PHILOSOPHY 2033: INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS
Course Syllabus

Midwestern State University, Fall 2011
MWF 11:00 - 11:50 a.m., DCOBA, Room 328
Instructor: Dr. Nathan Jun
Office: Bea Wood Hall, Room 221
Office Hours: MWF 8:30 - 9:50 a.m. / 12 - 1 p.m.
TTR 12:30 - 2:30 p.m. and by appointment
E-mail: nathan.jun@mwsu.edu / Phone: 940-397-4128
http://faculty.mwsu.edu/philosophy/nathan.jun

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:

This course provides a historical and theoretical introduction to the study of moral philosophy or ethics. Moral philosophy is concerned with a wide range of questions including, but not limited to, “what are good and evil?,” “how ought one to live?” and “how ought one to act?.” Most of the course will be devoted to various historical and contemporary theories regarding “right” and “wrong.” Among other things, we will learn how various philosophers have defined “right” and “wrong,” what criteria they articulated for deeming certain courses of action “right” and others “wrong,” etc. At the end of the course, we will discuss the relevance and application of ethics in “real world” decision-making – for example, in the fields of science, medicine, and public policy.

The main objectives of the course are as follows:

1. To help students learn and understand the basic issues of moral philosophy from both a historical and theoretical perspective.
2. To help students gain familiarity with various pivotal texts in the history of moral philosophy.
3. To help students develop their skills in interpreting and critically analyzing texts.
4. To help students develop their skills in identifying and evaluating arguments as well as in formulating arguments of their own.
5. To help students improve their ability to read and write clearly and critically.
6. To help students appreciate the relevance of ethical discourse in public and private life and to gain a greater understanding of their personal ethical commitments.

REQUIRED TEXTS: (Available at the MWSU Bookstore – Phone: 940-397-4225)


COURSE EXPECTATIONS:

In order to accomplish the course goals, you must arrive prepared for each class. This means coming to class on time as well as completing assignments and readings. It is expected that you will read the assigned texts carefully and critically, take notes, jot down questions, and bring all required materials to class each day. **Active and informed participation in class discussions is crucial.** For more information, please see the addendum on class participation and attendance.
ATTENDANCE:

Attendance is welcomed, expected, and mandatory. You must come to class on time.

You are considered absent if:

- you don’t show up for class
- you show up more than 15 minutes late for class without an appropriate excuse
- you are consistently unprepared for class, fail to pay attention during class, and/or fail to participate in class discussion

You are allowed two unexcused absences without penalty. For every unexcused absence after the first two, I will lower your final grade by five percent. After three absences you must attend a conference with me to discuss whether you should continue in this course. Five absences constitute automatic failure of the course.

In extreme cases, absences will be excused according to my judgment; I should be informed beforehand of any anticipated absence. Most excuses will require official documentation, such as a doctor’s note.

For more information, please see the addendum on class participation and attendance.

ASSIGNMENTS:

There are two options for student work in this class: the critical writing option and the service-learning option.

Students who choose the critical writing option will be required to complete the following assignments:

- One take-home mid-term examination (6 pp.): 100 points
- One take-home final examination (6 pp.): 100 points

The service learning option provides students with opportunities to apply their classroom learning to meaningful experiences in “the real world.” It is especially recommended for pre-professional students such as nursing, radiologic sciences, respiratory care, social work, education, criminal justice, mechanical engineering, and business majors. Students who pursue the service learning option are required to complete:

- A minimum of 16 hours of volunteer community service over the course of the semester at an approved agency
- A minimum of 10 journal entries which relate course topics to service experience (100 points)
- A final paper (minimum 6 pp.) which draws upon service experience in order to address a major ethical question (100 points)

All students will be graded on class participation and attendance: 50 points
If you are interested in pursuing the service learning option, please contact the instructor as soon as possible for more information. Otherwise, it is assumed that you will be pursuing the critical writing option.

**GRADING SCALE:**

Your points will be translated into percentages, and your final grade will be calculated according to the following percentage scale:

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

Although such instances are rare, I reserve the right to reward students who have shown dramatic progress with higher grades than the scale suggests.

*Note about Incompletes:* A grade of “Incomplete” may be given to a student who has not been able to complete specific required coursework due to circumstances beyond his/her control before the end of a given reporting period. In order to remove the ‘I’ from his/her record, the student will meet with the instructor to discuss his/her completion of coursework or the taking of a final exam. In turn, the instructor will issue a new grade two weeks before the closing of the following reporting period. A student’s failure to comply with the instructor’s requirements prior to this deadline will result in an automatic F grade. Students are encouraged to meet the requirements set by their instructors in order to remove ‘I’ grades from their reports.

