

Course Outline of Record

Los Medanos College

2700 East Leland Road

Pittsburg CA 94565

Course Title: Introductions to Ethics

Subject Area/Course Number: PHIL-120

New Course OR Existing Course

Author(s): Edward Haven

Subject Area/Course No.: Philosophy 120
Units: 3

Course Title: Introductions to Ethics
Discipline(s): Philosophy

Pre-Requisite(s): None
Co-Requisite(s): None

Advisories: *Eligibility for ENGL-100*

Catalog Description:

This course introduces students to the core philosophical ethical theories and their application to contemporary moral issues. These theories include but are not limited to Utilitarianism, Kantian Deontology and Virtue ethics, which may be applied to such issues as abortion, euthanasia, genetic engineering, terrorism. Students will be introduced to employing critical thinking and logic to analyze these theories and issues, making ethical evaluations and finding their own ethical imperative.

Schedule Description:

Everyone confronts ethical issues, whether globally, locally or in his/her personal life. How we choose to think about these issues and deal with them come to define the quality of our lives and who we are as a person. In this class students will be introduced to ethical theories and apply them to contemporary moral issues, such as abortion, euthanasia, genetic engineering and terrorism.

Hrs/Mode of Instruction: Lecture: 54 Scheduled Lab: HBA Lab: Composition: Activity: Total Hours

Credit Credit Degree Applicable (DA)
 Credit Non-Degree (NDA)

Grading Pass/No Pass (P/NP)
 Letter (LR)
 Student Choice (SC)

Repeatability 0
 1
 2
 3

Last date of Assessment: Spring 19

Cohort #: 2

Please apply for:

LMC General Education Requirement(s): Arts and Humanities

Transfer to: CSU UC IGETC Area 3B CSU GE Area C2 C-ID Number PHIL 120

Course is Baccalaureate Level: Yes No

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Signatures:

Department Chair _____ Date _____

Librarian _____ Date _____

Dean (Technical Review) _____ Date _____

Curriculum Committee Chair _____ Date _____

President/Designee _____ Date _____

CCCCD Approval Date (Board or Chancellor's Office) _____ Date _____

STAND ALONE COURSE: YES NO

Course approved by Curriculum Committee as Baccalaureate Level: YES NO

LMC GE Requirement Approved by the Curriculum Committee: _____

FOR OFFICE OF INSTRUCTION ONLY. DO NOT WRITE IN THE SECTION BELOW.

Begin in Semester _____ Catalog year 20____/20____ Class Max: _____

Dept. Code/Name: _____ T.O.P.s Code: _____ Crossover course 1/ 2: _____

ESL Class: Yes / No _____ DSPS Class: Yes / No _____ Coop Work Exp: Yes / No _____

- Class Code
- A Liberal Arts & Sciences
 - B Developmental Preparatory
 - C Adult/Secondary Basic Education
 - D Personal Development/Survival
 - E For Substantially Handicapped
 - F Parenting/Family Support
 - G Community/Civic Development
 - H General and Cultural
 - I Career/Technical Education
 - J Workforce Preparation Enhanced
 - K Other non-credit enhanced
 - Not eligible for enhanced

- SAM Code
- A Apprenticeship
 - B Advanced Occupational
 - C Clearly Occupational
 - D Possibly Occupational
 - E* Non-Occupational

- Remediation Level
- B Basic Skills
 - NBS Not Basic Skills

- *Additional criteria needed
- 1 One level below transfer
 - 2 Two levels below transfer
 - 3 Three levels below transfer

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Institutional Student Learning Outcomes:



General Education SLOs:

At the completion of the LMC general education program, a student will:

1. read critically and communicate effectively as a writer and speaker.
2. understand connections among disciplines and apply interdisciplinary approaches to problem solving.
3. think critically and creatively
4. consider the ethical implications inherent in knowledge, decision-making and action.
5. possess a worldview informed by diverse social, multicultural and global perspectives.



None

Program-Level Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs):

1. Citizenship – Developing and applying ethical responsibility and care in academics, the workplace, and global and local communities, while respecting and engaging with a diversity of beliefs, cultures, values, abilities, genders, races, ages, and sexual orientations.
2. Critical Engagement – Becoming critical co-investigators of a pluralistic world towards the agency to apply critical thinking to themselves, their communities and their societies, imparting an ethical imperative.
3. Philosophical Enquiry – Applying the methodologies of philosophy and critical thinking to describe and analyze philosophical and interdisciplinary problems and issues, including in historical context.
4. Philosophical Expression – Express complex philosophical ideas and arguments in clear, coherent and cogent written and oral communication.

