

Department of Philosophy & Religion

PHL-221 World Ethics

Course Credit: 3 Credits

Prerequisites: ENG-102

Instructor:

Phone:

Office:

E-mail:

Office Hours:

Required Texts:

- Gregory, Wanda T. and Giancola, Donna, eds. *World Ethics*. Belmont: Thomson Learning, 2003.
- Course Packet. Articles are from the following:

Esack, Ferid. *Qur'an, Liberation, and Pluralism*. Oxford: Oneworld Press, 1997 (reference in readings is "E")

Gouinlock, John, ed. *The Moral Writings of John Dewey*. New York: Prometheus Books, 1994 (reference in readings is "D")

Lott, Tommy, ed. *A Companion to African-American Philosophy*. Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 2006. (reference in readings is "L")

Madududi, Sayyid Abu'l A'la. *The Islamic Law and Constitution*. Lahore: Islamic Publications, 1960. (reference in readings is "M")

Singer, Peter. *A Companion to Ethics*. Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1993. (reference in readings is "S")

Wiredu, Kwasi, ed. *A Companion to African Philosophy*. Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 2006.

(reference in readings is "W").

Course Description:

This course will provide an account of selected ethical traditions from various cultures of the world, particularly traditions with a major following. For each tradition, consideration will be given to its distinctive character, approach to determining what is right and wrong, ultimate criterion of right action, and primary source of legitimacy for ethical claims.

Learner Objectives:

- Students will explain key concepts and principles of selected traditions of ethical thought from around the world through exams and the course paper.

- Students will state criteria for the approach of open dialogue among representatives of a variety of ethical traditions through group projects, discussions, and course papers.

Requirements:

- Four exams. Students will take four exams. The exams include both objective and essay questions on reading materials and issues. Students must take exams at the time when they are given. These exams will count as 60% of the student's grade.
- Course Paper. Students will write a 5-7 page paper examining how at least two traditions approach a given issue (such as the environment, sex, war, and poverty).
- Group Project. Students will research and debate an ethical issue from the standpoint of several selected ethical traditions.
- Classroom Conduct. (a) Students must read the assigned materials, take notes in class, and participate in class exercises and discussions. Participation includes attentive listening. (b) Cell phones must be turned off, hats removed, sleeping during class avoided, and distractions, such as engaging in private conversations during class, avoided.
- Attendance. Three late arrivals equal an absence and students may be graded down or failed for missing more than three classes. Three instances of tardiness (more than five minutes late) may be recorded as an absence. It is assumed that students who miss class also miss valuable learning experiences, and even if the excuse for absences is valid, excessive absences may result in a lower grade.
- Academic Integrity. The instructor follows the University Policy for Academic Integrity. The statement of that policy is attached.

Special Circumstances:

- Missed exams. (a) For missed exams students must provide a valid written excuse. A valid excuse includes medical emergency, family emergency, job interview, obligations on a sports team, and similar extenuating circumstances. (b) The instructor will give a make-up exam (usually an essay exam) for students with valid excuses. Students who fail to provide a valid excuse or who do not make up a missed exam in a timely manner will receive a failing grade for the exam.
- Late papers. Students must turn essays in when they are due. Late papers will be graded down one letter grade per week from when they are due.

Grading:

| <u>Weights and Percentages</u> | <u>Final</u> |
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| Exam # 1 | 15% |
| Mid-Term Exam | 20% |
| Exam # 3 | 15% |

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| Final Exam | 20% |
| Course paper | 15% |
| Group project | 15% |

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| 93-100 = A | 83-86 = B | 73-76 = C | |
| 90-92 = A- | 80-82 = B- | 70-72 = C- | |
| 87-89 = B+ | 77-79 = C+ | 60-69 = D | 59 > = F |

15 Week Schedule:

| Date | |
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| 1st Week | <p><u>Ancient Ethics</u> Gerald Larue “Ancient Ethics” pp. 29-40 (S) D.A. Maslo, “African Philosophers in the Greco-Roman Era,” (L)</p> <p><u>Ancient Greek Tradition</u> Socrates (470-399 BC) Euthyphro, pp. 3-11 Plato (428-327 BC) Republic, pp. 12-26 Aristotle (384-322 BC) Nicomachean Ethics, pp. 27-35</p> |
| 2nd Week | <p><u>Hindu Tradition</u> Purusottama Bilimoria, “Indian Ethics,” pp. 43-57 (S) Bhagavad Gita (6th Century BC), pp. 174-180 Mohandas Gandhi (1869-1948) ...On Non-Violence, pp. 220-224</p> <p><u>Buddhist Tradition</u> Padmasiri De Silva, “Buddhist Ethics,” pp. 58-67 (S)</p> |
| 3rd Week | <p>Buddha (563-483 BC), The First Sermon and Synopsis of Truth, pp. 181-186 Dhammadpada (3rd Century BC), pp. 204-208 Santideva (685-763), Bodhicaryavatara, pp. 209-212 Thich Nhat Hanh (1926 -) The Sun in My Heart, pp. 226-230 Exam</p> |
| 4th Week | <p><u>Classical Chinese Tradition</u> Chad Hansen, “Classical Chinese Ethics,” pp. 69-81 (S) Lao Tzu (7th Century BC) , Tao Teh Ching, pp. 167-173. Confucius (551-479 B.C.), Selections from the <u>Analects</u>, pp. 187-191 Mencius (371-289 BC), The Book of Mencius, pp. 192-196 Hsun Tzu (310-210 BC) , The Nature of Man is Evil, pp. 197-202</p> |
| 5th Week | <p><u>Jewish Tradition</u> Menachem Kellner, “Jewish Ethics,” pp. 82-90 (S) Moses Mainmonides (1135-1204) “The Guide of the Perplexed,” pp. 52-58 Martin Buber, (1878-1965)</p> |

