



## PH105 Course Syllabus (Spring 2025, 3 Credits)

### *Ethics*

School of Humanities, Arts and Design

[Chaminade University Honolulu](https://www.chaminade.edu/honolulu)

3140 Waialae Avenue - Honolulu, HI 96816

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**Office Hours:** TBA  
**Office Location:** Henry Hall 206

Email is the best way to reach me with questions about course assignments or policies. I will answer all emails by the next school day (usually within 24 hours, though weekends may take longer).

### **Course Catalog Description:**

The study of the concepts of good and bad, right and wrong, has a long history. This course will study the origins and legitimacy of our standards of conduct and character and will discuss modern studies which consider the compelling and unconditional overtones of ethical demands. The course will also discuss the ways in which we talk to children and young people about what is right and wrong. This course fulfills Critical Thinking General Education requirement

### **Course Overview:**

Unlike the way other animals generally live, human society is characterized by complex set of rules of all sorts. These rules have an authority in the sense that our society is so constructed that violations of these rules will usually result in punishments of the offender. Here the legal order and the moral order of society is differentiated. Legal regulations are those part of morality that are usually regarded as necessary for society. But moral rules never disappear from society. They continue with the legal system. This course is about ethics or the moral rules. Where do they come from, how you can persuade people to follow them or obey them, and what ultimately are the foundations of them?

### **Marianist Values:**

This class represents one component of your education at Chaminade University of Honolulu. An education in the Marianist Tradition is marked by five principles and you should take every opportunity possible to reflect upon the role of these characteristics in your education and development:

1. Education for formation in faith
2. Provide an integral, quality education
3. Educate in family spirit
4. Educate for service, justice and peace
5. Educate for adaptation and change

While all five characteristics are present in this course, we will pay particular attention to “education for service, justice, and peace” This course will ask you to consider such questions as “What do ideas of duty, justice, and rights mean and how do they develop in society?” and “What are the differences in the ideas of duty and virtue?” Through these questions, students will think critically about service, justice, and peace and will systematically acknowledge and challenge diverse evidence, concepts, assumptions, and viewpoints.

**CUS Core Competencies:**

1. Written Communication
2. Oral Communication
3. Quantitative reasoning
4. Critical Thinking
5. Information Literacy

**Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs):**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Define the rules of ethics.
2. Explain ethics as metaethics, the universal rules that armlock everyone in society without distinctions of sex, gender, nationality, or class.
3. Present a strong argument for freedom, rights, civility and decency.

**Alignment of Learning Outcomes:**

	CLO 1	CLO 2	CLO 3
Marianist Values	4	4	4
CUS Core Competencies	1, 4	1, 4	1, 4

**Required Texts:**

- *Ethics: A very short introduction* by Simon Blackburn (ISBN: 9780198868101)

**Course Website:**

This course can be accessed through your Canvas dashboard at <https://chaminade.instructure.com/>

**Technical Assistance for Canvas Users:**

- [How do I get help with Canvas as a student?](#)
- [Live chat with Canvas Support for students](#)
- Canvas Support Hotline for students: +1-833-209-6111
- [Watch this video to get you started](#)
- [Online tutorials](#): click on “Students” role to access tutorials
- Contact the Chaminade IT Helpdesk for technical issues: [helpdesk@chaminade.edu](mailto:helpdesk@chaminade.edu) or call (808) 735-4855

**Course Grade:**

I look at the following to arrive at deciding a final course grade for this course.

1. Has the student shown an understanding of ethics as not what people do normally but what it is for them to do ideally? Has the student understood the nature of ideals as opposed to facts.
2. For each on the 15 projects that they must do, especially in the essays, has the student managed to construct their responses in a concise, direct, and clear manner?
3. Usually only the essays are graded and commented on. I allow the discussion to be wide ranging and not specifically graded. I only count the number of discussions for each week and tend to give full marks for them if they are posted when done, no marks are given to any that are not posted. But the grade in the essays is important.
4. Finally, there is such a thing as quality of the response. The best way to understand what I mean by quality is to study my comments, when each essay is graded. Those collectively tell you what I am looking at, when I am looking for quality.
5. Also, the essays are due on Fridays. Late submission will be graded but will not get full marks. If the essay is not posted in the week when it is due, it may not be graded.
6. Make sure that your essays are posted in full at the appropriate space. Do not at any time leave a link for the instructor to click. I cannot click on links due to malware threats.
7. The instructor will not, repeat will not, click open any essay to read. The essay should be pasted in the space where it is supposed to appear.
8. Please pay attention to these remarks.
9. Also, please read what I say under the remarks about the each essay, so that you understand what I am looking for.

