PHIL 21001 014: Introduction to Ethics
Fall 2015, MW 11:00-12:15

Instructor: Matthew Veneklasen
Office (at least for this semester): Bowman Hall, Room 320, Office R
Email: mveneklasen(at)kent.edu
Office hours: MW 12:15-1:00, 1:30-2:30, 3:00-3:30, 6:45-7:00

Statement of course learning outcomes and expectations. By completing this course, students should: gain critical reading and writing skills; understand the arguments and ethical theories of a few representative thinkers in the Western tradition; be able to recognize ethical arguments and theories in “real world” situations; be able to articulate their own arguments responding to the ethical questions; be exposed to and understand a philosophical approach from a methodology or lens that is significantly different from their own.

Statements concerning university requirements.

This course may be used to satisfy a Kent Core requirement. The Kent Core as a whole is intended to broaden intellectual perspectives, foster ethical and humanitarian values, and prepare students for responsible citizenship and productive careers.

This course may be used to satisfy the University Diversity requirement. Diversity courses provide opportunities for students to learn about such matters as the history, culture, values and notable achievements of people other than those of their own national origin, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, age, gender, physical and mental ability, and social class. Diversity courses also provide opportunities to examine problems and issues that may arise from differences, and opportunities to learn how to deal constructively with them.

Required books.

- What the Buddha Taught, by Walpola Rahula, revised ed., 978-0802130310

Statement on enrollment/official registration. The official registration deadlines for this course can be found by doing a Detailed Class Search from the Schedule of Classes found at: https://keys.kent.edu:44220/eprod/bwlkffs.P_AdvUnsecureCrsSearch?term_in=201580

(You should also be able to do this through Flashline.) 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 FlashLine) prior to the deadline indicated. Registration errors must be corrected prior to the deadline.

For additional information about this course, including a provisional schedule of readings, assignments, et cetera, see the “Course Content” handout.

The final exam for this course is scheduled for Wednesday, December 16, from 10:15-12:30.

The course withdrawal deadline can be found in the same way that the official registration deadlines can be found (see the above “statement on enrollment/official registration”)

1 Please note that this syllabus is subject to revision at the instructor’s discretion.
Your grade for this course will be determined according to the following percentages.

- Participation: 10%
- Quizzes and Final Exam: 90%

Attendance Policy: Unless there is some appropriately serious and unavoidable circumstance, e.g. a medical emergency, students are expected to attend every class period. You are responsible for all material covered in the lecture, or covered in any assigned or distributed handouts or readings, regardless of whether or not you attended the class period in question. (This means that if you miss a class, you should attempt to get the notes, assignments, explanations, etc., from another student, and you might also want to visit me during my next office hours.)

If you are absent on the day of an in-class quiz: the first time, the quiz will be “dropped” from your final grade. The second time, you may take a make-up quiz, provided that your absence is a documented, excused absence. The make-up quiz may be different and/or more difficult than the “normal” quiz. If you miss a quiz due to an unexcused absence, notify me promptly and you might still be able to take a make-up quiz, although some points (perhaps a full letter grade) will need to be deducted. At the end of the semester, I may decide to increase the score on the worst-scoring quiz for everyone who has not missed any (in-class) quizzes. For take-home quizzes, the following policy regarding “assignments” applies.

If you are absent on the day an assignment is due: If the absence is a documented, excused absence, you may turn in the assignment the following day of class without penalty. If the absence is not a documented excused absence, then if you email me a completed version of the assignment, and if I receive it (i.e. if it makes it to my email “inbox”) before the time when our class begins that day, then you may also turn in the assignment the following day of class with no penalty. Otherwise, I will accept late assignments if they are turned in within a week of when they were due, and some amount of points will be deducted as a “penalty.” For example, the grade might be reduced by a full letter grade for each day (of class) that it is late.

Statement concerning cheating and plagiarism: University policy 3-01.8 deals with the problem of academic dishonesty, cheating, and plagiarism. None of these will be tolerated in this class. The sanctions provided in this policy will be used to deal with any violations. If you have any questions, please read the policy at [http://www.kent.edu/policyreg/policydetails.cfm?customel_dataid=1976529–2037779](http://www.kent.edu/policyreg/policydetails.cfm?customel_dataid=1976529–2037779) and/or ask.

Statement regarding students with disabilities: University policy 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).

Respect and courtesy are expected of everyone, in relation to everyone. This includes, by the way, keeping cell phones and other devices silent and put away during classes. Failure to conduct oneself respectfully may result in points being deducted from a student’s grade, and in severe or repeated cases may result in other consequences.