**PHIL 2310: THEORY OF ETHICS**

MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY

PHIL 2310-114 Spring 2018, Tues & Thurs 8:00a-9:15a at Cudahy 108

PHIL 2310-118 Spring 2018, Tues & Thurs 2:00p-3:15p at Cudahy 128

PROFESSOR: Mr. Brett Yardley OFFICE HOURS: T/TR at i) 9:15-10:15a in 449 Marquette Hall

EMAIL: [brett.yardley@marquette.edu](mailto:brett.yardley@marquette.edu) at ii) 3:15p-3:45p on Cudahy main floor, or iii) by appointment.

1. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Theory of Ethics is an investigation into the moral dimension of human life. Among the topics to be considered are the norms of morality and the general process of moral decision-making. Traditional natural law will be one of the points among ethical relativism, Mill’s utilitarianism, Kant’s deontology, and Aristotle’s Virtue Ethics, along with a significant alternative to traditional Western ethics, such as a non-Western or feminist work in ethics, as it relates to Western ethics. (Fulfills a UCCS and Arts & Sciences College Curriculum requirement for Human Nature and Ethics; and fulfills a requirement for the Philosophy major and minor.)

1. TEXTS
   1. **Required Textbooks:**

1) “DE” - Waluchow, Wilfrid J. *The Dimensions of Ethics: An Introduction to Ethical Theory*. Peterborough, Ont: Broadview Press, 2003. ISBN – 1-55111-450-X

2) “ET” - Geirsson, Heimir, and Margaret R. Holmgren. *Ethical Theory: A Concise Anthology*. Peterborough, Ont: Broadview Press, 2010. ISBN - 978-1-55481-015-4

* 1. **Other Required Readings:**

(ARES) Additional required readings in the form of URLs or PDFs as listed in the reading schedule will be made available via ARES reserves system located at <http://www.marquette.edu/library/> >> “Your Accounts” >> “Logon to ARES” OR <https://marquette.ares.atlas-sys.com/ares/ares.dll>. Use your MarqNet logon and password. Select and unlock the course using the password: “Plato”

1. KNOWLEDGE AREA OUTCOMES:

Phil 2310 is one of the two courses in the Human Nature and Ethics knowledge area. The Learning Outcomes of this knowledge area are the following: At the completion of core studies the student will be able to:

* + - 1. Assess views of human nature in various philosophical traditions, including classic Greek and Catholic philosophical traditions.
      2. Argue for one of the major ethical theories over another in terms of philosophical cogency and practical outcome.
      3. Use philosophical reasoning to develop the student’s own position on central issues in human nature and ethics, for example, the relation between mind and body, the problem of freedom and determinism, the spiritual and affective dimensions of human life, the extent of human knowledge, the justification of moral judgments, and the elucidation of moral norms.

1. COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course,

1. The students will be able to state and provide reasons for the basic positions of the major philosophical theories of Western ethics, including virtue theory, natural law theory, deontology, and consequentialism/utilitarianism.

2. The student will be able to state and provide reasons for principle objections to major Western ethical theories, including ethical egoism and various forms of moral relativism.

3. The student will be able to discuss a significant alternative to traditional Western ethics as it relates to Western ethics.

4. The student will be able to compare and contrast positions of the ethical theories studied in the course.

5. The student will be able to take and defend a position in ethics that addresses significant objections to the position.

**Objectives #1, 2, 3, and 4 will be assessed in four ways:** **as assessed through reading quizzes, class discussion, exams, and “If-Then” reflection essays.**

**Objective #5 will be assessed via essay questions on exams and two argued position papers.**

RELATION BETWEEN COURSE OBJECTIVES AND AREA OUTCOMES

1. Although the five learning objectives of the course are closely interconnected, numbers 4 and 5 above will mostly satisfy the second outcome. By reflecting on how ethics has been conceived and comparing different views, students will be able to argue for one of the major ethical theories over another.
2. In numbers 1 to 3 above students analyze and criticize the basic components of ethical theories and this will satisfy the third outcome: to use philosophical reasoning to develop the student’s own position on central issues in ethics.
3. Knowledge Area Outcome 1 does not apply to this course.
4. GRADING
   1. **Course Grading Scale: Points**