Course-Level Student Learning Outcomes (CSLOs):

1. Critically analyze theories in a culturally diverse body of ethical theories through primary texts, including utilitarianism, deontology and virtue ethics. (GESLO 3, 4, 5; PLSO 1, 2, 3)
2. Critically evaluate a culturally diverse body of ethical theories, including utilitarianism, deontology and virtue ethics, in their effectiveness to address ethical issues. (GESLO 3, 4, 5; PLSO 1, 2, 3)
3. Apply ethical theories to contemporary moral, political and social issues. (GESLO 2, 3, 4; PSLO 1, 2, 3)
4. Express complex ethical issues and arguments in clear, coherent and cogent written and oral communication. (GESLO 1, 4 PSLO 4)

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Assessment Instruments:

	Writing Assignments	Reading Assessments	In Class Activities
CSLO 1	X	X	X
CSLO 2	X	X	X
CSLO 3	X	X	X
CSLO 4	X	X	X

1. Critically analyze theories within a culturally diverse body of ethical theories through primary texts, including utilitarianism, deontology and virtue ethics. (GESLO 3, 4, 5; PLSO 1, 2, 3)

A. Writing assignments will ask students to provide in depth analysis of primary texts in order to support the students argument. (e.g. using an analysis of the Categorical Imperative to justify a stance on terrorism, the Principle of Utility to argue for moral consideration of animals, or arguments from Judith Jarvis Thomson’s “A Defense of Abortion” to establish grounds of selective abortion).

B. Reading assessments will require the students to analyze the texts assigned (e.g. identify the key premises in an argument against moral relativism , writing a short journal analyzing an excerpt from John Stuart Mills, or orally presenting a summary of an assigned case study relating to abortion).

C. In class actives will ask students to work together to come to an understand philosophical theories, learning the methodologies for successful analysis. (e.g. Identifying key premises from a passage in class, or breaking into groups to discuss and identify the argument in an assigned sub-argument)

2. Critically evaluate a culturally diverse body of ethical theories, including utilitarianism, deontology and virtue ethics, in their effectiveness to address ethical issues. (GESLO 3, 4, 5; PLSO 1, 2, 3)

A. Writing assignments will ask students to draw from a diverse body of viewpoints across cultures and traditions of thought, including ideas the student may not agree with, in order to evaluate ideas presented across the primary texts. (e.g. writing a paper about the best response to terrorism, a doctor’s ethical obligations in euthanasia, or which ethical theory provides a life well lived).

B. Reading assignments will ask students questions that lead to a evaluation of the theory as it relates to the other theories presented in the courses. (e.g answering questions about Bonnie Stienbock’s “The Intentional Termination of Life” as a response to James Rachels’ “Active and Passive Euthanasia”, or when reading an excerpt from Kant writing about how it addresses problems raised with Utilitarianism)

C. In class activities will ask students to consider the different perspectives from the course readings in relationship to each other as part of a larger discourse. These activities will provide a

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formative assessment of students comprehension of the philosophical underpinnings that connect the material (e.g. a group performance of moral skits, as evaluated by different philosophers or groups all tackle philosophical dilemma's and the class discusses which theories they found most useful).

3. Apply ethical theories to contemporary moral, political and social issues. (GESLO 2, 3, 4; PSLO 1, 2, 3)

A. When completing the writing assignment students will be challenged to use not only the information from the course, but to provide their own context to the questions. Paper prompts will be formed to encourage engagement with social, political and ethical issues. This will help students better understand their role as citizens both in their own community and in larger geo-political communities (e.g. writing about ethical solutions to terrorism or applying ideas from care ethics to the nurse/patient relationship).

B. Reading assessment will provide a formative assessment of student's ability to map the reading onto their own lives and experience with social, political and ethical issues. This will be done by providing prompts that encourage a critical engagement through questions aimed at exploring the commonalities between the philosophical questions in the reading and the questions in the students lives and experience in a social, political and ethical context. (e.g. challenging students to describe a moral dilemma from their own life and apply the theory to it; reading Confucius' Analects and applying them to contemporary political debate).

