

## COURSE SYLLABUS



### Introduction to Ethics

Phil. 21001/10033, 10034, 10035  
10041, 20073, 22661  
MW 1:10-2:00 + Friday Section  
Fall, 2009  
Bowman 317

Dr. Frank Ryan  
Office: 320-E Bowman  
Hours: M 2-5, W 4:15-6:15  
(and by appointment)  
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<u>Friday Section Leaders:</u>	007	Frank Ryan	BOW 204	<a href="mailto:fryan@kent.edu">fryan@kent.edu</a>
<i>Office: 216 Bowman</i>	008	Timothy Elsey	BOW 219	<a href="mailto:telsey@kent.edu">telsey@kent.edu</a>
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	013	Matthew Sandwisch	BOW 208	<a href="mailto:msandwisch@kent.edu">msandwisch@kent.edu</a>

Note: Dr. Ryan's Friday Section meets from 12:05-12:55. All other Friday Sections meet from 1:10-2:00.

**Course Design:** What must we do to be happy? Is the highest human good found in wealth, fame, love, or spirituality? Throughout history humans have sought the key to happiness and a worthwhile life—a search we collectively call “ethics.” Our introduction to ethics covers a wide range of beliefs, from the objectivist claim that we have absolute duties to others, to the relativist view that our only moral obligation is to ourselves. Our journey will be aided by some of the greatest thinkers in history, including Aristotle, Immanuel Kant, Friedrich Nietzsche, and John Dewey. We will also have the opportunity to apply these theories to contemporary issues from gender issues to environmental ethics. Ultimately, however, our study of ethics will yield options rather than final answers: the choice of values in the quest for a meaningful life is a personal lifelong pursuit.

**Required Texts:** (1) Denise, Peterfreund, & White, *Great Traditions in Ethics*, Twelfth Ed.  
(2) May, Collins-Chobanian, and Wong, *Applied Ethics: A Multicultural Approach*, Fourth Ed.  
(3) Handout Materials.

**Grading:** Grades are calculated according to the standard scale:

≥ 93 = A; 90-92 = A-; 88-89 = B+; 83-88 = B; 80-82 = B-;  
78-79 = C+; 73-77 = C; 70-72 = C-; 68-69 = D+; 60-67 = D; ≤ 59 = F

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- 26% is determined by a two unit exams (13 pts. each), a combination of objective and short essay questions.
  - 20% is determined by a cumulative final exam, similar in format to, though somewhat longer than, the unit exams.
  - 4% is determined by a one page paper outline.
  - 15% is determined by one five page critical-analytic paper. The first draft of the paper may be revised and resubmitted once for a higher grade.
  - 15% is determined by verbal responses to Friday unit study questions. If you cannot attend class on a day when questions are due, or do not wish to respond verbally, credit may be earned by supplying full written answers to all questions *before* we cover them in class.
  - 15% is determined by performance and participation in other Friday discussions, work groups, and class activities.
  - 5% is an attendance grade determined by the number of *unexcused* absences according to the following scale: 0-1=A, 2-3=B, 4-5=C, 6=D, 7+ =F.
- Note:* Students who ask questions and contribute regularly to the large group class discussions will have one or two points added to their overall grade.

**Expectations:** Because the study of ethics is most beneficial when personal interests and insights supplement a conceptual understanding of the views, both regular attendance and active involvement in class discussions are important. Please avoid tardiness, as this tends to disrupt the continuity of lectures and discussions. Ask questions in class or consult your instructor about any concepts or arguments you do not fully understand.

**Attendance Policy:** Attendance is monitored by your section instructor. Instructors are generally willing to excuse absences when informed in advance or on the same day—an email post is recommended. Without advance or same day notification, written documentation in conformance with University policy is needed to receive an excused absence.

**Cultural Diversity Element:** The rich legacy of Western thought is augmented by extended consideration of ethical issues pertaining to species, gender, race, and culture.

**Grievance Policy:** The Philosophy Department Grievance Procedure for handling grievances is in conformity with the Student Academic Complaint Policy and Procedures set down as University Policy 3342-4-16 in the *University Policy Register*. For information concerning the details of the grievance procedure, please see the Departmental Chairperson.

**Registration Requirement:** University policy requires all students to be officially registered in each class they are attending. Students who are not officially registered for a course by published deadlines should not be attending classes and will not receive credit or a grade for the course. Each student must confirm enrollment by checking his/her class schedule (using Student Tools in FlashFast) prior to the deadline indicated. Registration errors must be corrected prior to the deadline. The last day to withdraw is November 8.

**Student Accessibility Policy:** University Policy 3342-3-01.3 requires that students with disabilities be provided reasonable accommodations to ensure their equal access to course content. If you have a documented disability and require accommodations, please contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to make arrangements for necessary classroom adjustments. Please note, you must first verify your eligibility for these through Student Accessibility Services (contact 330-672-3391 or visit [www.kent.edu/sas](http://www.kent.edu/sas) for more information on registration procedures).