**Assessment:**

Assignments should be turned in on the due date noted on the course Canvas page or otherwise indicated in class; *late assignments will negatively impact your grade in the course.*

Descriptions of all assignments along with scoring rubrics are available on the course Canvas page. Grades are calculated from the total points earned from course assignments. They are interpreted as follows:

- A Outstanding scholarship and an unusual degree of intellectual initiative
- B Superior work done in a consistent and intellectual manner
- C Average grade indicating a competent grasp of subject matter
- D Inferior work of the lowest passing grade, not satisfactory for fulfillment of prerequisite course work
- F Failed to grasp the minimum subject matter; no credit given

In this course, letter grades are defined as follows:

A (100-90%)	B (89-80%)	C (79-70%)	D (69-60%)	F (59-0%)
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**Late Work Policy:**

All assignments should be turned in by the due date. I am willing to accept late work; however, late assignments may receive a lower grade.

**Grade of Incomplete:**

If students are unable to complete the course due to circumstances beyond their control, the instructor will consider offering a grade of “incomplete”. This will provide the student with 30 days beyond the end of the term to complete all outstanding course requirements. Please note that a grade of “incomplete” must be discussed with the instructor before the end of the term. If a student does not contact the instructor by the end of the term to discuss the possibility of an incomplete, they will be awarded the grade they have earned to that point.

**University Policies**

**Academic Honesty**

Academic honesty is an essential aspect of all learning, scholarship, and research. It is one of the values regarded most highly by academic communities throughout the world. Violations of the principle of academic honesty are extremely serious and will not be tolerated.

Students are responsible for promoting academic honesty at Chaminade by not participating in any act of dishonesty and by reporting any incidence of academic dishonesty to an instructor or to a University official. Academic dishonesty may include theft of records or examinations, alteration of grades, and plagiarism, in addition to more obvious dishonesty.

Questions of academic dishonesty in a particular class are first reviewed by the instructor, who must make a report with recommendations to the Dean of the Academic Division. Punishment for academic dishonesty will be determined by the instructor and the Dean of Academic Division and may include an “F” grade for the work in question, an “F” grade for the course, suspension, or dismissal from the University.

For the most up to date information, please refer to the [Academic Honesty Policy](#) on the Chaminade University Catalog website.

**Title IX and Nondiscrimination Statement**

Chaminade University of Honolulu is committed to providing a learning, working and

living environment that promotes the dignity of all people, inclusivity and mutual respect and is free of all forms of sex discrimination and gender-based violence, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. As a member of the University faculty, I am required to immediately report any incident of sex discrimination or gender-based violence to the campus Title IX Coordinator.

### **Nondiscrimination Policy & Notice of Nondiscrimination**

Chaminade University of Honolulu does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX and its regulations, including in admission and employment. Inquiries about Title IX may be referred to the University's Title IX Coordinator, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, or both and contact information may be found at the [Chaminade University Title IX Office Contact Information and Confidential Resources website](#). On-campus Confidential Resources may also be found here at [CAMPUS CONFIDENTIAL RESOURCES](#).

The University's Nondiscrimination Policy and Grievance Procedures can be located on the University webpage at:

<https://chaminade.edu/compliance/title-ix-nondiscrimination-policies-procedures/>.

To report information about conduct that may constitute sex discrimination or make a complaint of sex discrimination under Title IX, please refer to the [Campus Incident Report](#) form. Chaminade University of Honolulu prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates. The NOTICE of NONDISCRIMINATION can be found here: [Notice of Nondiscrimination](#).

### **CUH Alert Emergency Notification**

To get the latest emergency communication from Chaminade University, students' cell numbers will be connected to Chaminade's emergency notification text system. When you log in to the Chaminade portal, you will be asked to provide some emergency contact information. If you provide a cellphone number, you will receive a text from our emergency notification system asking you to confirm your number. You must respond to that message to complete your registration and get emergency notifications on your phone.

### **Assessment for Student Work**

With the goal of continuing to improve the quality of educational services offered to students, Chaminade University conducts assessments of student achievement of course, program, and institutional learning outcomes. Student work is used anonymously as the basis of these assessments, and the work you do in this course may be used in these assessment efforts.

