KENT STATE UNIVERSITY
PHIL21001/14603: Introduction to Ethics
Spring, 2011

(A course that presents a diversity of ethical perspectives:
This course satisfies Kent State University diversity requirement)
Section 004
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Office hours: T/Th: 11:30 - 12:15; and by appointment

DESCRIPTION AND GOALS OF THE COURSE:

PURPOSE OF THE COURSE: The purpose of this course is two-fold. First the course will introduce students to the various ways philosophers have approached the study of ethical reasoning and values. Thus this will be a study of various ethical theories, both contemporary and historical, primarily vis-a-vis the institutional side of our lives together in society. The goal is to achieve a comprehensive insight into the significant ethical systems, an appreciation of their strengths and weaknesses, as well as an analytical vocabulary adequate to the discussion and communication of the concepts and values that are integral to the diverse theories.

The second objective of this course is to provide students with an opportunity to practice the skills of moral reasoning carried in the various systems. This means they will have to first understand this reasoning, the strengths and weakness of each, personally draw up rational argumentation, and do so in regard to important contemporary moral issues that they will need to deal with in their everyday lives. The goal is also to allow students to become comfortable and skillful in ethical decision making, and in the discussion of issues in situations of diverse ethical opinions.

REQUIRED TEXTS:
Ethics: Theory and Contemporary Issues, concise edition, by Barbara MacKinnon
Course Packet of readings. (Can be purchase at Wordsmith on Main Street in Kent, Ohio)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:
1. Attentive presence, therefore regular attendance, punctuality (being on time), and commitment to the full hour and 15 minutes (not leaving early), of each class is very important. The subject matter of this course calls for a discussion intensive format, and hence your participation is essential to the success in reaching the goals of the class for all. Hence, both points will factor greatly in the evaluation of the participation component of your final grade.
2. Preparation for class by a careful reading of assigned pages. Quite often this will mean you bring short answers to class of questions provided to guide your readings. It also assumes that you will bring the reading assignments or pertinent text with you to class. Also, each student will be expected to intelligibly take part in a “fish bowl” discussion of these questions about these readings once during the semester. You can also expect an occasional spot quiz on the readings.
3. Completion of written assignments: You will receive instructions on your term paper on a
separate sheet. You will be asked to hand in a comprehensive question and answer assignment on
the film, *High Noon*.
4. A short mid-term test. The format will be fill in the blanks, matching, true and false, and an
essay section. The class before the mid-term exam will include some time for review of the
exam. There will also be a review sheet to guide your preparation for the mid-term.
5. The final exam. This will be a take home exam and be given out to you the last class.

SYLLABUS:
The syllabus will guide you as to each session’s topic so you can come prepared for class. It will
also list all assignments and dates they are due. Keep the syllabus in a convenient place and
check it often so that you are not caught unawares of an assignment that is due.

COURSE METHOD:
This course will proceed by using a variety of instructional methods, power point lectures,
discussion/question and answer sessions, film presentations, and student led discussions. In
order for you to have a successful experience, it is important for you to come to class prepared by
reading the texts assigned for that day, by following along and participating in class discussions,
and by taking good notes—remember in the long run *a teacher will test in a most basic sense on
what a teacher teaches in class*.

COURSE GRADING: 25% class participation: includes attendance, question sheets, and the
grade on the “fish bowl” conversation; 25% on the Ethics term paper plus your work on *High
Noon*; 25% mid-term and quizzes, 25% final exam.

ATTENDANCE: *Un-excused* absences, tardiness, or early departure will factored into the 25%
class participation average. Four un-excused absences (two weeks of class) will result in a F in
your attendance grade. I will require a prior notice for an excused absence and/or official note.
Your classmates and I need you to be actively present. It is university policy that you should
attend each and every class. In sum, the attendance grade will reflect three considerations: your
presence in class, your presence in class on time, your presence in class that is not
disruptive—cell phone interruptions are included. *Attuned attendance in class is a key to
doing well on exams and quizzes.*

GRADING SCALE: A+=99-100, A=92-98, A-=90-91, B+=87-89, B=82-86, B- 80-81,
C+=77-79, C=73-76, C-=70-72, D+=65-69, D=60-64, F=0-59.

CONSULTATION: Office hours are by appointment. I would be happy to meet with you for a
brief consultation before or after class. I will recommend that you meet at least once with me
to discuss your term paper or any other questions you may have. You can also call me at
home for an appointment or reach me with your questions by e-mail. I'll check my e-mail
faithfully 24 hours before class.
NEED HELP? There are many avenues for academic help at Kent State University. Kent State
University recognizes its responsibilities for creating an institutional climate in which students
with disabilities can succeed. Students with disabilities are entitled to reasonable
accommodations and should have equal access to course content. This is University policy, 3342-
3-01.3. If you have a documented disability and require accommodation, please call 330-672-3391 or visit www.kent.edu/sas for more information. Please keep in mind, you must first verify your eligibility, and that accommodations are not retroactive, so it is best to register with Student Disability Services at your earliest convenience.

Finally, as your Instructor, I am available to help you with your academic work and would be quite happy to do so, so please feel free to set up an appointment with me when needed.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE: The Philosophy Department Grievance Procedure is in conformity with the Student Academic Complaint Policy and Procedures set down as University Policy 3342-4-16 in the University Policy Register.

Academic Appeals: The general principle that applies to the following procedures is that an appeal is directed to the administrative level immediately above the unit from which the appeal emanates. Appeals are limited to the following reasons:

a. The decision is arbitrary and/or unreasonable.

b. The decision resulted from a procedural error.

c. The decision is not in accordance with the facts presented.

d. New information is available which may suggest a modification of the decision.