A = 93-100% 509-550  
AB = 88-92% 481-508  
B = 83-87% 454-481  
BC = 78-82% 426-453

**Course Grading Scale: Points**

C = 73-77% 399-425  
CD = 68-72% 371-398  
D = 60-67% 327-371  
F = 0-59% 0-326

* 1. **Composition of Course & Final Grade**
     1. Weekly Reading Questions [13 quizzes -3 lowest grades dropped] x 6 possible points = 60

Participation [4 points] x 15 weeks (capped at 50pts) = 50

If, Thens… [6 responses] x 15 possible points = 90

Cogitations [2 Essays] x 75 possible points = 150

Midterm & Final Exams [2 Exams] x 100 possible points = 200

TOTAL possible points 550

* + 1. On the Edge: If a student falls somewhere in-between grades, I round up at the half point mark (i.e., 82.49% = 82% & 82.50% = 83%). Positive participation will assist in this regard as well.
    2. Late Work: No late work is accepted. See me as soon as possible if a problem arises.
    3. **Disabilities: Students with disabilities should come see me as soon as possible. I will make accommodations as needed and work with you in any way necessary as long as it complies with university, college and department policy. Please consult the Office of Disability Services:** [**http://www.marquette.edu/disability-services/**](http://www.marquette.edu/disability-services/) **or (414)288-1645 located at 707 N. 11th Street. Room 503**
  1. **Class Preparation, Attendance, Punctuality and Participation**
     1. Reading Quizzes:A fully prepared and engaged mind is essential (*prior* to class time) to wrestling with philosophical ideas and questions. AT THE BEGINNING OF ONE RANDOM CLASS PER WEEK I will provide a quiz of 3 questions (worth 2 points each for a total of 6 points) about the readings. Quizzes consist of multiple choice, T/F, short answer and may cover any of the assigned readings.
     2. Attendance: If you miss six (6) or more classes for any reason (except medical or university approved exemption) you may be withdrawn from the course by the college office and assigned a grade or WA (withdrawn-excessive absences).
     3. Punctuality: Arriving late to class is a distraction. If you arrive after class has begun, you may lose one (1) participation point for the day.
     4. Participation: Discussion is essential to a successful course, so I expect class involvement from everyone. Remaining silent effectively robs the class of your brilliant insights (after reading your papers I know you have them!). Class involvement includes: a) asking for clarification, b) asking relevant questions, c) answering questions, d) offering your perspective or thoughts, and e) D2L discussion postings if/when made available. Final grading will be on range of 0-2, where 0 = never participated and 2 = regularly participated. The total score for participation is 50 points.
     5. Distractions: Keep in mind that disruptive behavior will have a negative impact on your grade. If I observe any such behavior, your participation grade for the week may be dropped by 1-2 points (not to exceed 0) based on the level of interruption for each instance of disruption.
     6. Technology: Contrary to popular trends, recent studies have demonstrated that technology does not facilitate learning and only engenders distraction(s). Therefore, unless you are pre-approved due to a legitimate reason, the use of electronic devices such as laptops, **phones**, tablets, or other device **will be considered as a distraction** which may result in loss of one (1) participation point. Please see me if you feel this will be a problem. Neither audio nor video recordings are allowed.
     7. “Life Happens”: I understand you have a life outside the classroom which includes events of greater importance or you simply have a “bad day”. Thus, your three (3) lowest reading quiz grades will be dropped. A surplus of participation points is also built into the course. In other words, you may miss up to three quizzes and a day here-and-there without penalty (i.e., I do not need written excuses, doctor’s notes, etc. for missed classes). If you anticipate that you will have trouble with attendance or will miss more than one week of class (cumulatively) please come see me.
     8. Extra Credit: Extra credit is not guaranteed, but may be made available during the semester. Extra Credit assignments typically include participating in a designated experimental research project or attending a designated campus event and writing a short summary.
  2. **Reading Quizzes**

A fully prepared and engaged mind is essential (*prior* to class time) to wrestling with philosophical ideas and questions. Therefore, AT THE BEGINNING OF ONE RANDOM CLASS PER WEEK I will provide a quiz of 3 questions (worth 2 points each for a total of 6 points) about the readings. Quizzes consist of multiple choice, T/F, short answer and may cover any of the assigned readings.

