

FE '02

CHAMINADE UNIVERSITY OF HONOLULU
RE/SO 338 Religion, Philosophy and Social Ethics
Instructor: Larry Jones
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Consultation by appointment and/or phone and/or e-mail

COURSE DESCRIPTION IN GENERAL CATALOG:

Designed to give students an interdisciplinary experience in the study of social ethics from the perspective of theology, religion and philosophy. Students will explore the theory and practice of social ethics and develop the knowledge and skills for philosophical and theological critique of ethical systems and social policy.

GOAL: With a view toward a deeper understanding, to be engaged both intellectually and existentially with some of the major ethical questions which confront modern society. As always, we will apply the educational philosophy of Marianist Universities: 1) educate for formation in faith, 2) provide an integral quality education, 3) educate for family spirit, 4) educate for service, justice and peace, and 5) educate for adaptation and change.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To objectively examine the following questions of social ethics: a) community responsibility, b) our criminal justice system, c) trust of the government, d) controversies created by modern medicine, e) business ethics, f) ethics and the military, g) the ethical dilemmas of civil litigation, h) the ethics of medical research, and i) the right to privacy vs. the right to know.
2. To relate to these issues the ideas and beliefs of some of the time honored thinkers of history, including the ancient Greeks, the Biblical writers, the writers on moral law, the utilitarians, and various contemporary theologians and philosophers.
3. To develop an awareness of and appreciation for the rich diversity of religious and philosophical theories, traditions and experiences as they relate to contemporary social ethics.
4. To hone our own interest in and ability to evaluate and make ethical decisions about public policy as well as personal choices.
5. To improve our abilities to read, think, discuss and write skillfully.
6. To actively participate in making this class both challenging and interesting.

REQUIREMENTS

1. An inquisitive yet open mind and a sense of humor.
2. Attendance at and active participation in all class sessions, including taking notes.
3. Completion of all reading assignments.
4. A one to two page reflection paper for each session on the assigned text readings.
5. A six to eight page term paper on a major ethical issue of social importance. Highlights to be shared with class on session #10.
6. Take home mid-term essay exam (due session #5) focusing on information covered in preceding class sessions and, final take home exam (due session #10).

READINGS: Text: *Ethics in America Source Reader*, edited by Lisa Newton
Various handouts

GRADING: 20% class attendance and participation
20% reflection papers (see next page for particulars)
20% term paper (see next page for particulars)
20% mid-term take home exam, due Session #5
20% final take home exam, due Session #10

A = 90 - 100%	C = 70 - 79%	F = 59% and below
B = 80 - 89%	D = 60 - 69%	I = Incomplete

The instructor reserves the right to make changes in the content of the course depending on the needs of the class.

TERM PAPER:

1. Based on an ethical social issue related to one of the session topics. If you would like to choose another topic, please consult with instructor.
2. Six to 8 pages of written material. May be up to 10 pages, but no shorter than 6.
3. Use at least five research sources, three of which may be from the Internet and one of which shall be an interview of a specialist.
4. Discuss the major differing points of view and conclude with your own.
5. Include the philosophical and religious dimensions of the issue written about.
6. Proposal for paper shall be shared briefly with the class on Session #6.
7. Use MLA or APA format, including cites and reference list, double space and use proper grammar and punctuation.
8. When you turn in your paper at the last class session, also please provide instructor with a self-addressed stamped envelope if you wish your paper returned to you.

**FORM FOR TERM PAPER
HEADING**

Term Paper

Name
Date turned in

Title of Paper

REFLECTION PAPERS ON TEXT READINGS

1. The purpose of your reflection paper is to show that you not only read the text material but that you reflected upon it and have attempted to focus on key questions you think the class should discuss.
2. The reflection papers are due at the class session dealing with those readings.
3. While doing the text readings you should jot down for your own reference ideas that impress you, things you disagree with, or questions you have.
4. After you have completed the text readings, write one to two pages of your reflections on the readings using your reading notes per #3 above.

**FORM FOR WEEKLY REFLECTION PAPER
HEADING**

Readings for Session No. _____

Name
Date turned in

STYLE

Typed
Double spaced

1" margins
Correct spelling, punctuation, grammar and sentence structure

MAKING UP ABSENCES: Excused absences, such as military duty, may be made up by consultation with the instructor. **SUCH CONSULTATION SHALL BE INITIATED BY THE STUDENT.** However, since you will not have had the benefit of classroom presentations and discussions when absent, you will need to spend some extra time mastering the reading materials and perhaps getting other students' notes.

