

Syllabus, Mercer County Community College

Introduction to Moral Choices

Moral Choices

Instructor: **Parviz Deghani**

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Course #: <u>PHI-205</u> GenEd? <u>Yes</u> GenEd Elective Categories: <u>Humanities</u>
Prerequisites: <u>Take ENG-101 Minimum Grade C</u> Co-requisites: <u>none</u> Special Notes: _____
Degrees Required for: <u>none</u> Degrees Key Elective for: <u>A.A. Liberal Arts; L.A.-Humanities</u>
Transfers in NJ as: <u>typically equivalent (Contemporary Moral Issues)</u>

Catalogue Description

A systematic analysis of the basic problems of Ethics and contemporary moral issues. Topics include the nature and meaning of moral values and judgments, freedom and moral responsibility, moral and cultural relativism, deontological moral theories versus utilitarian approach towards morality. Fundamental ethical positions are studied to determine the nature of moral problems and the criteria for their solutions. In this search the works of such major thinkers as Plato, Aristotle, Hume, Kant, Mill, Nietzsche and Sartre are read.

Course Description

This course will critically examine the fundamental issues and problems in Ethics. A brief history of philosophy will accompany each lecture so students will gradually become familiar with the Western intellectual tradition from before Socrates all the way to the present time. This will provide the students with an overall perspective in their journey to the practical aspect of philosophy. In this course students will be induced and provoked to think for themselves rather than let others do the thinking for them. Over the course of this semester we'll try to see if there is any meaning in living morally at all though there are thinkers who argue otherwise. We'll make an attempt to examine whether we are by nature moral or what is moral is basically what our family on the one hand and society on the other have imposed upon us.

Learning Objectives

1. Identify and define key terms, periods, theories and figure in Ethics.
2. Employ the logical and critical thinking methods and evidentiary criteria of philosophy to determine and critique the ways through which philosophers address basic moral issues.
3. Distinguish and analyze the basic Ethical issues facing us in our contemporary world.

4. Interpret, summarize and paraphrase the views of philosophers as expressed in their works on Ethics.
5. Present and support your own views on moral issues clearly, logically, concisely & coherently.

Requirements

Class Participation/Attendance:

Participation is reflective of your attendance. You won't really be able to participate if you are not in class. A lot is covered in class lectures therefore it is your job to make sure you do not miss what was covered. You can attempt to get what was covered in a class you were not able to attend by asking a classmate for notes. Also remember although you did not make it to a class the required reading assignment for that class must also be completed so you will not fall behind. Class participation will be also determined not only in how well the student demonstrates religious literacy but in the contribution to the class in active questioning, helping other students in understanding course materials through in class discussions, as well as attendance.

Attendance

The final grades will have a lot to do with your attendance records. Whether legitimate or not your absences will have an effect on the depth and the quality of your works. Thus, the more you are absent the lower your grades will be for the semester. The burden of making up for your absences is on your shoulders and not your teacher's. You must control the number of your absences so they will not exceed # 3. With any extra absence your (A) can drop to (A-). You are also responsible for catching up with the rest of the class by perhaps borrowing your friends' notes, etc.

Attendance/Regulations

Mercer County Community College does not have a "cut system." Students are expected to attend all classes of every course on their schedules. Only illness or serious personal matters may be considered adequate reasons for absence.

It is the prerogative of the instructor to excuse absences for valid reasons, provided the student will be able to fulfill all course requirements.

Students in the Medical Laboratory Technology and Radiography programs must arrange with the program coordinator to make up all missed laboratory and clinical hours. Students in nursing courses are required to attend all lecture, recitation, college laboratory, and clinical laboratory sessions.

The college is required by law to maintain attendance reports on students who are funded by Veterans benefits, Social Security payments and various other federal, state, or private scholarship programs.

Attendance Verification and Progress Grades

Student performance in classes is formally verified at the middle of each full semester. If a student's attendance has been infrequent or performance unsatisfactory, he or she may receive notification in the mail. At any time, the instructor may withdraw the student from class as a result of insufficient attendance.

Students who receive an unsatisfactory progress report are encouraged to see their instructor, advisor, and/or counselor and to take the steps necessary to complete the course successfully by the end of the semester.

Class Presentation/Reading Assignments:

There will be class presentations given by the students throughout the semester. These presentations will be based on the reading assignments for each class. Students shall be randomly chosen to give these presentations and they will be graded in-class. Students will not be permitted to read from their notes. However, they are allowed to glance at them once in a while. They are to maintain proper eye contact with their classmates while keeping an eye on the highlights of the subject at hand. If they are not ready, they will receive a negative sign in front of their name, which will in turn affect their final grade at the end of the semester. But if they are ready, they will get a positive sign, in front of their name, which will help them with their final grade. Those who have already given a presentation can be called upon again to give another one at any time. ((If you miss a class you are still obligated to complete the required reading assignment for that class so you will not fall behind.))