**GRADING POLICY:**

Major written assignments in this course will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

*Exposition* – Does the paper correctly and clearly answer the question(s) posed in the thesis statement?

*Organization* – Is the paper well organized? Does it build upon the main idea/thesis statement? Does it evince a logical argumentative structure?

*Coherence* – Do the main ideas and arguments of the paper relate to one another logically? Does the paper adequately explain main ideas and concepts? Does the paper avoid “going off on tangents” or including otherwise irrelevant information?

*Argumentation* – Does the paper provide adequate support, evidence, justification, etc. for its claims?

*Creativity* – Does the paper approach philosophical problems in a creative fashion?

*Clarity* – Does the paper use a clear and consistent writing style? Does it avoid significant grammatical and mechanical errors?
A paper that meets some but not all of these criteria is a ‘C’ paper. A paper that meets all of these criteria is a ‘B’ paper. A paper that meets and exceeds these criteria is an ‘A’ paper. (See below.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Possible Grades:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposition</td>
<td>The paper answers the question(s) posed in the thesis statement correctly, clearly, and effectively.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>The paper exhibits a maximally clear and logical structure.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coherence</td>
<td>The paper is maximally coherent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argumentation</td>
<td>The paper exhibits superior critical analysis, argumentative rigor, and logical acumen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td>The paper approaches philosophical problems in creative, clever, novel, etc. ways.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity</td>
<td>The paper is extremely well-written and contains no major spelling or grammatical errors.</td>
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**WRITING DEADLINES & SUBMISSIONS:**

You are expected to submit assignments by the deadlines listed. All written work is due at the beginning of class unless otherwise noted. In order to be considered for a grade, all assignments are to be complete, of the minimum word count, and must conform to MLA documentation and format (word-processed, 12 point Times New Roman font, double-spacing, with one inch margins). No papers will be accepted if they are handwritten. If an assignment does not meet the above requirements when it is submitted, it will receive zero points and may not be revised. Late
assignments will only be accepted with the specific, prior agreement of the instructor, and then only in extreme cases. There is no grace period. No exceptions.

All papers should include page numbers (upper right hand corner: Surname Page Number). For all written assignments, please include the following in the upper left hand corner of the first page:

Your Name
PHIL 2033
Date
Professor Jun

ACADEMIC CONDUCT:

Academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, etc.) will not be tolerated and may result in suspension or dismissal from the course. Cases will also be referred to the Dean of Students for possible dismissal from the university.

This course observes the MSU Code of Conduct. Academic dishonesty, however small, creates a breach in academic integrity. A student’s participation in this course comes with the expectation that his or her work will be completed in full observance of the MSU Code of Student Conduct. A student should consult the Student Handbook or the Office of the Dean of Students for answers to any questions about the code.

Student Honor Creed: “As an MSU Student, I pledge not to lie, cheat, steal, or help anyone else to do so.”

Cheating includes, but is not limited to, (1) use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; (2) dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers or completing other assignments; or (3) the acquisition of tests or other academic materials belonging to the university faculty or staff without permission.

Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, using the published or unpublished works of another person without recognition, either by paraphrase or direct quotation. The use of materials generated by agencies engaged in “selling” term papers is also plagiarism.

WIKIPEDIA & OTHER OUTSIDE SOURCES

Even if correctly cited, Wikipedia or other outside sources should not be used on the midterm or final examination in this course. Use of outside sources without the explicit permission of the instructor will result in a zero for the assignment.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR:

Insults, slurs, or attacks of any kind will not be tolerated in this class. Any student who engages in this type of behavior in the classroom will be permanently removed from the class, in addition to other possible punishment by Midwestern State University.

LAPTOP COMPUTER, CELL PHONE, AND MISCELLANEOUS ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY:
Owing to persistent abuse, **LAPTOP COMPUTERS, CELL PHONES, IPODS, ETC. ARE NOT PERMITTED IN THIS CLASS.** If you require the use of a laptop pursuant to a special need, please contact the instructor. Cell phones and all other electronic devices should be turned off and put away before class begins.

**SPECIAL NEEDS:**

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable adjustments in its policies, practices, services, and facilities to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational programs and activities.

The Office of Disability Services (ODS) provides information and assistance, arranges accommodations, and serves as a liaison for students, instructors, and staff. The ODS has assistive devices such as books on tape, recorders, and adaptive software which can be loaned to qualified individuals. A student/employee who seeks accommodations on the basis of disability must register with the Office of Disability Services in the Counseling Center. Documentation of disability from a competent professional is required.

