

SYLLABUS

PHIL 1133-01 – Fundamentals of Ethics

Spring Semester, 2008

- **INSTRUCTOR - David M Turner**
- **TIMES AND ROOM: 8:30 a.m. – 9:50 a.m. T,R at GC-103**
- **PHONE: (501) 767-8581 (email is preferred but call for emergencies between 6:30 a.m. and 10:00 p.m.)**
- **E-MAIL: dturner@npcc.edu**
- **Website: <http://res.npcc.edu/dturner> (this syllabus and all class handouts will be provided at this site).**

PREREQUISITES – None, Introduction to Philosophy (1123) suggested.

REQUIRED TEXT:

MacKinnon, Barbara. Ethic: Theory and Contemporary Issues, Fifth Edition, Wadsworth/Thompson, 2007. ISBN: 0-495-00716-1
Ruggeiro, Vincent. Thinking Critically About Ethical Issues, Sixth Edition, McGraw-Hill. ISBN: 07-283188-X

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This is an introductory course in the field of ethics. As an introductory course, the student will, through lectures, assigned reading, written and group exercises, examinations, group projects, journaling and research gain a comprehensive understanding of the formative moral and ethical theories that have served to shape and influence contemporary culture and morality and to help the student form personal guidelines for making wise moral choices.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. Introduce students to philosophers, theologians, and moralists who have helped shape classical and contemporary ethical thought
2. Familiarize students with selected normative ethical and moral theories
3. Strengthen students' ability to think critically about ethical issues and personal ethical choices

COURSE GOALS:

1. Students will be able to understand, analyze and evaluate the philosophical arguments presented.
2. Students will begin the process of developing and communicating their personal ethical, philosophical beliefs.
3. Students will learn to respectfully interact with a diversity of ethical theories and traditions and contemporary issues.

GENERAL EDUCATION OUTCOMES:

Students enrolling in a college need to prepare themselves to be well-informed and responsible citizens for a complex and culturally diverse world. It is the intent of NPCC to provide general education that will enhance common knowledge, intellectual concepts, and attitudes that every educated person should possess regardless of their career paths. The College will ensure that the General Education offered is consistent with its mission and designed to ensure breath of knowledge and to promote intellectual inquiry. The College also recognizes the importance of General Education related studies as integral component of technical education.

The College will strive through General Education to lead the student to:

- Write and speak clearly, concisely, and coherently.
- Reason and think logically and clearly (and critically).
- Understand world culture, past and present.

METHOD OF INSTRUCTION:

I will attempt to use a variety of pedagogical methods dependent upon the nature of the topic studied. However, because of the nature of philosophy, expect the class to rely predominately on short lectures with extended class discussions. Lectures and discussions will be based in the theoretical and practical arguments presented in the text and teacher handouts. It is imperative that students complete all the assigned readings **BEFORE** the day that they are discussed. The nature of philosophy is to bring into the open volatile issues. Students will be expected to demonstrate respect and courtesy to other's views without making personal or derogatory comments. With the exception of the Journal all written work, must be typed, double-spaced, and without spelling or grammar errors.

AVAILABILITY OF INSTRUCTOR:

Feel free to openly discuss with me any concerns you may have. As an adjunct I'm seldom on campus except for classes or by appointment. To discuss your needs or to make an appointment call me at 767-8581 (after 6:30 a.m. or before 10:00 p.m.), or e-mail me at dturner@npcc.edu.

GRADES:

Grades will be determined on the basis of the following point scheme:

Ethics Journal	20%
Exams (Two from Ethical Theory, two from Ethical Issues)	40%
Ethical Paper (same topic as Group presentation)	20%
Group Presentation (same topic as Ethical paper)	10%
<u>Class Attendance and participation</u>	<u>10%</u>
Total:	100%

Grades will be based on the percentage of points received. Grades can be challenged *in a written argument* (no e-mail) within 1 class day of when returned, but there are no guarantees that challenged grades will improve.