Quizzes:

Three quizzes throughout the semester to assess course's comprehension and literacy.

Midterm:

You will be required to write a three page paper using your texts, library sources, and class notes if needed. The class texts must not be bypassed for they are your main sources. **The Internet cannot be used as a source in the paper but students are free to read the material available on it concerning the subjects of their papers.** All papers are to be cited properly, for example, (Palmer, p. 154). Failure to do so will render points reduction. The first page will be research, the second page will be a student's personal life experience (students are to think for themselves and discuss their own personal experiences and/or experiences of their friends or loved ones in relation to their chosen topic) and the third page will be the conclusion in which the students will summarize how their personal life experiences relate to the religious subject at hand. The conclusion is where the student will either agree or disagree with the religion or religious views and analyze their given situation with relation to the topic they have chosen for their paper. Students can choose any topic throughout the text. A bibliography is not necessary unless new sources aside from the course text are used. **Students are not allowed to bypass their texts and write their papers based on another source.** Depth is the key in this course. Do not let your papers be ordinary, strive to be unique and express your own individual perspectives on the issues. Use your past and present experiences or even what you are planning to do in the future for your life in relation to your topics. Your grades will reflect what you put into the papers.

Final Exam:

The Final Exam will be based on class discussions and lectures as well as the text. Therefore, it is very important not to miss too many classes because 75% of your final exam depends on class discussions. Remember participation by questioning during class presentations, especially text related, will help your grade. Interactions among students are a must. Students who do so are bound to earn better grades at the end.

GRADE BREAKDOWN:

10% Class Participation/Attendance
15% Class Presentations/Reading Assignments
25% Quizzes
25% Midterm
25% Final Exam

Policies

Late papers will get late grades, so please do not turn in your papers late. Be actively involved in the class and do not make things more difficult for the rest of the class by chatting and distracting your class mates. Getting out of class as If you're going to use the bathroom while in fact you're to check your cell phones is not allowed. In fact, you'll be asked to go to the bathroom before the class starts. Being late for the class will disturb your classmates as well as

your teacher. If you choose to be absent for Religious holidays, you will be responsible for the material covered in the class.

Any student in this class who has special needs because of a disability is entitled to receive accommodations. Eligible students at Mercer County Community College are assured services under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. If you believe you are eligible for services, please discuss these with the instructor AND contact Arlene Stinson, the Director of Academic Support Services. Ms. Stinson's office is LB221, and she can be reached at (609) 570-3525.

There will be no tolerance for any plagiarism so I advise that you do not do it or else you'll put yourselves in harm's way. College policies will be strictly and maximally enforced. To wit, the College's Academic Honest Policy reads: —Mercer County Community College is committed to Academic integrity—the honest, fair and continuing pursuit of knowledge, free from fraud or deception. This implies that students are expected to be responsible for their own work and that faculty and academic support services staff members will take reasonable precautions to prevent the opportunity for academic dishonesty. ¶ See: <http://mlink.mccc.edu/omb/OMB210.pdf>. When in doubt, cite! Never cut and paste in any answer!

Required Text (You are expected to have the following book)

“Doing Ethics” by Lewis Vaughn 5th Edition

“The Ethics Tool Kit” by Julian Baggini and Peter S. Fosl

Websites:

Philosophy on the WWW:

Ethics Supersite: <http://ethics.sandiego.edu/>

Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy: <http://www.utm.edu/research/iep>

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: <http://plato.stanford.edu>

Philosophy Now Magazine: <http://www.philosophynow.org/>

The Philosopher's Magazine: <http://www.philosophersnet.com/>

Episteme Links Site: <http://www.epistemelinks.com/>

Philosophy Study Guides: http://instruct.westvalley.edu/lafave/study_guides.html

Philosophy Pages... from Garth Kemerling: <http://www.philosophypages.com/>

Intute Index: <http://www.intute.ac.uk/artsandhumanities/philosophy/>

Erratic Impact Database: <http://www.erraticimpact.com/>

Philosophy texts & humor: <http://philosophy.eserver.org/>

The American Philosophical Association Online: <http://www.udel.edu/apa>

Socratic Argument clinic: <http://www.mindspring.com/~mfpatton/sclinic.htm>

Religious Faith Consistency Test: <http://www.philosophersnet.com/games/god.htm>

Philosophy Texts Online: <http://people.brandeis.edu/~teuber/textsonline.html>

Philosophy Texts Online: <http://people.ucalgary.ca/~baker/books.html>

Philosophy Texts Online: <http://philosophy.eserver.org/>

Early Modern Philosophy Texts online: <http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/>