C. In class activities will include a social, political or ethical element. The activities should encourage students to think about the implications of the discussions they are making and the larger impact these decisions would have on society. (e.g. discuss the ethical implications of current political debates and issues; ask students to provide ethical dilemma in their own lives and challenge the student to come up with advice from the theories covered; or have students do a quick write about opinions they have heard about euthanasia).

4. Express complex ethical issues and arguments in clear, coherent and cogent written and oral communication. (GESLO 1, 4 PSLO 4)

A. Writing Assignments will require students to formulate a written argument for their own ideas on the particular topic for the course section. In doing so students will receive assistance in moving from their ideas, to being able to clearly and concisely articulate an argumentative stance on the topic. (e.g. writing a term paper in which the student provides a solution to the no rest objection to utilitarianism or writing a section paper about how to accurately ethically categorize terrorism).

B. Reading assessment will provide a formative assessment of students' writing skills or oral skills when they are asked to articulate their beliefs and opinions about the assigned reading. On a week by week basis the instructor will be given the opportunity to assess the students' writing and speaking to modify the assignment to help shape student learning towards mastery of written arguments on major philosophical questions. (e.g. reading an excerpt from John Stuart Mills' Utilitarians and drawing their own chart organizing the different kinds of pleasures/happiness; orally presenting a summary of "The case for Animal Rights" by Tom Regan in class to begin class discussion on the text; or reading Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "Letter from a Birmingham Jail", to write about social justice and the ethical imperative for justice.)

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C. When participating in class activities students will be asked to present their ideas and arguments in an oral form, to other students in a group, to the class and instructor, through presentations. This will give an opportunity for a formative assessment not only of a students' understanding of the material but also of the students' competency for presenting complex philosophical ideas and arguments in an oral form. (e.g. a group performance of moral skits, as evaluated by different philosophers; respond to a video about human impact on the environment; or present an assigned case study to the class).

Through the course of the semester students will receive both formative and summative assessments to evaluate their progress towards mastery of the student learning outcomes. Assessments may take on many forms, not limited to the required assessments below. All assessment will focus on critical engagement with the material in the course, student comprehension of the underlying interconnected philosophical issues and their ability to articulate a well founded position within the philosophy field of discourse. Students' course work will be assessed by but are not limited to the following methods:

Writing Assignments

In order to help students analyze a particular topic or philosophy in depth, evaluate those philosophies, and express their own philosophical conclusions, students will be required to write a paper on a subject relating to each section of the course. Paper length will vary depending on the length of the section but will total at least 9 pages (MLA format) over the course of the semester and will contain direct quotations from assigned primary text for the course.

Sample writing prompts:

1. Is Kantian Deontology the best method for determining moral choices? Discuss some of the strength and weaknesses to taking a Deontological approach.
2. Can terrorism ever be morally justified? Why or why not? Consider its use in war.
3. Virtue Ethics focuses on being moral. How is this different from the other ethics systems we have looked at? How does this change the response to moral questions?
4. Is passive euthanasia morally different than active euthanasia? Can either form of euthanasia be moral?

Reading Assessments

Learning to critically engage with philosophical readings is an important part of philosophy. In order to facilitate a critical reading and analysis of the primary texts, students will be required to write about the assigned readings. These may take different forms, from journals to study questions to in class presentations. In all cases, the instructor will use these reading assessments to teach important skills for reading academic texts, such as identifying key passages, mapping the overarching argumentative structures and distinguishing between an evaluation and analysis.

In Class Activities: In philosophy it is important to share ideas, raise questions and express objections in order to make progress towards understanding the material and for students to begin to form their own ideas and sense of self. For this reason student participation in class is important. In order to reflect this, in class participation activities will be given in class. These will be small in class assignments. These activities give the student the opportunity to engage with new material,

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while building communication skills with their classmates, to better form an understanding of the material in context.