**Cheating and Plagiarism:** [ For the complete policy and procedure, go to [www.kent.edu/policyregister](http://www.kent.edu/policyregister) and search for policy

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3342-3-01.8j Cheating and plagiarism constitute fraudulent misrepresentation for which no credit can be given and for which appropriate sanctions are warranted and will be applied. Acts of cheating and plagiarism by students constitute a subversion of the goals of the institution and are serious offenses to academic goals and objectives, as well as to the rights of fellow students. "Cheat" means to intentionally misrepresent the source, nature, or other conditions of academic work so as to accrue undeserved credit, or to cooperate with someone else in such misrepresentation. Cheating includes, but is not limited to:

1. Obtaining or retaining partial or whole copies of examinations, tests or quizzes before these are distributed for student use;
2. Using notes, textbooks or other information in examinations, tests and quizzes, except as expressly permitted;
3. Obtaining confidential information about examinations, tests or quizzes other than that released by the instructor;
4. Securing, giving or exchanging information during examinations;
5. Presenting data or other material gathered by another person or group as one's own;
6. Having another person take one's place for any academic performance without the specific knowledge and permission of the instructor;
7. Using a substantial portion of a piece of work previously submitted for another course or program to meet the requirements of the present course or program without notifying the instructor to whom the work is presented; and
8. Presenting falsified information in order to postpone or avoid examinations, tests, quizzes, or other academic work.

"Plagiarize" means to take and present as one's own a material portion of the ideas or words of another or to present as one's own an idea or work derived from an existing source without full and proper credit to the source of the ideas, words, or works. As defined, plagiarize includes, but is not limited to, the copying of words, sentences and paragraphs, and also other visual and nonverbal materials directly from the work of another without proper credit.

Date	Topic/Author	Reading/Assignments /Exams
		<i>G: Great Traditions in Ethics A: Applied Ethics</i>
8/31	Introduction: Ethics in Life	
9/2	An Ethical Continuum	
9/4	<u>Friday Session</u> : Where are you on the ethical continuum?	
9/7	<i>Labor Day Holiday—no class</i>	
<b>I. Objectivism</b>		
9/9	Socrates and the Sophists	G: 7-10
9/11	<u>Friday Session</u> : Should Socrates have escaped?	<b><i>Paper Instructions and Handout</i></b>
9/14	Plato: The Form of Good	G: 10-15
9/16	Plato: The Good State	G: 15-20
9/18	<u>Friday Section</u> : Panel: Bronze, Silver, and Gold	
9/21	Augustine: The Problem of Evil	G: 59-65
9/23	Augustine: The City of God	G: 65-72
9/25	<u>Friday Section</u> : See no evil?	
9/28	Kant: Pure and Practical Reason	G: 142-144
9/30	Kant: The Good Will	G: 145-149
10/2	<u>Friday Section</u> : The attic dilemma—checklist of motives versus consequences	
10/5	Kant: The Categorical Imperative	G: 149-153

10/7 Kant: The Kingdom of Ends  
10/9 Friday Section:  
10/12

G: 153-155  
**Objectivism Study Questions**  
**UNIT TEST I**

### II. Naturalism

10/14 Aristotle: Form and matter  
10/16 Friday Section: Test return and review  
10/19 Aristotle: The Virtuous Life  
  
10/21 Moore, Neo-Utilitarians, Ayer  
10/23 Friday Section: Exercise: Define Happiness?  
10/26 Dewey: The Crisis of Modernity  
10/28 Dewey: The Construction of Good  
10/30 Friday Section:

G: 21-27  
  
G: 27-34  
**Paper Outline Due**  
G: 240-246; 262-268  
  
G: 226-230  
G: 230-238  
**Naturalism Study Questions**

### III. Social Relativism

11/2 Bentham and Mill: The Pleasure Calculus  
11/4 Mill: Utilitarianism  
11/6 Friday Section: Discussion: Utilitarianism and the health care debate  
11/9 Rawls: Justice is Fairness  
11/11 *Veterans Day Observance—no class*  
11/13 Friday Section: Instructors' Wild Card

G: 156-162  
G: 163-169  
  
G: 300-311

### IV. Individual Relativism

11/16 Nietzsche: The Will to Power  
  
11/18 Nietzsche: Superman Returns  
11/20 Friday Section:  
  
11/23

G: 211-218  
**Paper First Draft Due**  
G: 218-224  
G: **Social and Individual Relativism Study Questions**  
**UNIT TEST II**

### V. Ethics and Contemporary Social Issues

11/30 Environmental Ethics: Leopold and Baxter  
12/2 Environmental Ethics: Cajate and Cheng  
12/4 Friday Section:  
12/7 Same Sex Marriage: Bolte and Jordan  
12/8 Affirmative Action: Boxill and Steele  
12/11 Friday Section:

A: 165-175; 186-190  
A: 191-207  
Test Return and Review  
A: 399-422  
A: 458-472  
**Applied Ethics Study Questions**  
**Paper Final Draft Due**

**FINAL EXAM: Friday, December 18, 10:15-12:30**