

PHILOSOPHY 105: ETHICS
Fall, 2001

Jim Christiana, SM
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COURSE DESCRIPTION/OBJECTIVES:

I have designed this course to be an introduction to some of the major writers and philosophical perspectives in the history of ethics and to explore some of the seminal issues and controversies in the area of applied ethics.

Throughout the semester, students will:

- * be introduced to the seminal philosophers and their teachings in the history of ethics
- * struggle with and evaluate different philosophical perspectives and arguments on a series of ethical issues
- * be engaged in the essential philosophical activities of critical thinking and discussion

REQUIRED TEXTS:

- James Sterba's *Morality in Practice* (6th ed.)
- several articles will be placed on library reserve.
- (at least four bluebooks)

STRUCTURE OF COURSE:

Approximately half of the course will consist of lectures by the instructor; half of our classes will provide opportunities for students to participate in group discussion and respond to class materials.

Since dialogue and discourse are essential in the philosophical process, they will constitute an essential part of our philosophical experience together in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADES:

It is expected that students be present on the days that exams are administered and that all assignments be submitted on the dates due. Students are not automatically entitled to make up exams or to other forms of extensions. It is always up to the discretion of the instructor to determine if and when and how makeups or extensions are given and with what grade penalties. **Your grade will be determined as follows:**

--four--five exams (essay format; bluebooks) each of equal weight

Attendance will be taken on a regular basis throughout the semester. Students who accumulate more than three (unexcused) absences will have their course grade lowered significantly (to an extent which is completely up to the discretion of the instructor).

I encourage students to make an appointment to see me during the semester; I do not enjoy teaching a classroom of strangers.

WEEK**(TENTATIVE) TOPICS**

WEEKS I--V	Introduction to Philosophy and Ethics Overview of Major Ethical Traditions READ: articles on library reserve *King, <i>Letter from a Birmingham Jail</i> *Benedict, <i>A Defense of Cultural Relativism</i> *Hospers, <i>The Problem With Relativism</i>
WEEK VI	Social Stratification; Moral Luck
WEEK VI/VII	Distribution of Wealth and Income READ: Ch. I (articles: Hospers; Nielson; Wyman Case; Plyler Case).
WEEK VII	Euthanasia; Physician Assisted Suicide READ: Ch. III (articles: Rachels; Steinbock; Cruzan Case)
WEEK VIII	Affirmative Action READ: Ch. V (articles: Pojman; Mosley; Murray; Hopwood Case).
WEEK IX	Pornography READ: Ch. VII (articles: MacKinnon; Kaminer)
WEEK X	Human Sexuality: Diversity; Deviance; Tolerance; Morality READ: Ch. IX
WEEK XI	Communitarianism: Reflections on the Nature of Rights and Community
WEEKS XII--	Unresolved Issues: Hume or Kant: Sentiments and Reason Hegel or UN Charter on Universal Rights? Christian Ethics in a Diverse World? Role of Government in morality

Students should note that the date and time for the last/final examination for all courses is determined by the university (and printed in your schedule of classes); for us: Dec 10 (Mon), 8:00 am.

**PRE/POST TEST ASSESSMENT
PHIL 105 (ETHICS)
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SECTION I: Students are asked to define the following

1. Aristotle's Doctrine of the Mean
2. Plato's theory of the Healthy Personality
3. The Stoic concept of Resignation
4. Virtue Ethics
5. Utilitarianism
6. Duty Ethics
7. Moral Relativism
8. Traditional Morality

Section II: Write a brief essay on some of the major themes or dimensions of Christian Ethics

Section III: Present an overview of some of the ethical arguments on ONE of the following areas of controversy. Be sure to present arguments on both sides of the issue: abortion; euthanasia; affirmative action; recreational use of illegal drugs/substances.