Method of Evaluation/Grading:

Each section will be composed of in class activities to help the students better engage with the material, reading assessments for the assigned readings in the section, and will culminate in a short paper. Additional assessment may be made by the instructor as needed. A sample break down of grade weight by approximate percentage value could be:

Writing Assignments 45% (15% per paper, with the lowest paper grade dropped)

Participation 25% (over ~20 – 30 graded activities)

Reading assignments 30% (15 assignments each worth 2%)

Upon completion of the course, a percentage of completed course work will be calculated using the assessments from the course. A letter grade will be assigned as follows:

A	90 - 100%
B	80 - 89%
C	70 - 79%
D	60 - 69%
F	0 – 59%

A student who earns an 'A' grade will have achieved mastery in the course-level learning outcomes, demonstrating exceptional ability for critical engagement with the material in the course, comprehension of the underlying interconnected philosophical issues and their ability to articulate a well founded position within the philosophy field of discourse.

A student who earns a 'B' grade will have achieved near mastery or mastery in some but not all of the course-level learning outcomes, demonstrating a strong ability for critical engagement with the material in the course, comprehension of the underlying interconnected philosophical issues and their ability to articulate a well founded position within the philosophy field of discourse.

Student who earns a 'C' grade will have achieved a satisfactory completion of the course-level learning outcomes, demonstrating satisfactory ability for critical engagement with the material in the course, comprehension of the underlying interconnected philosophical issues and their ability to articulate a well founded position within the philosophy field of discourse.

A student who earns a 'D' grade will have achieved near satisfactory completion or satisfactory completion in some but not all of the course-level learning outcomes, demonstrating below standard ability for critical engagement with the material in the course, comprehension of the underlying interconnected philosophical issues and their ability to articulate a well founded position within the philosophy field of discourse.

A student who earns a 'F' grade will lack satisfactory completion of the course-level learning outcomes, demonstrating a deficiency in ability for critical engagement with the material in the course, comprehension of the underlying interconnected philosophical issues and their ability to articulate a well founded position within the philosophy field of discourse.

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Course Content:

The course will be divided into at least four sections, each covering a different philosophical theory along with excerpts from primary texts and applying the theory to a contemporary moral issue, which is best illuminated by that theory. The following theories must be covered: Utilitarianism, Kantian Deontology, Virtue Ethics and one non-Western. Other possible sections could include: Care ethics, Ubuntu, Confucianism or meta-ethical questions like, moral relativism, moral egoism, defining ethics.

Sample outline:

- I. Challenges of Morality
 - A. What makes something moral?
 - B. How to Answer Moral Questions
 - C. Moral Authorities
 - D. Moral Relativism
 - E. Egoism and Moral Skepticism
- II. Utilitarianism
 - A. John Stuart Mills
 - B. Issues and questions raised about Utilitarianism
- III. Animal Rights
 - A. Utilitarianism Arguments For, including Peter Singer
 - B. Arguments Against and in response
- IV. Kantian Deontology
 - A. Immanuel Kant
 - B. Issues and questions raised about Utilitarianism
- V. Terrorism
 - A. Moral arguments against terrorism
 - B. Just war theory applied to terrorism
 - C. Moral Justifications for terrorism
- VI. Virtue Ethics
 - A. Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics
 - B. Care Ethics
- VII. Abortion.
 - A. Judith Jarvis Thomson – A Defense of abortion.
 - B. Other approaches to abortion.
- VIII. Ubuntu
 - A. Original Zulu texts
 - B. Contemporary philosophical contributions
- IX. Affirmative Action
 - A. Two Concepts of Affirmative Action
 - B. Arguments for and against Affirmative action

Lab By Arrangement Activities (If Applicable): N/A

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Instructional Methods:

- Lecture
- Lab
- Activity
- Problem-based Learning/Case Studies
- Collaborative Learning/Peer Review
- Demonstration/Modeling
- Role-Playing
- Discussion
- Computer Assisted Instruction
- Other (explain) _____

Textbooks:

1. Selections from primary sources (Open Educational Resources)
2. Dimmock, Mark and Andrew Fisher (2017), Ethics for A-Level, Creative Commons 4.0, Openbook Publisher
2. Cahn, Steven M. (2019) Exploring Ethics: An Introductory Anthology (5rd ed.) New York: Oxford University Press
3. Rachels, James (2018) The Elements of Moral Philosophy (9th ed.) McGraw Hill College
4. Pojman, Louis (2016) Ethics: Discovering Right and Wrong (8th ed.) Wadsworth Pub.