

Moravian College
Phil. 122: Introduction to Ethics
Spring 2008

Instructor: The Rev. Dr. William Falla
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Course Description:

This course is designed to acquaint the student with basic theory of ethics and morality as well as with their historical concepts and development. Contemporary ethical and moral issues will be examined, and the student will become familiar with the essential vocabulary utilized in ethical and moral discussions.

Course Objectives:

- A. To become familiar with major ethical theories and various philosophical issues in moral reasoning.
- B. To explore the development of ethical theories within their historical context and as they exist today.
- C. To develop consistent and coherent strategies for ethical decision-making.
- D. To explore how our culture influences us in our moral thinking.
- E. To become more aware, and develop an understanding, of contemporary ethical issues.

Required Texts:

Rosenstand, Nina, *The Moral of the Story*, 5th ed., McGraw-Hill, 2005.

Supplemental Materials

Articles and movies will be on reserve at Reeves Library.

Evaluation:

Your final course grade will be determined in the following manner:

Papers (50%): You will be asked to write four (4) 2-3 page papers on assigned questions given in class and due on the dates indicated in the syllabus. On these papers you will be graded on your mastery and use of the course material as well as the quality of your argumentation and your writing style.

Journal (10%): You will be asked to keep a journal that focuses on current ethical issues in our world that you glean from various media sources both print and electronic sources. In addition to assembling your entries, you will be asked to write a short reflection on each one. This will serve as the basis for part of our conversation during

our scheduled meeting the last week of class as well as possibly providing you with a topic for your research paper.

Research Paper (25%): In this paper, you will explore a current ethical issue or dilemma in some detail and propose a viable solution. To do this you will use the Library resources to do your research. This research must utilize professional journals or newsletters. You may use no more than two non-professional sources (newspapers, magazines or non-professional web sites). Any web resource (other than e-journals or e-books) that you wish to use must be submitted on your preliminary bibliography in order to be used. (Wikipedia.com is not a legitimate source for the purpose of scholarly research and may not be used.) We will have bibliographic instruction for this paper. The paper itself should be 5 to 7 pages in length excluding the Bibliography. The paper will be graded on quality of research as well as its content and style. It is due on the date indicated in the syllabus.

Class Participation (15%): This includes both class attendance and your active participation in class discussions. A class such as ethics is predicated on class discussion so that this is an important component. You will also be asked to schedule a meeting with the instructor during the last week of classes to discuss your research paper and your journal.

Grading Scale

92.5 - 100 = A
89.5 – 92.4 = A-
87.5 – 89.4 = B+
82.5 – 87.4 = B
etc.

All final grades are rounded to the nearest integer.

Honor Code/Attendance:

Students are expected to regularly attend class. Attendance contributes to your class participation and therefore is important. If you must miss a class, it is your responsibility to notify the instructor and to insure that arrangements are made to make up all missed assignments or material. You are also expected to hand in all assignments on time. If you must be late with your work, you must make arrangements with the instructor prior to the due date. Failure to do so may result in the lowering of the grade on late submitted work.

Students have an obligation to exhibit honesty in all their work. You will be found to have violated this obligation if you plagiarize or cheat. Any violation will result in the lowering of your grade. Plagiarizing is presenting the work of others as one's own; cheating is taking, giving or accepting illicit advantage for any course work inside or outside the classroom.

COURSE SYLLABUS

- Jan.14: Overview and Introduction to Ethics
Rosenstand, pp. 1-23
- Jan.21: Basic Ethical Theory: Values and Narratives
Rosenstand, pp. 35-68, 77-90
- Jan. 28: Questionable Ethical Theories: Relativism & Egoism
Rosenstand, pp.105-127, 134-6, 156-78
- Feb. 4: Theories of Conduct: Utilitarianism **Paper #1 due: 2/6**
Rosenstand, pp.179-198, 213-40
- Feb. 11: Theories of Conduct: Kant
Rosenstand, pp. 263-289
Movie: *Crime and Misdemeanors*
- Feb. 18: Theories of Conduct: Rights and Justice **Paper #2 Due: 2/20**
Rosenstand, pp. 299-308, 315-342, 346-50
- Feb. 25: Theories of Virtue: Ancient
Rosenstand, pp. 371-394, 416-442
- Mar. 10: Virtue Ethics: Case Study **Research Bibliography Due: 3/12**
Movie: *The Fellowship of the Ring*
- Mar. 17: Ethics of Care
Rosenstand, pp. 566-98, 605-6
- Mar. 24: Ethical Issues:Media **Paper #3 Due: 3/26**
Rosenstand, pp. 626-32
- Mar. 31: Ethical Issues: Environment
Rosenstand, pp. 641-7
- Apr. 7: Ethical Issues: Biomedicine **Paper #4 Due: 4/7**
Movie: *Awakenings*
- Apr. 14: Ethical Issues: Biomedicine **Research Paper Due: 4/14**
(in class handouts)

Apr. 21: Scheduled Meetings

Apr. 28: Scheduled Meetings (if necessary)