

Moravian College
Phil. 122A: Introduction to Ethics
Fall 2008

Instructor: The Rev. Dr. William Falla
Phone: 610/821-8725 (W)
610/432-8711 (H)
e-mail: newsf01@moravian.edu

Meeting Time: MW 7:30-8:40 AM

Office Hours: MW 10:30-11:30 AM or by appt.

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*, 6th ed., McGraw-Hill, 2009.

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 (20%): You will be asked to write two (2) 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 (20%): 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. Your goal should be at least 1 entry per week. They may be in one area of interest or be broader in scope. You will be evaluated on the quality of your choices, reflection and presentation. It will also periodically serve as the basis for our class discussions.

Exams: (40%) There will be an open book, open note take home mid-term due on the date indicated. There will also be a final exam focusing on applied ethics to be given during the scheduled exam period. Since the exam will focus on ethical problem solving, it will also be an open note, open book exam. In both, you will be graded on your understanding of the material and your ability to apply it to current ethical issues/dilemmas.

Class Participation (20%): 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

Aug. 25: Overview and Introduction to Ethics
Rosenstand, pp. 1-30

Sept. 1: Basic Ethical Theory: Values and Narratives
Rosenstand, pp. 47-54, 92-98, 110-147

Sept. 8: Questionable Ethical Theories: Relativism & Egoism
Rosenstand, pp.163-98, 208-10

Sept. 15: Theories of Conduct: Utilitarianism
Rosenstand, pp.224-261

Sept. 22: Theories of Conduct: Kant
Rosenstand, pp. 275-301

Sept. 29: Theories of Conduct **Paper #1 Due: 9/29**
Movie: *Crime and Misdemeanors*

Oct. 6: Theories of Conduct: Rights and Justice
Rosenstand, pp. 312-20, 328-41, 358-63

Oct. 13: Theories of Virtue: Ancient
Rosenstand, pp. 371-411, 431-457

Oct. 20: Virtue Ethics: Case Study **Mid-Term Exam Due: 10/22**
Movie: *The Fellowship of the Ring*

Oct. 27: Contemporary Ethics
Rosenstand, pp. 470-83, 586-602, 618-26

Nov. 3: Ethical Issues:Media
Rosenstand, pp. 644-53, 700-02

Nov. 10: Ethical Issues: Business **Paper #2 Due: 11/12**
Rosenstand, pp. 653-660, 702-3

Nov. 17: Ethical Issues: Environment
Rosenstand pp.669-81, 211-213, 711-12
Movie: *Gorillas in the Mist*

Nov. 24: Ethical Issues: GET & Stem Cell
Rosenstand, pp. 320-328

Dec. 1: Ethical Issues: Euthanasia
Rosenstand, pp. 641-4
Movie: *The Sea Inside*

Journals Due: 12/1

Dec. 8: Catch-up & Review

Final Exam: TBA