REGISTRATION REQUIREMENT: The official registration deadline for this course is January 16, 2011. Late registration ends January 24. After this date there is a $100 fee assessed. The last official date to withdraw from class without a W on your record is January 23, 2011. 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 they 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 deadlines indicated.

LATE WORK: Late papers mean lots more work for you (because assignments can build up and become overwhelming) and for me. Moreover, since class discussions can only succeed if you are prepared, there is some late work that simply cannot be made up. There will be a grade penalty on all late papers; exceptions will require a documented reason for the work being late.

WRITTEN WORK:
Be careful and show pride in the papers you turn in as to neatness, correct grammar and spelling, appropriate academic language, and clarity of writing. Your major paper must be typed, double spaced, and adequately identified as to topic and author (you!). Please proofread and make corrections neatly—that is not my job. I reserve the right to return papers which have not been adequately proofread before I grade them.

EXTRA CREDIT: You may earn up to 20 points in extra credit by reading and writing a short summary of one or two of the course pack readings not discussed in class. This credit can be applied to your mid-term, final or term paper according to how you would like to use it.

DIVERSITY ELEMENT: This course will include ethical works written from feminist and non-Western perspectives.
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: A statement by Mary Ann Haley; University policy 3342-3-02.8 deals with the problem of academic dishonesty, cheating and plagiarism. None of these will be tolerated in this class. The sanctions provided by this policy will be used to deal with any violations. If you any questions, please read the policy: http://www.kent.edu/policyreg/chap3/3-01.8cfm or ask.

STUDENT CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM: Condensed Version

For the complete policy and procedure, go to www.kent.edu/policyreg and search for policy 3342-3-01.8, or see http://www.kent.edu/policyreg/chap3/3-01.8.cfm or http://www.kent.edu/policyreg/chap3/upload-3342-3.01.8.pdf

Cheating and plagiarism constitute fraudulent misrepresentation for which no credit can be given and for which appropriate sanctions are warranted and will be applied. The university affirms that acts of cheating and plagiarism by students constitute a subversion of the goals of the institution, have no place in the university 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. Falsifying experimental data or information;
7. Having another person take one's place for any academic performance without the specific knowledge and permission of the instructor;
8. Cooperating with another to do one or more of the above;
9. 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
10. Presenting falsified information in order to postpone or avoid examinations, tests, quizzes, or other academic work.

20 August 2009
Phil 21001: Syllabus, Spring Semester, 2011

January
10/11 Explanation of Syllabus, Requirements. “What is Ethics?”
12/13 The Moral Experience: CP # 1, 2, 3.

17/18 What is Justice? CP# 4. Fish Bowl 1. Note: Monday is a federal holiday, (students are responsible to complete the readings on their own time).
19/20 Ethics and Ethical Reasoning, textbook, pp. 2-12.

24/25 Ethical Relativism: textbook, pp. 14-21. Quiz on Chapter 1
26/27 Readings, CP. # 5, 6, 7.

February
(Jan) 31/1 Quiz on Chapter 2, Ethical Relativism, Fish Bowl 2.
2/3 Ethical Egoism: textbook, pp. 22-29.

7/8 Nietzschean ethics: CP. # 8, 9. Quiz on chapter and readings.
9/10 Utilitarian ethics, textbook, pp. 30-42; “Cost Benefit Analysis”. Class Handout and discussion.

16/17 Peter Singer, “All Animals are Equal”, CP# 11; Class participation quiz.

21/22 Deontological ethics: Kant’s Ethics of Duty, textbook, pp. 44-52. Mid-term review.
23/24 Mid-term; distribution of questions on CP reading, #12.

March
(Feb) 28/1 A reading on Kant’s moral theory, CP.# 12. Discussion questions due.
2/3 Natural law and natural rights, textbook, pp. 55-61. Discussion questions hand out.

7/8 Discussion questions due: class discussion on CP# 13. Short quiz.
9/10 Virtue Ethics, textbook, pp. 63-69. CP.# 14, Aristotle, excerpts from The Nicomachean Ethics.

14/15 Quiz on virtue ethics. Existentialist ethics; Readings by Sartre and de Beauvoir, CP. # 15 & 16. Discussion question handout on CP. # 17 &18.
16/17 Fish Bowl 4: on feminist ethics. (Readings by Gilligan and Friedman).

Spring Break — March 21-25

28/29 Movie: High Noon. Discussion questions will be handed out. NOTE: Since the movie is 85 minutes long, we will begin class 5 minutes early and end 5 minutes
late. The most important actions in this movie are in those respective times so we ask you to come early and leave a little late for this class.

30/31 Discussion of the theories as represented in this movie. Early dismissal as you stayed later last session.

April
4/5  Fish Bowl 5 on “Can We Be Good without God”? CP. # 19
6/7  General discussion on “Letter from the Birmingham Jail”, CP.# 20.

11/12 Fish Bowl 6 on CP.# 21 &22. Confucian ethics
13/14 Buddhist Ethics, CP.# 23—Class presentation.

18/19 North American Indian Ethics, CP.# 24.
20/21 Environmental Ethics, CP. #25 Positions on next classes debate assigned.

25/26 Ethical consideration for the nursing profession, CP> # 26 &27.
27/28 Assignment and explanation of the take home final exam. This exam must be e-mailed to me by May 5, 2011. I will send you a confirmation that I have received your exam on Saturday morning, May 6. Grades will be posted by midnight on May 12, 2011.

This has been a good faith calendar of topics for the semester—it is of course subject to revision if this becomes necessary.