PLAGIARISM: Plagiarism is the offering of work of another as one's own. Plagiarism is a serious offense and may include, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Complete or partial copying directly from a published or unpublished source (including the Internet) without proper acknowledgment to the author. Minor changes in wording or syntax are not sufficient to avoid charges of plagiarism. Proper acknowledgment of the source of a text is always mandatory.
2. Paraphrasing the work of another without proper author acknowledgment.
3. Submitting as one's own original work (however freely given or purchased) the original exam, research paper or manuscript, report, computer file, Internet information, or other assignment that has been prepared by another individual.

Session 1, October 11 Community Responsibility

Introductions and syllabus review

Presentation on the Golden Rule

Video: *Do Unto Others* A panel of experts discusses the question of community responsibility.

Discussion

Session 2, October 18 Justice and Murder

Readings: Text: pp. 2-17, Introduction, Thucydides, Plato
 Handouts: *Does Might Make Right?*, Time Magazine and Radio Free Europe

Outrage, but No Surprise, at Attack, L.A. Times

What is attorney client privilege?

Can client confidentiality be sacrificed? Amarillo Globe News, 6/11/98

Video: *To Defend a Killer* Ethical dilemmas of the criminal justice system are explored.

Session 3, October 25 Government Trust and Mistrust

Readings: Text: pp. 18-43, Plato cont.

 Handouts: *Code of Ethics*, U.S. Congress

Watergate Scandal, Encarta Encyclopedia

Bush-Lay Ties Based on Shared Priorities, Washington Post, 3/24/02

Restoring Public Trust in Government, Patricia McGinnis

Video: *Public Trust, Private Interests* Looks at trust within the government, between one public official and another, and between the government and the public.

Session 4, November 1 When Patient and Doctor Disagree

Readings: Text: pp. 43-63, Aristotle

 Handouts: *Refusal vs. pursuit of treatment*, Maura R.J. Burnell

Duty to patient vs. duty to society, Theresa A. Walls

Video: *Does Doctor Know Best?* Controversies created by modern medicine are discussed.

Session 5, November 8 Corporate Ethics

Take home midterm exam due

Readings: Text: pp. 65-90, Readings from the Bible

 Handouts: *System Failure*, Fortune, 6/24/02

Crime in the Suites, The Nation, 2/4/02

Energy Racketeers, American Family Voices

Twenty-six words to change the way corporations operate

Videos: *Pharmaceuticals and Profit*, ABC News with Peter Jennings

How Wall Street Really Works, PBS with Bill Moyers

Session 6, November 15 Ethics and the Military

Brief report to class on term paper proposal.

- Readings: Text: pp. 91-126, Readings on Aquinas, Locke and Jefferson required
Readings on Epectitus and Hobbs optional
Handouts: *The Port Chicago Disaster*, Contra Costa County Office of Education required
The Army Core Values required
Selected news stories about U.S. military in Okinawa optional
Video: *Under Orders, Under Fire*, The duty to follow orders and a commander's obligation to protect soldiers are discussed by top military personnel and news correspondents.

Session 7, November 22 Civil Suits and Civil Rights

- Readings: Text: pp. 126-154, Readings on Kant and M.L. King, Jr. required
Readings on Royce and Rawls optional
Handouts: *Does the Adversarial System Need Changing?* by Esther Lardent
Mediators help solve civil cases

Video: *Truth on Trial* The ethical dilemmas of civil litigation are the focus.

Session 8, November 29 Dilemmas in Medical Research

- Readings: Text: pp. 155-189, Epicurus, Bentham, Mill
Handouts: *Stem Cell Research and Applications: Monitoring the Frontiers of Biomedical Research*, American Association for the Advancement of Science
The Human Genome Diversity Project: Implications for Indigenous People, Debra Harry
Timid Bureaucrats Kill People, Reason Online

Video: *The Human Experiment* Whether or not humans should be used as test subjects in the medical research field is debated.

Session 9, December 6 Right to Privacy vs. Right to Know

- Readings: Text: 192-195, Epilogue
Handouts: *For personal reasons*, Timothy D. Smith
Confidentiality, Privacy, and the "Right to Know," Journal of the American Medical Association
The Media at War, Public Broadcasting System
Repeal the USA Patriot Act, Jennifer Van Bergen

Videos: *Politics, Privacy, and the Press* Panelists on both sides of the issue discuss what part of a public official's life should be exempt from public scrutiny.
The Media at War, PBS

Session 10, December 13 All Pau, Time Flies When You're Having Fun

Take home finals due

Term paper reports

Course evaluation