

FEI '00

PM

Introduction to Ethics

(PH 105-80)

Chaminade University of Honolulu
Fall Interim Semester, 2000
Instructor: Robert Buss (phone: 528-4067, home)

September 15-29, 2000
Accelerated Session
Camp Smith

"Introduction to Ethics" -- An examination of ethical values in general and the forums in which such discourse finds critical expression. The course will introduce students to the language of moral concepts and their relation to forms of social life and human conduct. It will also examine ethics in the history of ideas, particularly the Western philosophical tradition. What are the intellectual origins of looking at a particular ethical dilemma or problem? How do the conditions of the modern, urban, technological world affect how we consider ethical issues? How do classical philosophical, religious and cultural values affect our ethical judgments? The two most difficult tasks of this class will be to clarify our own thinking about moral issues and to demonstrate an ability to see alternative ways of considering such issues.

Course Objectives -- Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Gain an overview of moral philosophy or philosophical thinking about morality, moral problems and moral judgments.
2. Distinguish between using reason to lay out ethical arguments and using such non-philosophical methods as opinion, faith, authority and technological solutions.
3. Demonstrate an ability to provide a balanced review of alternative positions on ethical "hard cases."
4. Express through discussion and writing an understanding of contemporary moral dilemmas and issues.
5. Improve his or her own philosophical thinking skills.

Text: -- *ETHICS: The Big Questions* edited by James P. Sterba (1999)
-- There will also be occasional handouts and study aids.

Organization of Course and Basis for Grading

- **PHILOSOPHICAL POSITIONS IN ETHICS** -- A mid-term exam on the content of the readings for the first half of the class. (40% of grade)
- **PROBLEMS IN ETHICS Term Paper** -- Write a seven-ten page essay on a topic from one of the chapters in the second half of the text. Present the essay in class during one of the periods designated for such reports. (40% of grade)
- **CLASS PARTICIPATION AND IN-CLASS EXERCISES** -- Activities, writings and discussion in-class. Attendance and active class participation. (20% of grade)

GENERAL OUTLINE OF TOPICS

With Reading Assignments

<i>DATE</i>	<i>TOPICS</i>	<i>READING ASSIGNMENTS</i>
Class One	What is Morality? The Origins and Nature of Ethics Introduction to Philosophical Reasoning and Critical Thinking Morality and Religion, Morality and the Law (Responsibility) Handouts: "WRAITEC (The Good Thinker's Tool Kit)" and "Logical Argument and Writing Using the Toulmin Model"	Introduction handouts
Class Two	The Nature of Morality: What is Morality? Morality as Good, Emotive Theory, Ought and Is, Moral Beliefs	Part One (chapters 1-7)
Class Three	The Justification of Morality: Why Be Moral? Reason and Emotions, Rights, Moral Theory and Rationality	Part Two (chapters 8-13)
Class Four	Alternative Moral Perspectives: What Does Morality Require? Utility and Ethics: Utilitarianism, Consequentialism	Part Three (chapters 14-18)
Class Five	Alternative Moral Perspectives: What Does Morality Require? Duty and Ethics: Deontological Theories	Part Three (chapters 19-24)
Class Six	Alternative Moral Perspectives: What Does Morality Require? Virtue and Ethics: Virtue-Based Ethical Theories	Part Three (chapters 25-30)
Class Seven	Midterm Examination	
Class Eight	Challenges to Morality Feminism: How Is Gender Relevant to Morality?	Part Four (chapters 31-35)
Class Nine	Challenges to Morality Environmentalism: Who Is to Count in Morality?	Part Four (chapters 36-40)
Class Ten	Challenges to Morality Postmodernism: Morality From Whose Cultural Perspective?	Part Four (chapters 41-43)