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| 6th Week | <u>Christian Tradition</u> Ronald Preston, "Christian Ethics," 91-105 (S) Augustine (354-430), Selections from City of God, pp. 45-51 Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), Selections from Summa Theologica, pp.59-67 Soren Kierkegaard (1813-1855), Selections from Either/Or & Fear and Trembling, pp. 96-103 |
| 7th Week | <u>Islamic Tradition</u> Asim Nanji, "Islamic Ethics," pp. 106-118 (S) Majid Khadduri, Selections from The Islamic Conception of Justice, pp.106-134. Al-Ghazali (1508-1111), The Ways of Myticism, pp. 213-219 Abul'l A'LA Maududi, "The Political Theory of Islam," (M) Farid Esack, Selections from Quran, Liberation, and Pluralism, pp. 179-206 (E) |
| 8th Week | <u>European Tradition</u> Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) Selections from Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals, pp. 80-86 John Stuart Mill (1806-1873), Selections from "What Utilitarianism Is," pp. 77-86 Exam |
| 9th Week | <u>African Tradition</u> Theophile Obenga, "Egypt: The Ancient History of African Philosophy,"(A) Souleymane Bachir, "Pre-Colonial African Philosophy in Arabic," (A) Kwame Nkrumah (1909-1972), Consciencism, pp. 233-236 Leopold Sedar Senghor (1906-2001), Negritude: A Humanism of the Twentieth Century, pp. 238-240 Paul Mbuya Akoko (1891-1981), Sage Philosophy, pp. 242-244 Oruka Rang'inya (1900-1979), Sage Philosophy, pp. 245-248 |
| 10th Week | <u>African American Tradition</u> W.E.B. Du Bois (1868-1963), The Development of a People, pp. 248-253 Martin Luther King Jr., Letter from a Birmingham Jail, pp. 256-259 Malcolm X (1925-1965), The Black Revolution, pp. 262-264 Angela Davis (1944-), "Radical Perspectives on the Empowerment of African American Women..." pp. 266-269 Cornel West (1953-), "Pitfalls of Racial Reasoning," pp. 271-273 Cornel West, "Philosophy and the Afro-American Experience," (AA) |
| 11th Week | <u>The Latin American and Carribbean Tradition</u> |

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| | <p>Aime Cesaire (1913-), Discourse on Colonialism, pp. 274-277 Frantz Fanon, (1925-1961) Racism and Culture, pp. 278-283 Paulo Freire, (1921-), Pedagogy of the Oppressed, pp. 286-288 Enrique Dussel (1935-), Prevailing Social Morality: The Babylon Principle, pp. 290-293 Paget Henry, “African-American Philosophy: A Caribbean Perspective,”(AA)</p> <p>Native American Tradition</p> <p>Black Elk (1863-1950), pp. 294-298 Exam</p> |
| 12th Week | <p><u>American Tradition</u> John Dewey, “Morality is Social,” pp. 181-192 (D) John Rawls (1921-2002), Selections from A Theory of Justice, pp. 148-154 Alasdair McIntyre Selections from “The Virtues, The Unity of Human Life and the Concept of a Tradition,” pp. 161-166</p> |
| 13th Week | <p><u>Marxism and Communism</u> Karl Marx, Selections from Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts, pp.106-111 Allen Wood, “Marx against Morality,” pp. 511-524 (S)</p> |
| 14th Week | <p><u>Existentialism</u> Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), “What is Noble?” pp. 115-119</p> <p>Jean-Paul Sartre, Selections from Existentialism and Human Emotions, pp. 142-147 Lewis Gordon, “African American Existential Philosophy,” (AA)</p> <p><u>Feminism</u> Simone de Beauvoir (1908-1986), Selections from the Second Sex, pp. 301-308 Carol Gilligan, Selections from “In a Different Voice” pp. 310-317 bell hooks, “Feminism: A Transformational Politic,” pp. 350-355</p> |
| 15th Week | Student Presentations on Group Projects |
| 16th Week | Final Exam |