Students who qualify must contact the instructor as soon as possible to request accommodations.

**COURSE SCHEDULE:**

*Part One: Ethical Theory*

**WEEK ONE**

(a) Monday, 22 August – Introduction
(b) Wednesday, 24 August – Chapter 1: Ethics and Ethical Reasoning
(c) Friday, 26 August – Chapter 1: Ethics and Ethical Reasoning (cont’d)

**WEEK TWO**

(a) Monday, 29 August – Chapter 2: Ethical Relativism
(b) Wednesday, 31 August – Chapter 2: Ethical Relativism (cont’d)
(c) Friday, 2 September – Chapter 2: Ethical Relativism (cont’d)

**WEEK THREE**

(a) Monday, 5 September – LABOR DAY
(b) Wednesday, 7 September – Chapter 3: Ethical Egoism
(c) Friday, 9 September – Chapter 3: Ethical Egoism (cont’d)

**WEEK FOUR**

(a) Monday, 12 September – Chapter 3: Ethical Egoism (cont’d)
(b) Wednesday, 14 September – Chapter 4: Utilitarianism
(c) Friday, 16 September – Chapter 4: Utilitarianism (cont’d)
WEEK FIVE

(a) Monday, 19 September – Chapter 4: Utilitarianism (cont’d)
(b) Wednesday, 21 September – Chapter 4: Utilitarianism (cont’d)
(c) Friday, 23 September – Chapter 5: Kant’s Moral Theory

WEEK SIX

(a) Monday, 26 September – Chapter 5: Kant’s Moral Theory (cont’d); MID-TERM EXAMINATION DISTRIBUTED
(b) Wednesday, 27 September – Kant’s Moral Theory (cont’d)
(c) Friday, 29 September – Chapter 7: Natural Law Theory

WEEK SEVEN

(a) Monday, 3 October – Chapter 7: Natural Law Theory (cont’d)
(b) Wednesday, 5 October – Chapter 7: Natural Law Theory (cont’d)
(c) Friday, 7 October – Chapter 8: Virtue Ethics

WEEK EIGHT

(a) Monday, 10 October – Chapter 8: Virtue Ethics
(b) Wednesday, 12 October – Chapter 8: Virtue Ethics (cont’d);
(c) Friday, 14 October – Divine Command Theory (Lecture); MID-TERM EXAMINATION DUE

Part Two: Ethical Issues

WEEK NINE

(a) Monday, 17 October – Chapter 10: Euthanasia
(b) Wednesday, 19 October – Chapter 10: Euthanasia (cont’d)
(c) Friday, 21 October – Chapter 10: Euthanasia (cont’d)

WEEK TEN

(a) Monday, 24 October – Chapter 11: Abortion
(b) Wednesday, 26 October – Chapter 11: Abortion (cont’d)
(c) Friday, 28 October – Chapter 11: Abortion (cont’d)

WEEK ELEVEN

(a) Monday, 31 October – Chapter 12: Sexual Morality
(b) Wednesday, 2 November – Chapter 12: Sexual Morality (cont’d)
(c) Friday, 4 November – Chapter 12: Sexual Morality (cont’d)

WEEK TWELVE

(a) Monday, 7 November – Chapter 13: Equality and Discrimination
(b) Wednesday, 9 November – Chapter 13: Equality and Discrimination (cont’d)
(c) Friday, 11 November – Chapter 13: Equality and Discrimination (cont’d)
WEEK THIRTEEN

(a) Monday, 14 November – Chapter 15: Capital Punishment
(b) Wednesday, 16 November – Chapter 15: Capital Punishment (cont’d)
(c) Friday, 18 November – Chapter 15: Capital Punishment (cont’d)

WEEK FOURTEEN

(a) Monday, 21 November – Chapter 15: Economic Justice; FINAL EXAMINATION DISTRIBUTED
(b) Wednesday, 23 November – THANKSGIVING
(c) Friday, 25 November – THANKSGIVING

WEEK FIFTEEN

(a) Monday, 28 November – Chapter 19: Violence, Terrorism, and War
(b) Wednesday, 30 November – Chapter 19: Violence, Terrorism, and War (cont’d)
(c) Friday, 2 December – Chapter 19: Violence, Terrorism, and War (cont’d)

FINAL EXAMINATIONS DUE NO LATER THAN 5 PM ON FRIDAY, 2 DECEMBER!