

ETHICS & VALUES

(PHIL 2050)

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Ethics is the philosophical study of morality. Morality is the behavior of making value judgments, for example, deciding an action is right and another wrong, or saying one person is good and another bad. All humans make these kinds of judgments; morality is thus intrinsic to *humanness*. Examples of ethical questions are:

- What is the character (or disposition) of the morally virtuous person?
- What is happiness?
- What things are morally valuable?
- What is the source of moral knowledge?
- What, if any, are the rules or standards of morally correct action?
- Ethically speaking, what is the best way to organize individuals into a society?

These questions reveal that ethics is relevant on both *individual* and *societal* levels. On the individual level, ethics relates to how we personally *should* or *should not* act. On the societal level, ethics concerns the best social structure. The focus of this course is primarily on the individual; ethics on the societal level is treated in greater detail in *Social and Political Philosophy* (PHIL 3700).

In this course, our study of ethics and values will have two parts: *ethical theories* and *contemporary issues*. Ethical theories are attempts at identifying general moral concepts and principles. We will read and discuss a variety of central ethical theories of the Western tradition. After studying ethical theory, we will consider several contemporary moral issues and the extent to which various ethical theories might help us in evaluating these issues.

Ethics and Values is a UVU General Education core course. For a description of the goals of General Education, see Appendix A in this syllabus.

To ensure excellence and rigor in all sections of Ethics & Values, the Department of Philosophy and Humanities has set guidelines for PHIL 2050. A complete copy of these guidelines may be obtained at the departmental office (LA 121).

Studying ethics is of little use unless it has a bearing on your life. We think studying ethics is useful, and even *fun!* It is our hope that this course accomplishes both tasks.

I. PREREQUISITE: ENGL 1010 (may not be taken concurrently).

II. TEXTS:

Connolly, Peggy, Becky Cox-White, David R. Keller, and Martin G. Leever.
Ethics in Action: A Case-Based Approach. Malden, Massachusetts: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009.

Johnson, Oliver A., and Andrews Reath (eds.). *Ethics: Selections from Classic and Contemporary Writers*. Tenth Edition. Cengage Learning, 2006.

III. GRADING STANDARDS:

A = Excellent work
B = Good work
C = Average work
D = Poor work
E = Failing work

A	= 94 - 100%	C	= 73 - <77%
A-	= 90 - <94%	C-	= 70 - <73%
B+	= 87 - <90%	D+	= 67 - <70%
B	= 83 - <87%	D	= 63 - <67%
B-	= 80 - <83%	D-	= 60 - <63%
C+	= 77 - <80%	E	= <60%

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY: Academic dishonesty, in any form, will not be tolerated. Students are expected to adhere to the academic standards outlined in the *Student Rights and Responsibilities Code*, especially Article II, Section B. Academic dishonesty includes (but is not limited to) disclosing or obtaining exam content information from other students, using notes during exams, signing another student's name or having another student sign your name, and all forms of plagiarism including downloading papers from the Internet (for example <http://1Millionpapers.com/>, <http://cheathouse.com/>, or <http://duenow.com/>). *Students guilty of academic dishonesty will receive grade E for the course.* In fairness to all students and to uphold the integrity of education at UVU, there are no exceptions to this policy.

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

ASSIGNMENT	# POINTS
Attendance and Participation	Required
Quizzes	100
Personal Statement	50
Exams (2 @ 150 points each)	300
Case Study	100
Ethical Theory Précis	100
Ethical Analysis of Case Study Paper	200
Final Exam	150
TOTAL	1,000
Extra credit	20
TOTAL POSSIBLE	1,020

A. *Attendance and Participation.* Attendance is required. Preparation is essential. Students should come to class having read the required selection and outlined the main points of the selection for discussion. Outstanding attendance, preparation, and participation will be taken into consideration in grading borderline cases.

B. Ten *Quizzes* will occur throughout the semester, covering reading assignments and lectures. Quiz 1 will be on the grading standards and course requirements outlined in this syllabus.

Missed quizzes cannot be made up.

C. *Exams* are based on class discussion and reading assignments. Each exam is multiple choice, and will be administered in our classroom on the assigned exam day.

You will have 70 minutes to complete *Exams 1 and 2*. Each exam consists of approximately 50 questions.

The *Final Exam* is cumulative of the semester. You will have 120 minutes to complete the Final Exam. The Final Exam consists of approximately 100 questions.

Please Note: Missed exams can only be made up for medical problems or personal crises, and are excused only by a letter from a licensed physician or the Dean of Students.

D. All *Writing Assignments* must conform to the standards outlined in Appendix B in this syllabus.

Late penalty: Assignments turned in after they are collected at the beginning of class on the specified due date will be lowered ten percent per twenty-four hours.

1. In the *Personal Statement* you should describe your values and life goals. This is to be the kind of statement that you would use in the cover letter for a job application, an application to a competitive school, or for a scholarship.

The content of the personal statement will not be graded. The statement will only be graded on syntax and grammar.

