



Course Syllabus – May Term 2009

Course Number and Title: S LD 1300 Ethics

Instructor Information

Name: Rachael Bein

Contact Information:

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Office Hours:

- Monday through Thursday 8-9 a.m.
- By appointment

Course Overview

Catalog Description: The course provides an introduction to ethical theories (deontological, teleological, virtue ethics, etc.), moral decision-making, and key contemporary moral issues. Particular attention is given to practical application in moral reasoning and to the development of sensitivity to ethical issues of contemporary society, focusing on rights and duties of individuals and groups and the nature of legitimate needs and values. This course may be used to fulfill McMurry University's general education requirement for Leadership, Excellence, and Virtue.

Course Overview: The purpose of the course is to assist students to develop abilities to participate in ethical reasoning, dialogue, and decision-making processes in ways that will benefit them and society. The goal of the course is that students will become thoroughly acquainted with the major ethical concepts, methods and problems of contemporary society and by exposure to a variety of imaginative and factual sources--including case studies, stories, and/or films--become proficient in identifying moral problems and principles relevant to their understanding and resolution. Please note: **Ethics is not a spectator sport!** You will not enjoy or benefit from this course unless you engage and test the various ideas and issues we will encounter, and attempt to articulate for yourself what is at stake in human moral activity and the practice of ethics. The goal of this course is not to attempt to convince you of the "truth" of any particular point of view or the "solution" to any moral problem. It is your task in this course to examine and explore the various points of view, and to understand the moral issues we will discuss.

Pre-requisites: None

Course Objectives/Student Learning Outcomes:

Objective: Identify actions and aspects of character that have set leaders apart from others in certain historical, cultural, and/or practical contexts.

Outcome: Students will demonstrate understanding of the connection between competent leadership and clear moral reasoning.

Objective: Demonstrate the ability to evaluate what actions and aspects of character are required of a leader in various contexts.

Outcome: Students will demonstrate understanding of the effect of decisions and behaviors on a leader's credibility.

Objective: Identify actions and aspects of character that have set virtuous people apart from others in certain historical, cultural, and/or practical contexts.

Outcome: Students will be able to distinguish between the locus of virtue ethics vis-à-vis loci of other modes of moral reasoning.

Objective: Demonstrate the ability to evaluate behavior required of the virtuous individual in various contexts.

Outcome: Students will demonstrate the ability to use a systematic process for making/analyzing moral decisions.

Course Materials and Resources:

Required Course Materials:

Textbook: The Right Thing to Do: Basic Readings in Moral Philosophy, 4th ed. by James Rachels

AEC and Other Educational Support Resources:

- Writing tutoring is available in the AEC
- Individual assistance with the instructor is available by appointment

Course Policies:

Attendance: There are only 14 scheduled class meetings this semester and you **must** attend class to meet course goals. **Each absence will result in a reduction of 1 point off the final average. If a student has 2 unexcused absences, he or she may be administratively dropped from the course. Any student who misses class is responsible for finding out what was covered in class.** Make-up work and assignments will be accepted **only** when class is missed due to a death in the family, a documented illness (nurse or doctor's note), or a school event approved by the Vice President for Academic Affairs office **and I am notified before class.** All other absences are considered unexcused.

Grade Determination:

Attendance and Participation (14 classes)	15%
Classwork (quizzes, exercises, news articles..)	15%
Moral analysis paper or case study	15%
Exams (2-worth 20% each)	40%
Group Presentation (moral analysis of a film)	15%
	100%

+/- Grade System:

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72, etc...

Make-up Work: Make-up exams will only be given for **excused** absences and it is your responsibility to schedule a time **within two days** of the exam date. There are no make-ups for quizzes.

Cell Phones: Cell phones and other electronic devices must be turned off and out of sight during class. Violation of this policy may result in a pop quiz for the entire class.

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating and Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Failure to do your own work will result in a zero on the particular exam or assignment in question.

Special Needs: McMurry University abides by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which stipulates that no otherwise qualified student shall be denied the benefits of an education "solely by reason of a handicap". If you have a documented disability that may impact your performance in this class and for which you may be requesting accommodation, you must be registered with and provide documentation of your disability to the Disability Services Office, located in Old Main Room 102. Arrangements will be made for students needing special accommodations.

