1 *Discussion Section Meetings*
6 **Course Review**

The Fine Print

For all matters concerning course withdrawal, appeal of grades, academic misconduct, etc, students are strongly advised to consult the rules outlined in the Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Student Handbook and on the web at: <http://studentaffairs.tamucc.edu/>.