The Personal Statement is to be 300 words in length.

For an example, see the personal statement I wrote in 1982 on e-reserve.

2. *Case Study*. For the case study, you should describe an ethical dilemma. (An ethical dilemma is a situation in which two relevant ethical duties are mutually exclusive.) The case study should be based on a real-life situation in which only one person is faced with the dilemma. Do not write your case study so that the issue is resolved simply by reference to rules, codes, or law.

The Case Study is to be 300 words in length.

3. The *Ethical Theory Précis* is a concise summary of one of the ethical theories covered in class. Do not give your own subjective opinion on the theory; simply describe the logic of the argument for the theory.

The Ethical Theory Précis is to be 400 words in length.

4. The *Ethical Analysis of Case Study Paper* is an ethical analysis of your case study. In the analysis, you analyze the case using the ethical theory outlined in your Ethical Theory Précis. For the basic structure of the paper, see Appendix C.

The Ethical Analysis of Case Study paper is to be 1200 words in length.

E. *Extra Credit* can be earned by attending various on-campus lectures and events *relating to ethics* occurring throughout the semester. Each event counts as 5 points; up to 4 events may be attended for extra credit.

For a complete schedule of possible extra credit events, see <http://ethicscenter.info/>.

ATTENTION STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: If you have any disability which may impair your ability to successfully complete this course, please contact the Accessibility Services Department (room WB-146). Academic accommodations are granted for all students who have qualified documented disabilities. Services are coordinated with the student and instructor by the Accessibility Services Department.

V. COURSE CALENDAR:

(N.B. Page numbers of required readings shown in parentheses)

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|---|--|
| R | Course introduction: Review of syllabus |
| T | What is Ethics & Values?: Outline of the Course (handout)
(<i>Ethics in Action</i> pp. 11-19, pp. 45-49) |
| R | An example of ethical reasoning: Plato, <i>Crito</i> (e-reserve)
(<i>Ethics in Action</i> pp. 19-21) |
| T | An example of ethical reasoning: Plato, <i>Crito</i> (e-reserve) |
| R | Video and discussion: <i>The Trial of Socrates</i> |

BASIC ETHICAL THEORY

ETHICAL RELATIVISM

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|---|---|
| T | Hume, <i>An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals</i> (e-reserve)
(<i>Ethics in Action</i> pp. 21-23) |
| R | Laura Bohannon, "Shakespeare in the Bush" (e-reserve)
(<i>Ethics in Action</i> pp. 391-399) |

VIRTUE ETHICS

- | | |
|---|---|
| T | Morality and the Love of God: Augustine, <i>City of God</i> (e-reserve)
(<i>Ethics in Action</i> pp. 23-25) |
| R | <u>Personal statement due</u> ;
The Transvaluation of Values: Nietzsche, selections (e-reserve)
Existentialism: Sartre, <i>Existentialism is a Humanism</i> (e-reserve) |
| T | The Ethics of Care: Gilligan, <i>In A Different Voice</i> (386-393)
(<i>Ethics in Action</i> pp. 25-26) |
| R | Open Discussion [quiz grade] |
| T | Exam #1 Review |
| R | <u>Exam #1</u> |

RULE ETHICS

- T Divine Command Ethics: Henry, *Christian Personal Ethics* (e-reserve)
 Discussion of Divine Command Ethics: Plato, *Euthyphro* (e-reserve)
- R The Greatest Happiness Principle: Mill, *Utilitarianism* (51-54)
(Ethics in Action pp. 27-30)
- T Deontology: Kant, *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals* (45-51)
(Ethics in Action pp. 30-33)
- R Case Study due
 The Problem of Conflicting Moral Duties: Ibsen, *An Enemy of the People*
 (79-85)

EXTENDING THE SCOPE OF MORAL CONSIDERATION

- T Singer, “All Animals are Equal”
(Ethics in Action pp. 40-43)
- R Leopold, “Thinking Like a Mountain,” “The Land Pyramid”
(Ethics in Action pp. 43-45)

CONTEMPORARY CASE STUDIES

- T The Goshute Nuclear Waste Controversy (*Ethics in Action pp. 133-148*)
 R No class—Spring Break
- T Ethical Theory Précis due
 The Bushmeat Problem (*Ethics in Action pp. 179-185*)
 R Water Politics (*Ethics in Action pp. 194-198*)
- T Exam #2 Review
 R Exam #2
- T The Gun Ban at the University of Utah (*Ethics in Action pp. 456-462*)
 Civil Disobedience and the BYU Honor Code (*Ethics in Action pp. 442-449*)
 R Academic Affairs and “Community Values” (*Ethics in Action pp. 235-245*)
- T Case Study of class’ choice (*Ethics in Action*)
 R Case Study of class’ choice (*Ethics in Action*)
- T Ethical Analysis of Case Study paper due;
 Open discussion
 R Course evaluation (counts as one quiz);
 Final Exam Review
- T Final Exam

Please note: Assignments not retrieved within two weeks after the end of the semester will be donated to the paper recycling bin.