Major Projects, Required Activities, and Assignments:

- Exams (40%) Two exams will be given during the course of the semester. Each exam will be part objective (e.g., multiple choice, matching, T/F), part short answer, and part essay. They might also include the analysis of a case study. Make-up exams will be available for excused absences only and will probably be all essay. There will be a study guide for each exam.
Exam 1 Chapters 1-5 and all additional notes and readings covered
Exam 2 Chapters 6-9 and all additional notes and readings covered
- Group Presentation (15%) This will be a small group ethical analysis of a film. It will demonstrate an understanding and application of **all** that is discussed in the course.
- Moral Analysis Paper (15%) Students will be given a case study along with several possible options to resolve the major ethical dilemma. They will discuss the empirical situation, the agents and participants, apply appropriate ethical principles, and then choose and defend options from the quantitative utilitarian viewpoint, the qualitative utilitarian viewpoint, the natural law viewpoint, formalist viewpoint, and finally their own.

SYLLABUS	ETHICS Tentative Course Schedule	MAY TERM 2009
Week One		
Monday	Concepts of Servant Leadership Actions and aspects of character exhibited by leaders	
Tuesday	Read Chapters 1 and 2 Complete Response Sheet Be prepared to report on Moral Theories (who, what, etc...)	
Wednesday	Brief introduction to the course Discuss the difference between morality and ethics Practical Ethics Who needs ethics? Why think for yourself? Individual Reports on Moral Theories Discuss different types of values Values Exercise Group exercise: Jurassic Park Reading Chapter 2 – Some Basic Points about Arguments Group exercise: Arguments For/Against Cheating	
Thursday	Three Levels of Ethical Analysis Quiz Chapter 3 pp. 38-40 – Cultural Relativism Chapter 4 – The Virtues Chapter 5 – Ethics and the Natural Law Howard's Health (Genetics and Natural Law) exercise Hand out Review for Exam #1	
Friday	Exam #1	
Week 2		
Monday	Chapter 6 – The Social Contract Chapter 7 – Morality as Based on Sentiment Chapter 8 - Utilitarianism	
Tuesday	Chapter 9 – The Categorical Imperative (Kantian Formalism) Divine Command Ethics How are virtuous persons different set apart?	
Wednesday	Quiz Elements of Moral Analysis Case Study – Fanny Grimes Assign Paper #1 (Moral Analysis of Case Study)	
Thursday	Comprehensive/Responsibilist Ethics Group Moral Analysis of Case Study Personal and Social Ethics, Integrity, Pluralism Determine film for final project Review for Exam #2	
Friday	Exam #2 View Film	
Week 3		
Monday	Memorial Day Holiday	
Tuesday	Paper Due Current events – news articles Baby Boy Hernandez Case Group time - Outline Due, Media Requests Due	
Wednesday	Chapter 17 – The Morality of Euthanasia Chapter 18 – Assisted Suicide: Pro-Choice or Anti-Life? Witnessing to Life Case Group time	
Thursday	Ethical Decision Making Dialysis Case Group time	
Friday	Group Presentations	

The class schedule is subject to change at any time. You will be notified during class of any changes.

**Course Objectives/Student Learning Outcomes
and their Linkage to
Program and University Goals and Outcomes.**

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General Education Curricular Goals and Standards	Desired Student Learning Outcomes for this course	Linked to which Gen. Ed. goal(s)?	Types of evidence that will be used to demonstrate student achievement of objectives & goals
Identify actions and aspects of character that have set leaders apart from others in certain historical, cultural, and/or practical contexts.	Students will demonstrate an understanding of the connection between competent leadership and clear moral reasoning.	3,4,5	Students who complete the course are expected to attain an average of 73% on embedded exam questions and/or written assignments related to this standard.
Demonstrate the ability to evaluate what actions and aspects of character are required of a leader in various contexts.	Students will demonstrate understanding of the effect of decisions and behaviors on a leader's credibility.	3,4,5	Students who complete the course are expected to attain an average of 73% on embedded exam questions and/or written assignments related to this standard.
Identify actions and aspects of character that have set virtuous people apart from others in certain historical, cultural, and/or practical contexts.	Students will be able to distinguish between the locus of virtue ethics vis-à-vis loci of other modes of moral reasoning.	1,3,4,5	Students who complete the course are expected to attain an average of 73% on embedded exam questions and/or written assignments related to this standard.
Demonstrate the ability to evaluate behavior required of the virtuous individual in various contexts.	Students will demonstrate the ability to use a systematic process for making/analyzing moral decisions.	3,4,5	Students who complete the course are expected to attain an average of 73% on embedded exam questions and/or written assignments related to this standard.