### **Student with Disabilities Statement**

Chaminade University of Honolulu offers accommodations for all actively enrolled students with disabilities in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of

1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and the ADA Amendments Act (2008).

Students are responsible for contacting Kokua Ike: Center for Student Learning to schedule an appointment. Verification of their disability will be requested through appropriate documentation and once received it will take up to approximately 2–3 weeks to review them. Appropriate paperwork will be completed by the student before notification will be sent out to their instructors. Accommodation paperwork will not be automatically sent out to instructors each semester, as the student is responsible to notify Kokua Ike via email at [ada@chaminade.edu](mailto:ada@chaminade.edu) each semester if changes or notifications are needed.

### **Kōkua 'Ike: Tutoring & Learning Services**

Chaminade is proud to offer free, one-on-one tutoring and writing assistance to all students. Tutoring and writing help is available on campus at Kōkua 'Ike: Center for Student Learning in a variety of subjects (including, but are not limited to biology, chemistry, math, nursing, English, etc.) from trained Peer and Professional Tutors. Please check [Kōkua 'Ike's website](#) for the latest times, list of drop-in hours, and information on scheduling an appointment. Free online tutoring is also available via TutorMe. Tutor Me can be accessed 24/7 from your Canvas account. Simply click on Account > TutorMe. For more information, please contact Kōkua 'Ike at [tutoring@chaminade.edu](mailto:tutoring@chaminade.edu) or 808-739-8305.

### **Credit Hour Policy:**

The unit of semester credit is defined as university-level credit that is awarded for the completion of coursework. One credit hour reflects the amount of work represented in the intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement for those learning outcomes. Each credit hour earned at Chaminade University should result in 45 hours of engagement. This equates to one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester, 10 week term, or equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time. Direct instructor engagement and out-of-class work result in total student engagement time of 45 hours for one credit.

The minimum 45 hours of engagement per credit hour can be satisfied in fully online, internship, or other specialized courses through several means, including (a) regular online instruction or interaction with the faculty member and fellow students and (b) academic engagement through extensive reading, research, online discussion, online quizzes or exams; instruction, collaborative group work, internships, laboratory work, practica, studio work, and preparation of papers, presentations, or other forms of assessment. This policy is in accordance with federal regulations and regional accrediting agencies.

## **Activities Schedule**

### Week 1 –

- Read: Threat of the death of God.
- Understand: Why does human society require complex rules? It was thought that God gave these rules, therefore it was thought that if there is no God, then there is no morality.
- Discussion: Does obedience bring triumph or everlasting life as the Christian tradition claims?
- Essay: What is the relationship between God and Morals? Does something become morally right, if God approves it, or does God only approve those things are morally right?

### Week 2 –

- Read: The threat of relativism.
- Understand: Why is relativism both attractive and regards as a threat to moral philosophy or ethics?
- Discussion: What the author says about Herodotus and Sophocles' Antigone and say what you think of them
- Essay: Examine the author's claim that 'there is no living without standards if living'

### Week 3 –

- Read: The threat of Egoism.
- Understand: Thorstein Veblen's and what he says about the people's need for wasteful display.
- Discussion: Try to connect Veblen, Smith, and Butler in your discussion.
- Essay: What is the general fallacy of egoism?

### Week 4 –

- Read: The threat from Evolutionary theory.
- Understand: The point of evolution, what it really says.
- Discuss: Are we programmed by our cells?
- Essay: Why is ideology mistaken? Why is it more probable that we like cooperation and coordination instead of the old-fashioned ideas of competition?

### Week 5 –

- Read: The threat of determinism and futility.
- Understand: The relation between desire and rules.
- Discussion: Is there a paradox between Genetic rules and Human behavior?
- Essay: Why our ability to understand how we act is no threat to free will.

### Week 6 –

- Read: The threat of unreasonable demands.
- Understand: Why a very simple moral rule like 'You shall not murder' is

- hard to live by. What more complicated rule do we need?
- Discuss: What the author says, “The center of ethics must be occupied by things we can reasonably demand of each other.”
- Essay: Are moral theories universal and impartial?

#### Week 7 –

- Read: The threat of false consciousness.
- Understand: If what motivates us is often unconscious to us or not?
- Discuss: Can ethics be used to repress the minorities? Why do some think that it is?
- Essay: Is promise keeping a fetish of the middle class or is it a fundamental necessity to us? Why?