Appendix A

General Education at Utah Valley University*

General Education assists students to become independent, creative, and productive learners. An essential part of the Utah Valley University curriculum, General Education is based on the Jeffersonian premise that an informed citizenry is necessary for a healthy democracy. The knowledge and skills gained from General Education can benefit students regardless of their career paths, providing a broad educational foundation that can enrich them for a lifetime personally and professionally.

Each general education class at UVU offers students opportunities to develop some or all of the following skills and abilities:

1. Students critically evaluate information they hear, read, and see.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of various sources of information?

What characteristics of data collection make some data more reliable than others?

What are some of the ways data is collected and interpreted which directly affect the credibility of the conclusions that can be drawn from it?

2. Students apply methods from relevant areas—the humanities, fine arts, physical sciences, natural sciences, and/or social sciences—to collect and interpret data on specific issues.

What are some strengths and weaknesses of the methodologies of the common intellectual disciplines?

What are some differences between the scientific method and the methods of visual art or literature?

Are all methods of study equally effective in obtaining information and/or approaching truth? How does the method affect the outcome?

How do large sample sizes and single case studies differ in terms of drawing valid conclusions about behavior?

* Prepared by UVU Academic Task Force for General Education in concert with the General Education assessment measures developed by the Utah State Regents' Task Force and Educated Person Consortium, 2000.

3. Students work well collaboratively in diverse groups.

What are the advantages of working well with people with whom one differs or disagrees? How can the individual contribute to a group as a leader or member?

What can one do to solve common group problems?

4. Students communicate clearly and in writing, orally, and quantitatively.

How does one write imaginatively and creatively? What is required to write convincingly for different audiences and purposes?

How does one develop and present a logical argument orally? How does one speak convincingly for different audiences and purposes?

What is required to negotiate with others in a group situation.

What is required to convey numerical data clearly and correctly?

How does one use data accurately to buttress or refute an argument?

5. Students apply to a given issue insights from the life sciences, physical sciences, social sciences, humanities, and fine arts.

What problems lend themselves to study using reductive methods?

What issues benefit from a multidisciplinary study approach?

What are the advantages and weaknesses of an integrated approach?

General Education courses address how these various skills and abilities are developed and assessed. Not surprisingly, the goals set for General Education match societal and workplace needs. College graduates are expected to have a broad range of knowledge, skills, and abilities. Employers, graduate programs, and professional schools commonly seek people who:

- communicate clearly and concisely,
- work collaboratively,
- adapt to new situations,
- make informed, judicious, ethical decisions,
- have skills in research, evaluation, analysis, interpretation, and assessment,
- appreciate and celebrate cultural diversity,
- work well with a wide range of people from different backgrounds,
- and are proficient in using modern technologies.

Appendix B

Writing Assignment Guidelines

- (1) All writing assignments should be written in conventional, correct American English, and should be free of spelling and grammatical errors.
- (2) All writing assignments must be submitted as hard copies in class on the due date. No e-mails.
- (3) Reader: The student's name, the assignment, course title and number, our names, the date, and the word count (text only—not heading or title) should be placed in the *upper left corner* of the first page. For example:

Susan Q. Smart
Case Study
Ethics and Values (PHIL 2050)
Dr. David Keller
October 1, 2009
Words: 304

- (4) Formatting: All writing assignments are to be typed using 12-point font, double-spaced, have numbered pages, with 1.25 inch side margins and 1 inch top and bottom margins. Do not use right justification. It is not necessary to have a page number on the first page.
- (5) Citations: The semester paper must include a bibliography (works cited page) following the citation guidelines outlined in *The Chicago Manual of Style*.

Internet citations: If a website is referenced, the author, the author's credentials, and the original publication must be included. If the author, the author's credentials, and the original publication are not reported, then *the citation is incomplete*.
- (6) Binding: Multiple-page assignments should be stapled once in the upper left-hand corner. Do not use plastic binders or covers of any sort.
- (7) Instructors' comments follow the fifteenth edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style* proofreading notation (§3.20-3.36, pp. 97-102).
- (8) A great resource for help with citations is available at <http://citationmachine.net>.

- (9) Plagiarism, the cardinal academic sin, will result in an E grade for the course. Plagiarism is the act of using and passing off the ideas or writings of another as one's own. *It is your responsibility to understand what plagiarism is and how to*

avoid it. If you do not feel that you understand what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it, consult the Writing Center (LA 201) and read <http://www.uvu.edu/english/student/plagiarism.html>.

Appendix C

Structure of Ethical Analysis of Case Study Paper

- I. Introduction [approximately 100 words]
- II. Case Study [approximately 250 words]
- III. Brief Summary of an Ethical Theory using citations from the philosopher's text showing your mastery of the material based on your précis [approximately 350 words]
- IV. Analysis of the Case Study using the Ethical Theory outlined in III [approximately 400 words]
- V. Conclusion: What has been learned? (Hint: the application of ethical theory to concrete, everyday problems can yield useful results) [approximately 100 words]