* 1. **If, Thens…**

On given Thursdays you will receive an “if” statement which will provide an assumption from a thinker. For example, “If the soul is a separate substance, then...” In a short response (150word minimum-200 word maximum), indicate what follows or what is a/the consequence of believing this assumption. I.e., “then…there is possibility for life after death.” Do not say “then…this is Descartes view” or “then…Hume is wrong”; this is obvious and does not reveal a consequence of the assumption. Then explain why you think this consequence follows, explain what other positions (are connected to this assumption) using materials from lectures and the readings; however, for full points your If-Then must indicate that you have done the reading. Students will hand in their If-Then **at the beginning of class on assigned Tuesdays** asa printed response with1 inch margins, double-spaced (12pt Times New Roman). Also include your name on top and a Word Count: at the bottom. See sample on D2L. You will receive one of three scores: check + (15 pts), check (10 pts), or check – (5 pts). Late responses will not be accepted (0 pts). Examples will be posted to D2L. **If-Thens are to be handed in via TurnItIn enabled D2L dropbox AND a paper copy in class the day it's due**.

* 1. **Written Cogitations**
     1. You will be assigned TWO take home reflection essays, each one after the completion of two units. Essays will be on deep questions related to class lectures which will ask you to assume the (mental) posture of “The Thinker” regarding important and relevant ideas concerning human nature and philosophy. You may choose from cogitation questions assigned (from the covered units). *After* spending a sufficient amount of time thinking, pondering, and meditating on the question in light of class readings/discussion/research you are to write no more than a 2 page, 1 inch margins, double-spaced (12pt Times New Roman) reflection. It should be clear from the essay WHAT you believe and WHY you believe WITH A CLEAR ARGUMENT. Your argument should incorporate a logical structure which informs the paper’s layout, i.e. DO NOT assume your conclusion or just list evidence in support of your claim. The short format is to ensure your thoughts are well formed and expressed concisely. You may even be forced to leave out good ideas or examples for the sake of brevity. Points will be deducted for each violation of the assignment’s parameters. Feel free to discuss your topic and argumentation with me, but I will not read a draft. Please see D2L for a sample, grading & comment guide. **Cogitations are to be handed in via TurnItIn enabled D2L dropbox by midnight the day it’s due AND a paper copy no later than the next class**.
  2. **Exams**
     1. The midterm and final exam will consist of multiple choice, short answer, and essays for their respective units (the final will not be cumulative) totaling 100 points each. Any material covered in the assigned readings or in-class lectures may appear on the examinations. A review period will precede the mid-term and the final exam.

1. ACADEMIC DISHONOESTY & MISCONDUCT POLICY
   1. In this course you will be required to submit written assignments in electronic form to a dropbox on D2L enabled with plagiarism detection service called **Turnitin**. Your assignments become a permanent part of the **Turnitin** database, but will not be used for any other purpose than checking for plagiarism.
   2. Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, individual violations, helping another student with any form of academic misconduct, failing to report any form of academic misconduct, or intentionally interfering with the educational process in any manner. Faculty, staff or students who are aware of academic misconduct and fail to report it are considered complicit in these actions. If a student is in doubt as to whether an action or behavior is subject to the academic misconduct policy, he/she should consult an appropriate member of the Academic Integrity Council, faculty or staff. For more information visit the university website:  
      <http://bulletin.marquette.edu/undergrad/academicregulations/#academicintegrity>
   3. **Acts of academic misconduct include but are not limited to:**

**Cheating**

1. Copying from others for an assignment and/or during an examination, test or quiz.

2. Obtaining, or attempting to obtain, an assignment, examination, test, quiz, or answer key without authorization.

3. Using unauthorized electronic devices or materials for an assignment, during an examination or quiz.

4. Communicating answers or providing unauthorized assistance for an assignment, examination, test or quiz.

5. Using unauthorized answers or assistance for an assignment, examination, test or quiz.

6. Offering one’s own work to another person, or presenting another person’s work as one’s own.

7. Completing an assignment and/or taking an examination, test or quiz for another student, or having someone complete an assignment, take an examination, test or quiz for oneself.

8. Tampering with an assignment, examination, test or quiz after it has been graded, and then returning it for additional credit.

