



Syllabus

PHL 103 Ethics

General Information

Date January 9th, 2023

Author Mark Worrell

Department Humanities

Course Prefix PHL

Course Number 103

Course Title Ethics

Course Information

Catalog Description This course investigates the theoretical nature of morality and its application in particular moral dilemmas. The course is designed to assist students in approaching, questioning, and refining their moral commitments and values, their understanding of the reasoned application of ethical principles, and, ultimately, their ethical practice in both their personal and professional lives. Among the theoretical questions posed and discussed are: Is morality simply relative to specific cultures? What are criteria for right and wrong? What is moral agency? Different ethical theories about the nature of a worthwhile life and concepts of morally sound behavior are examined.

Credit Hours 3

Lecture Contact Hours 3

Lab Contact Hours 0

Other Contact Hours 0

Grading Scheme Letter

Prerequisites

None

Co-requisites

None

First Year Experience/Capstone Designation

This course **DOES NOT** satisfy the outcomes applicable for status as a FYE or Capstone.

SUNY General Education

This course is designated as satisfying a requirement in the following SUNY Gen Ed categories

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Social Justice Outcome 1, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Social Justice Outcome 2, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Social Justice Outcome 3, and Humanities

FLCC Values

Institutional Learning Outcomes Addressed by the Course

Vitality, Inquiry, Perseverance, and Interconnectedness

Course Learning Outcomes

Course Learning Outcomes

1. Students will be able to understand, analyze, and interpret moral theories and perspectives critically.
2. Students will be able to make critical distinctions between various moral theories and perspectives.
3. Students will be able to distinguish the principles of good moral reasoning from poor moral reasoning.
4. Students will be able to apply principles of good moral reasoning to write and develop sound moral arguments about moral situations (personal, social, professional) using organized and coherent discourse.
5. Students will apply principles of good moral reasoning in oral communication about moral situations (personal, social, professional) in an organized and persuasive manner.

Outline of Topics Covered

PHL 103 -- Topics

What is morality?

Are moral principles relative to society/culture? Are they universal, if so in what sense?

Are there absolute moral rules?

Does morality depend upon religion or theism?

What is the good life? Why is it worth pursuing?

How is rightful behavior distinguished from wrongful behavior?

What is the relation between morality and other normative disciplines, such as law and etiquette?

To what extent is ethics connected to theories of human nature?

How is ethics connected to notions of justice? How might notions of justice be relevant as analytical rubrics or frameworks for examining or scrutinizing systems or networks or institutional practices of oppression and inequality perpetuating and/or reinforcing arbitrary prejudice and discrimination along categories of race, sex, class, gender, sexual orientation, species membership, disability status, among others?

How are principles of rights viable and to what extent provide reasonable discourse for recognizing and addressing moral responsibilities and obligations to reform or repair social networks, past and current that support or are based or tainted by discriminatory practices that marginalize opportunities along categories of race, sex, class, gender, sexual orientation, species membership, disability status, among others?

What moral principles are relevant and sound for developing conscientious agency and a sound (reasonable) moral self-identity in relation to others in the world that are vigilant about how dynamics of power and privilege evolve to deny and exclude opportunities or participation along social categories of race, sex, class, gender, sexual orientation, species membership, disability status, among others?

What moral principles or moral features are necessary and relevant for conceiving of the scope of the moral community such that the interests and needs of its members are less subjected to social structures, systems, and practices based in arbitrary discrimination, prejudices, and denial of opportunities along categories of race, sex, class, gender, sexual orientation, species membership, disability status, among others?

How is ethics related to standards of self-interest?

What does it mean to be a (conscientious) moral agent?

What is the scope of moral responsibility?

Is there a fundamental moral principle or rule that can justify all of our moral duties?

What are our fundamental moral duties? Can any such moral duties be justified?

Which character traits count as virtues? Which ones count as vices? How and why is this distinction justified? Who should be our role models?

What is the status of moral claims? Can specific ethical theories, moral principles, or specific moral verdicts/judgements be true or properly justified?

Are we allowed to violate moral rules? If so, when, and how is that justified?

In what ways is or is not egoism relevant for understanding the nature of ethics and moral responsibility?

Do women and men think differently about ethics?

Are we obligated to give to the poor in our community or the other areas in the world?

Are individuals obligated to reduce their share of greenhouse gases?

Is torture always morally wrong? Why or why might this not be the case?

Why might a virtuous person decide to become a whistle-blower?