#### Week 8 –

- Read: Two species of reason
- Understand: The different ways we reason when we are trying to transact rules from the way we reason when we try to understand the way the world appears to us through our sense organs, or facts.
- Discuss: The difference between a description and a prescription.
- Essay: Write your essay on the difference between Locke and Hume in moral matters.

#### Week 9 –

- Read: The party of mankind.
- Understand: The foundations of morals in Adam Smith and David Hume.
- Discuss: The sentiments that Hume says humans have which become the foundations of his moral system.
- Essay: Write on the idea of consilience or identity of sentiments. What is this idea and how does it play a significant role, in his theory of morality?

#### Week 10 –

- Read: Doing good and living well.
- Understand: What we mean by society, and how important it is for us to live with other people.
- Discuss: The difference between life governed by sentiments and life governed by reason.
- Essay: What are virtues and what is living a virtuous life?

#### Week 11 –

- Read: The categorical Imperative.
- Understand: Kant’s indispensable basis of ethics.
- Discuss: Discuss the differences in the ideas of duty and virtue.
- Essay: What according to Kant is the core of Morality?

#### Week 12 –

- Read: The state of nature.



- Understand: What is a prisoner's dilemma?
- Discuss: What is it that we can learn from the prisoner's dilemma?
- Essay: Write on what the assurance game is and what we can learn from it.

Week 13 –

- Read: The emergence of norms.
- Understand: How social norms develop.
- Discuss: The ideas of norm, rule, and principle.
- Essay: What do ideas of duty, Justice and rights mean and how do they develop in society?

Week 14 –

- Read: Desire and meaning, paternalism and the greatest happiness principle.
- Understand: How abstraction perplexes the mind and eventually begins to control it, and in its wake, make all of us, blind to our own freedom of doing what is right for us and the rest of humanity.
- Discuss: How meaning is produced?
- Essay: On abortion and the utilitarian ideal of happiness. The argument against abstraction and the greatest happiness of the greatest number may be related to each other.

Week 15 –

- Read: Rights and natural rights, birth and death, and decency, civility and trust.
- Understand: How we conceive of rights. Is it in some sense guaranteed by the things are or by civil governments enacting the laws in favor of it?
- Discuss: The difference between what we allow to happen and what we cause to happen. Is this distinction a true distinction?
- Essay: What is confirmation bias and how does it overrule reason in many cases?

## Grading Rubrics

Discussion Post Rubric - 10 Points				
	3 - Distinguished	2 - Proficient	1 - Basic	0 - Unsatisfactory
<b>Post Length</b>	Each post is a minimum of 100 words	Each post is a minimum of 75 words		Posts are shorter than 75 words
<b>Engagement with Assigned Texts</b>	Demonstrates serious contemplation of the readings and clear connection to the Marianist Values	Indicates reading was completed with somewhat clear connections to the Marianist Values	Suggests reading was scanned but not carefully analyzed, with weak connections to Marianist Values	Provides little indication that the reading was completed and/or no connections to the Marianist Values
<b>Responses</b>	Responds to at least two classmates with substantive replies		Responds to at least one classmate with substantive replies	
<b>Spelling, Punctuation, and Grammar</b>			Post is clear and articulate; grammar and spelling are correct	Post contains multiple errors in grammar and/or spelling that impact clarity

Essay Rubric - 10 Points				
	3 - Distinguished	2 - Proficient	1 - Basic	0 - Unsatisfactory
<b>Length</b>	Minimum of 150 words	Minimum of 100 words	Minimum of 75 words	Shorter than 75 words
<b>Engagement with Assigned Texts</b>	Demonstrates serious contemplation of the readings and clear connection to the Marianist Values	Indicates reading was completed with somewhat clear connections to the Marianist Values	Suggests reading was scanned but not carefully analyzed, with weak connections to Marianist Values	Provides little indication that the reading was completed and/or no connections to the Marianist Values
<b>Application and Analysis of New Ideas</b>	Clear application and analysis of the new ideas presented in the chapter and discussion	Somewhat clear application and analysis of the new ideas presented in the chapter and discussion	Minimal application and analysis of the new ideas presented in the chapter and discussion	No application and analysis of the new ideas presented in the chapter and discussion
<b>Spelling, Punctuation, and Grammar</b>			Post is clear and articulate; grammar and spelling are correct	Post contains multiple errors in grammar and/or spelling that impact clarity