9. Outsourcing assignments, papers, examinations, tests, quizzes to fellow students or third parties.

10. Using purchased answers or selling answers to assignments, examinations, quizzes or papers.

**Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is intellectual theft by the unethical use of sources. It means use of another’s creations or ideas without proper attribution. Credit must be given for every direct quotation, for paraphrasing or summarizing any part of a work and for any information that is not common knowledge. Plagiarism is further addressed in the Academic Integrity Tutorial.

**Academic Fraud such as:**

Submitting substantial portions of the same work for credit in more than one course, or from previous institutions, without receiving permission from all instructors involved.

1. LEARNING SCHEDULE

**NOTE: This schedule is TENTATIVE and is subject to change**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Week # & Start Date** | **Tuesday** | **Thursday** |
| **Introduction** | | |
| 1 (1-16)  No Reading Quiz this week | Syllabus Review | “What does it mean to be ethical?”  Key Terms & The Semantic Triangle  *Read the Syllabus!* |
| **Unit 1:** *Meta-ethics & Relativism* | | |
| 2 (1-23)  Last day to drop/add 1-25 | Meta-Ethics Part 1  DE, 13-29 (16 pages) | Meta-Ethics Part 2  DE, 31-42 (11 pages) |
| 3 (1-30) | Relativism  DE, 65-81 (16 pages)  **If-Then # 1 Due** | Relativism  DE, 81-93 (12 pages) |
| 4 (2-6) | Egoism  ET, 61-73 (12 pages) Ring of Gyges | Social Contract  DE, 121-139 (18 pages) |
| 5 (2-13) | “Rights”  DE, 42-58 (16 pages)  **If-Then #2 Due** | Rawls – Theory of Justice  ET, 246-263 (17 pages) |
| **Unit 2:** Meta-ethics & The Divine | | |
| 6 (2-20) | Divine Command Theory  DE, 95-103(8 pages) | Divine Command Theory  ET: 44-57 (13 pages) Euthyphro Dilemma |
| 7 (2-27) | Natural Law  DE, 103-119 (16 pages)  **If-Then #3 Due** | Aquinas: from “Treatise on Law”  ARES: 171-183 |
| 8 (3-6)  No reading Quiz this week | Mid-Term Review  *Electronic Devices allowed!* | **Mid-Term** |
| **Unit 3:** Normative Theories & Rational Principles | | |
| 9 (3-13)  No reading Quiz this week | **SPRING BREAK – No Class** | **SPRING BREAK – No Class** |
| 10 (3-20) | Utilitarianism  ET, 90-98 (8 pages) John Stuart Mill  **Cogitation #1 Due** | Utilitarianism  DE, 145-161 (16 pages) |
| 11 (3-27)  Register for Fall 2017  PHIL courses! | Utilitarianism  DE, 161-170 (9 pages)  **If-Then #4 Due** | Deontology  ET, 150-165 (15 pages) |
| 12 (4-3) | Deontology  DE, 173-186 (13 pages) | Deontology  Reread ET, 150-165 (15 pages) |
| **Unit 4:** Normative Theories & Being | | |
| 13 (4-10) | Racism  ARES: Lawrence Blum: *I’m not a racist but…*  33-52(19 pages)  **If-Then #5 Due** | **NO Class** Easter Break |
| 14 (4-17)  Deadline for “W” Withdraw | Feminist Ethics  DE, 231-244 (13 pages) | Feminist Ethics  ET, 363-372 (9 pages)  ET, 373-380 (7 pages) |
| 15 (4-24) | Virtue Ethics  DE, 201-212 (11 pages)  ET, 303-311 (8 pages)  **If-Then #6 Due** | Virtue Ethics  DE, 212-221 (9 pages)  ET, 311-320 (9 pages) |
| **Wrap Up:** Applied Ethics and Review | | |
| 16 (5-1) | VE& Abortion  ET, 337-355 (18 pages) Hursthouse  **Cogitation #2 Due** | Final Review  *Electronic Devices allowed!* |
| 17 **FINALS** | **5/8 MONDAY** **section 118**  10:30a-12:30p in Cudahy 128 | **5/12 FRIDAY section 114**  1:00-3:00p in Cudahy 108 |