GRADE SCALE A: ≥ 90% B: 80%-89.9% C: 70%-79.9% D: 60%-69.9% F: ≤ 59.9%

All work is due on the day assigned. Term papers will be due on the day of Group presentation.

ATTENDANCE/TARDY POLICY:

Attendance is mandatory. 10% of the total grade is based on class attendance and participation. It is expected that each student participate in class discussions, and to ask questions. Each student will be permitted two absences without a deduction. Each additional unexcused absence will result in a deduction of 3% from the total participatory grade. If absences are excessive additional points above the 10% may, at the instructor’s discretion, be deducted. Only medical and family related (illness, sick children, death in family, etc.) will be accepted as excused and should be communicated through email or in written form. Please get to class on time. Do not enter class in the middle of a lecture or during a student/group presentation. If you are late, do not enter into a teacher/student discussion or ask questions that may have already been discussed in class. Obtain notes from a student that was on time. Excessive tardiness will be considered absences.

COURSE WORK:

Ethics Journal (20%): Each student will develop a Journal during the Semester. The Journal should consist of two parts and an extra credit section (optional).

Part One: At the end of each chapter of Thinking Critically About Ethical Issues, Ruggiero gives at least a dozen Ethical Inquiries. You are to select three from each chapter (as we are studying that chapter) and discuss your response. I will be looking for the following: Identify the relevant facts (and if there are enough given); explain the ethical dilemma for each party involved in the dilemma; explain the ethical system most relevant to the dilemma (Kant, Utilitarian, etc); list several possible solutions and the consequences of these solutions; choose and explain what you think is the best solution, given the available facts. At the end of each Chapter in Ethics: Theory and Contemporary Issues, MacKinnon has presented several Review Exercises. Look in the outline section of this syllabus to see which one/ones have been selected for your response. Place the Chapter number at the top of each page.

Part Two: Write about ethical issues of interest as they are discussed in class and/or ethical issue that come up in daily life situations. Explain the process of identifying, confronting and resolving these issues. At least 20 pages will be expected in this section. Because of the personal nature of this section the Instructor will glance over it to see that it is done. He will not read it. Place the Date at the top of each page. The journal will be graded at the end of the semester, so don’t procrastinate on it.

Extra Credit (up to 5%): A minimum of 10 hours of volunteer work in a community project (Special Olympics, Habitat for Humanity, Red Cross, Senior Olympics, Salvation Army, Church Food Closet, others [get approval from instructor]). Keep records of hours worked, name of supervisor/s and your experience, in a separate section of the Student Journal.

Exams (40%): There will be two take-home exams. We will discuss the nature of the exams in class. The first exam (15%) will be on Ethical Theory (Chapters 1-7 and class lectures) and the second exam (15%) will cover Ethical Issues (Chapter 8-19 and discussed in class). The Final will be optional and can be taken to replace one of the first two exams.

Ethical Paper (20%): Each student will write an Ethical Paper that supplements his/her Group Presentation. This is an individual paper, not a group paper. It should be at least five pages long and demonstrate to the instructor and the class that the student has done adequate research. Student should attempt to present a work that he/she would not be ashamed to have published or hand out in class. You will choose a topic within the first three weeks of class. Gather resources on all sides of the issue. Attempt to study without bias as you do your research. After you have studied the issue enough to formulate a position, you will hand in a Thesis statement that declares your position and what you will argue. Do not plagiarize. See the appendix of your text and/or my website on recommendations for writing an ethics paper.

Group Presentation (10%): The second half of the semester will focus on Ethical Issues. Students in groups of three will select a Chapter from Part Two of Ethics: Theory and Contemporary Issues, choose an issue relevant to that Chapter corresponding to your Ethics paper, and work as a team to creatively communicate the issue. Students need to demonstrate knowledge of, and take a position on the issue/topic (be able to answer questions by teacher and class regarding how the issue would be approached from each Meta-ethical system). The students in the group do not have to be united on the issue. They may use debate, lecture, power-point, drama, quest lecturer (get permission from Instructor) or any pedagogical method that will best communicate their topic. All Presentation will be thirty to forty minutes and followed by an answer and question session from the class and instructor. When using debate, each student will have three minutes to communicate his/her position and then two minutes to counter each other's view. See the instructor for format if it is decided to use this method. **DO NOT READ YOUR PAPER TO US.** Make this presentation interesting.

