Philosophy 3340
Professional Ethics
Spring 2006
TR 4:00-5:15

Instructors
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Office Hours: MW 10-11; TR 9-10; W 7-8 p.m.; and by appointment

Catherine Albert; Modular Building, Rm.109; ph# 825-3951; texwexer@yahoo.com

Glenn Tiller; Faculty Center, Rm. 268; ph# 825-6008; glenn.tiller@tamucc.edu

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Course Description
Overview of ethical theories and basic principles of ethical reasoning. Application to ethical problems arising in public policy debates and in the practice of various professional fields.

We will begin by studying the nature of philosophical approaches to ethics, and to ethical argumentation. We will then examine and discuss a variety of ethical theories and principles; and in the remainder of the course we will put this background to use in an exploration of ethical problems that arise in professional life.

Course Organization
Class meetings will be divided into two types: lectures and discussion section meetings. The lectures, given by Andy Piker in CI 113, will be concerned with general philosophical and ethical issues related to professional activity. There will be five discussion sections, focusing on issues that arise in specific areas of professional life. 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 021, ST 107, Arts and Humanities
Glenn Tiller, section 022, CI 109, Arts and Humanities
Don Berkich, section 023, CCH 104, Science and Technology
Lois Huff, section 024, CI 122, Business
Candy Skelton, section 025, ST 106, Education

Each student is expected to attend the lectures, as well as the meetings of his or her discussion section. Questions and comments are encouraged in both the lectures and the discussion section meetings.
The class will also involve an online component, in which students engage in online discussion of ethical issues. See “Graded Assignments” and “More on Online Assignments” below for information on that component.

**Objectives**
The course objectives fall into three main categories:
1) Content: as a result of taking this course, you should acquire some understanding of a variety of issues in ethical theory, and of various ethical problems that arise in professional practice and life.
2) Skill: The course should enable you to develop a degree of proficiency in recognizing, evaluating, and constructing ethical arguments on more than one side of a moral issue.
3) Motivation: The instructors hope that you will strengthen your interest in ethical thought and issues, continue thinking about ethical values and issues, and continue to develop your own views on ethical issues.

**Graded Assignments**
First test (10% of your overall grade); second test (15%); discussion section assignments to be determined by the section leaders (totaling 40% of your overall grade); online assignments (totaling 20% of your overall grade); and a final exam (15%). 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 (including online assignments) will be graded by her/his discussion section instructor.

**More on Online Assignments**
Completion of ten online assignments is required of each student (each assignment is worth 2% of the overall course grade). The assignments will begin in the fifth week of the semester, and conclude at the end of the fourteenth week (see course schedule for due dates).

Each online assignment will consist of a written response related to an article or case study posted online (on the website for the course: ethics.tamucc.edu) by your section instructor. You may either a) respond directly to the article or case study, or b) respond to the comments posted by other students (all student responses will be posted anonymously online).

The grading criteria for the online assignments will be as follows:
- focus on at least one ethical issue relevant to the article/case. In other words, focus on whether an act, practice, or policy relevant to the article/case is (or was, or would be) ethically justified;
- inclusion of reasons for the ethical view(s) presented;
- application of at least one ethical principle or theory to the ethical issue(s);
- minimum of 50 words;
- quality of the application of each ethical theory or principle (e.g., thoroughness, correct understanding of the theory or principle);
- strength of the reasons presented for ethical view(s);
- clarity and organization (including division into paragraphs when appropriate)
Attendance Policies for Sections
Discussion section leaders will determine the attendance policies for their sections.

Make-up Tests and Incompletes
Students who miss a test for a good reason 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.

Plagiarism and Other Forms of Academic Dishonesty
Plagiarism is the presentation of work as one’s own, that was in fact produced by another author (e.g., the submission of a paper as one’s own work, when it was written by someone else; or the submission of a portion of a paper written by another author, without citing the source of the material). University policy strictly prohibits plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. The penalty for an act of academic dishonesty will be determined by the instructor responsible for the grading of the assignment in question.

Readings
No hard copy text is required for the course (except in Education discussion sections). All readings may be accessed online at the course website: ethics.tamucc.edu

Course Schedule
Discussion section meetings have been explicitly indicated; all other meetings are lectures.

January
12 Orientation
17 Part I: Introduction to Philosophical Ethics
   The Nature of Philosophical Ethics
19 Constructing and Evaluating Ethical Arguments
24 Part II: Ethical Theories and Principles
   Consequentialism
26 Discussion Section Meetings
31 Consequentialism, continued
February
2 Discussion Section Meetings
7 Consequentialism, continued
   Non-Consequentialism (Deontology)
   Articles/cases for online assignments 1 & 2 posted (on course website)
9 Discussion Section Meetings
14 Non-Consequentialism (Deontology), continued
16 TEST (in discussion section rooms)
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| 21   | *Non-Consequentialism (Deontology), continued*  
      | Online assignments 1 & 2 due  
      | Articles/cases for online assignments 3 & 4 posted  
| 23   | Discussion Section Meetings |
| 28   | *Justice and Contractarian Ethics*  
      | Discussion Section Meetings |
| 7    | *Justice and Contractarian Ethics, continued*  
      | Online assignments 3 & 4 due  
      | Articles/cases for online assignments 5 & 6 posted  
| 9    | Discussion Section Meetings |
| 14   | SPRING BREAK |
| 16   | SPRING BREAK |
| 21   | *Part III: Ethical Problems in Professional Life*  
      | *Truth and Adversarial Deception*  
      | Discussion Section Meetings |
| 23   | Discussion Section Meetings |
| 28   | *Truth and Adversarial Deception, continued*  
      | Online assignments 5 & 6 due  
      | Articles/cases for online assignments 7 & 8 posted  
| 30   | TEST (in discussion section rooms) |
| April 4 | *Truth, Paternalism, and Paternalistic Deception*  
          | Discussion Section Meetings |
| 11   | *Truth, Paternalism, and Paternalistic Deception, continued*  
      | Online assignments 7 & 8 due  
      | Articles/cases for online assignments 9 & 10 posted  
| 13   | Discussion Section Meetings |
| 18   | Discussion Section Meetings |
| 20   | Discussion Section Meetings |
| 25   | Discussion Section Meetings |
| 27   | Online assignments 9 & 10 due |
| May 2  | Discussion Section Meetings |

**Final Exam:** Tuesday, May 9, 4:30-7:00 (in discussion section rooms)