Philosophy Study Guides: http://instruct.westvalley.edu/lafave/study_guides.html

Online Philosophical Dictionaries: <http://www.ditext.com/runes/>

<http://www.philosophypages.com/dy/>

<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/philosophy>

<http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/gpi/dicts.htm>

Mercer County College Philosophy Site: <http://www.mccc.edu/~howarthk/MainPage.htm>

Philosophy Paper writing: <http://www.rowan.edu/philosop/clowney/IntroPhilosophy/PhilPaper.html>
<http://mugwump.pitzer.edu/~bkeeley/CLASS/IP/Fall01/shints.htm>

Additional resources The College library's text and NetLibrary and ebrary electronic resources, accessible through http://www.mccc.edu/student_library.shtml, as well as the Library Resource page (under development) provide a wide range of philosophical reference and topic specific texts. The Philosophy Repository on the College online course platform, Angel, contains specific auxiliary readings accessible for all sections that utilize Angel as at least a 'shell' resource for even classroom-based sections. A library of targeted readings handouts is also available in the Coordinator's office.

Learning Center Resources

There are no tutors or study groups through the Learning Center for philosophy topics, though there are tutors for writing. There are limited volunteers in the Philosophy S.P.A. Club available for peer-to-peer tutoring, and Professor Howarth is available to meet with students for tutoring to augment students meeting with their class professors.

Americans with Disabilities Act

On July 26, 1990, the President of the United States signed the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA is intended to remove barriers against the more than 43 million people with disabilities in the United States. If a learner has a documented learning disability, psychological disability, physical disability, or other hidden disability that requires an accommodation, it is the responsibility of that individual to make an appointment to meet with the Course Instructor to provide documentation indicating the accommodation that supports that request that is being made. This meeting must occur prior to the due date for any course examinations or assignments to discuss what accommodations might be necessary. It is the responsibility of the student/learner to provide written documentation for the need.

Any student/learner in this class who has special needs because of a disability is entitled to receive accommodations. Eligible students at Mercer County Community College are assured services under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. If you believe you are eligible for services, please contact Arlene Stinson, the Director of Academic Support Services. Ms. Stinson's office is LB221, and she can be reached at (609) 570-3525. stinsona@mccc.edu

Academic Integrity (http://www.mccc.edu/admissions_policies_integrity.shtml)

Mercer County Community College is committed to Academic Integrity -- the honest, fair and continuing pursuit of knowledge, free from fraud or deception. This implies that students are expected to be responsible for their own work, and that faculty and academic support services staff members will take reasonable precautions to prevent the opportunity for academic dishonesty. **Violations**

The college recognizes the following general categories of violations of academic integrity, with representative examples of each. Academic integrity is violated whenever a student:

A. Uses or obtains unauthorized assistance in any academic work.

- copying from another student's exam

- using notes, books, electronic devices or other aids of any kind during an exam when prohibited.
- stealing an exam or possessing a stolen copy of an exam B. **Gives fraudulent assistance to another student.**
- completing a graded academic activity or taking an exam for someone else
- giving answers to or sharing answers with another student before, during or after an exam or other graded academic activity.
- sharing answers during an exam by using a system of signals

C. Knowingly represents the work of others as his/her own, or represents previously completed academic work as current.

- submitting a paper or other academic work for credit which includes words, ideas, data or creative work of others without acknowledging the source.
- using another author's words without enclosing them in quotation marks, without paraphrasing them or without citing the source appropriately.
- presenting another individual's work as one's own.
- submitting the same paper or academic assignment to another class without the permission of the instructor.

D. Fabricates data in support of an academic assignment.

- falsifying bibliographic entries
- submitting any academic assignment which contains falsified or fabricated data or results

E. Inappropriately or unethically uses technological means to gain academic advantage □

inappropriately or unethically acquiring material via the Internet or by any other means.

- using any electronic or hidden devices for communication during an exam.

Each instructor and academic support service area is authorized to establish specific guidelines consistent with this policy.

Consequences for Violations of Academic Integrity

For a single violation, the faculty member will determine the course of action to be followed. This may include assigning a lower grade on the assignment, assigning a lower final course grade, failing the student in the course, or other penalty appropriate to the violation. In all cases, the instructor shall notify the chairperson of the Academic Integrity Committee (AIC) of the violation and the penalty imposed.

When two or more violations of academic integrity are reported on a student, the AIC may impose disciplinary penalties beyond those imposed by course instructors. The student shall have the right to a hearing before the AIC or a designated AIC subcommittee.

Appeals

The student has a right to appeal the decision of the instructor or the Academic Integrity Committee. Judicial procedures governing violations of academic integrity are contained in the Student Handbook.

Approved: Board of Trustees March 18, 2004

The reading Assignments (This will be distributed in the class.)

DUE DATES for the MIDTERM and the FINAL are mentioned in the reading assignment sheet.