Final Exam: The final exam will be comprehensive of the entire semester. It will be optional and will replace a previous low test grade.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Do not plagiarize. Your work should be your work. Give credit to those who deserve it. Become familiar with page 42 of the NPCC 2003-05 Catalog on Academic Honesty.

FOR STUDENTS WITH SPEACIAL NEEDS AND/OR DISBILITIES

It is my policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, accommodations to those who have disabilities, or special needs (caring for elderly parents or having children are examples) that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities or special needs are encouraged to contact me during the first week of classes if they think such disabilities or needs could interfere with their coursework. The following is may be revised at the Instructor's discretion.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Date	Class Topic	Readings (should be read before class)	Journal Assignments	Assignments due and Tests
1/15 T	Class Introduction	none	none	None
1/17 R	Moral Reasoning	Mac: Ch. 1	Questions 1,3	
1/22 T	Need for Ethics	Rug: Ch. 1	Choose three	
1/24 R	Role of Majority View & Role of Feelings	Rug: Ch. 2, 3	Choose three	Area of study for paper
1/29 T	Role of Conscience	Rug: Ch. 4	Choose three	
1/31 R	Comparing Cultures	Rug: Ch. 5	Choose three	
2/5 T	Foundations of Judgment	Rug: Ch. 6	Choose three	
2/7 R	Basic Criteria, some guidelines	Rug: Ch. 7	Choose three	List of at least six references (both sides) for Ethics paper
2/12 T	Considering Obligations	Rug: Ch. 8	Choose three	
2/14 R	Ethics & Religion: Introduction and Overview	Mac: p.4-5, 12-16; Rug: p.7-8	Mac: p.16 Question 2.	Test (beginning of Class) Responses to several of the Inquiries in Ch. 1-8 of Ruggiero, chosen by teacher. Essay.
2/19 T	Ethics & Religion: Theistic Ethics	Class notes	Make comments regarding class discussions	Thesis for Ethics paper
2/21 R	Ethics & Religion: Eastern Religions and Secular Humanism	Class notes	Make comments regarding class discussions	
2/26 T	Intro to Meta-Ethics & Relativism	Mac: Ch. 2	Questions 2, 6	Test (beginning of class) on Ethics and Religion.
2/28 R	Meta-ethics: Egoism	Mac: Ch. 3	Questions 1, 8	
3/04 T	Meta-ethics: Natural Law Ethics	Mac: Ch. 6	Questions 2, 6	
3/06 R	Meta-ethics: Utilitarianism	Mac: Ch. 4	Questions 1, 4	

3/11 T	Considering Consequences	Rug: Ch. 9	Choose three	
3/13 R	Deontological Ethics & Kant	Mac: Ch. 5	Questions 1, 4	
3/18 T	Kant (cont) and Determining Moral Responsibility	Rug: Ch. 11	Choose three	
3/20 R	Virtue Ethics/Moral Ideals	Mac: Ch. 7 Rug: Ch. 9	Rug: Choose three from Ch. 9	Term Paper Due
3/24-28	Spring Break			
4/1 T	Presentation: Euthanasia			Test (beginning of class) Meta-ethics.
4/3 R	Presentation: Abortion			
4/8 T	Sexual Morality			
4/10 R	Discrimination			
4/15 T	Economic/Distributive Justice			
4/17 R	Legal Punishment			
4/22 T	Environmental Ethics			
4/24 R	Genetic Engineering, etc.			
4/29 T	Violence, Terrorism, War			
5/1 R				Grade Journals Test: On material covered in presentations.