

SSEI '00

Pro

Chaminade University of Honolulu
Summer Interim Session
June 14 - June 30, 2000
Kaneohe

COURSE: RE/SO 33820 Religion, Philosophy, and Social Ethics
TIME: June 14, 16, 19, 21, 23, 26, 28, 30; 1730 - 2140
June 17, 24; 0800 - 1210
INSTRUCTOR: Marty H. Heitz, Ph.D
956-6686; (h) 944-4641 Email: marty@hawaii.edu
TEXTBOOK: *Thirteen Questions in Ethics and Social Philosophy*; edited by G. Lee Bowie, Kathleen M. Higgins, Meredith W. Michaels. Second edition (Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace, 1998).

Description:

Ethical problems and issues are both personal and social concerns. This course is designed to provide students with interdisciplinary conceptual frameworks to understand social ethics from the perspectives of religion, philosophy, and sociology. Students will explore the theory and practice of social ethics and develop the knowledge and skills for philosophical and religious critique of ethical systems and social policy.

Objectives:

- to appreciate and understand the complexity of ethical issues
- to be able to objectively represent all sides of a given issue
- to learn how to apply the concepts of religion, philosophy and sociology to these issues
- to critically analyze the philosophical, religious and cultural aspects of given issues
- to critically evaluate various positions taken on relevant social issues

Class Format:

This class will usually be held "seminar style." to facilitate interaction and discussion among all the students. The format will integrate lectures with small group discussions and student presentations. To enable us to have productive discussions, students will be expected to have read all relevant materials before our class meetings and to participate in all class activities.

Course Requirements:

- Attendance, as well as coming to class on time and staying the full period, is required in order to complete the course (unexpected conflicts such as illness or deployment will be excused on a case by case basis with proper documentation, according to the University policy as published in the handbook). Students *must contact* the instructor by phone ASAP for make-up work.
- All reading assignments and reports are to be done before class meetings—late papers will not be accepted without a proper excuse.
- Students will be expected to participate in group discussions, to allow others to express their ideas without interruption, to **listen carefully** and with an open mind to what is being said, and to show respect for fellow classmates.

Grading:

- Participation/Attendance 30 pts.
- Summary Assessments 40 pts.
9 total, lowest score dropped, 5 pts. each
- Reading Assignment Reports 80 pts.
4 Written Reports, Alternate Classes, 20 pts. each
- Reading Assignment Responses 20 pts.
4 Oral Responses, Alternate Classes, 5 pts. each
- Final Reading Report and Analysis 30 pts.

TOTAL = 200 pts.

A=180-200, B=160-179, C=140-159, D=120-139, F=119 and below

Grading Criterion as stated in the Chaminade undergraduate catalog are 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, is not satisfactory for fulfillment or prerequisite coursework.
- F** - Failed to grasp even the minimum subject matter; no credit given.
- I** - Did not complete a small portion of the work or final examination due to circumstances beyond the student's control.

The issuance of an "I" grade is not automatic. Prior to reporting of grades a contract must be made between the student and the instructor for the completion of the course. Sufficient time should be allowed to permit completion of the work, evaluation, and reporting of the final grade within 90 days after the end of the semester or term. This limit may not be extended. If a new grade for the course is not submitted by the instructor prior to the deadline, the alternate grade, indicated in the contract, will be recorded.

Reading Assignment Written Reports

Students will be responsible for assigned readings for class meetings 2 through 9, but are also expected to have read all the chapter readings covered in class. On alternate days students will write a 1-2 page typed summary report on the selection, to be presented to the class and then handed in, or will respond orally to another student's report. To this end, the class will be broken into two groups (there is a total of four reports and four responses): Group One will present their reports on June 16, 19, 23, and 26; Group Two will present their reports on June 17, 21, 24, and 28. (Note: when one group is presenting their reports, the other group will present their responses, and then vice versa the next class.)

All reports are to be written in the following format:

- Introduction In the opening paragraph, students will identify their reading and its author, and describe the topic or issues addressed. Students should also clearly state the author's position on the issue/s, or the conclusion/s reached by the author.
- Summary Students will then briefly present the main points raised by the author, and must also clearly identify any reasons given that support the authors position on the issue at hand.
- Discussion Questions Students will then present three questions based upon or directed toward the reading, to be discussed as a group. Questions should reflect the concerns of this course; namely, the perspectives and concepts of religion, philosophy and sociology.

Reading Assignment Oral Responses

On alternate days, when not responsible for reporting on a reading selection, students will be assigned another reading selection and are to be prepared to respond orally to the report given to the class on this reading. Students will be expected to be familiar with the reading, and have prepared some notes to draw from before the class. The response is to be a critical assessment of the report, not a personal assessment of the reporter or the issue of the reading.

Responses are minimally to address the following topics:

- Were the topic and position correctly identified?
- Were all the main points represented? Were all the relevant justifications cited correctly?
- Is there anything to add? (This includes additional discussion questions.)

Summary Assessments

At the end of each class period, students will fill out a "summary assessment" form to both summarize the main ideas covered in class that day as well as to assess both the accomplishments of the class as a whole and of the individual him/herself. Students will have the opportunity to reflect upon our class discussions, both for their content as well as their form, and to offer criticisms of either.

Final Reading Report and Response

On the final day of class, each student will be assigned a reading selection taken from Chapter 5, "Is It Ever Right to Lie?", and will initially write a report in the same format as the others. But students will then **also** write a critical analysis of the article, assessing the strengths of the argument, identifying any weaknesses, and offering an alternative position. Students will be evaluated for how well they are able to integrate the material and methods of the course, as practiced in group discussions, and are able to present their ideas logically and coherently. In short, this is an evaluation of a student's critical thinking ability coupled with his or her capacity to draw upon the religious, philosophical, and sociological concepts covered in the course.