

9-2002

PHIL 200.50: Ethics - The Great Traditions

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1 Syllabus

PHIL 200, Section 3
Fall, 2002
ONLINE

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Professor Deni Elliott elliottd@mso.umt.edu office: 243-6632

OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday, 10-12 or by appointment at the Practical Ethics Center, 1000 E Beckwith.

home: 273-6606 (use this number for problems during the virtual class meeting time)

Teaching Assistant: Loren Meyer office: 243-6643

TEACHING ASSISTANT OFFICE HOURS: Thursday and Friday, 1-2 p.m., or by appointment at the Practical Ethics Center, 1000 E. Beckwith.

Course Texts: Available at the UM Bookstore

(NOTE: It is IMPERATIVE that you have these particular translations and editions. We will be referring to text by page number. If you have a different translation or edition, you will not be able to follow along. If you cannot follow along, it is likely that your understanding will suffer. If your understanding suffers, it is likely that your grade will suffer).

Arthur, John. (2002). *Morality and Moral Controversies*, 6th Edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Gert, Bernard (2002) *Common Morality*. THIS SHORT BOOK IS AVAILABLE ON THE COURSE SITE (under the section marked BOOKS) OR AT THE UM BOOKSTORE IN THE PHIL 443 TEXT AREA.

Infield, Louis (1980) editor and translator. *Immanuel Kant, Lectures on Ethics*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company.

Ostwald, Martin (1999) editor and translator. *Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Philosophy 200, *Great Traditions in Ethics*, is designed to introduce students to important work in ethical thought and analysis. You will read Aristotle, Kant, Mill, other classical and contemporary philosophers all with the aim of helping you think better about contemporary moral problems.

The basic learning goal for this online section is that you become able to use classical and contemporary moral philosophy so that you can better engage in the important ethical discussions and decisions of our time.

Taking Philosophy 200 online is different in many ways from taking it in a regular classroom. First, while the professor and teaching assistant are happy to meet with you 'face-to-face', you are not required to meet with faculty or students aside from the Monday night 6-8 p.m. online virtual class meeting. Your success in Philosophy 200 Online depends on different motivation from a face-to-face class.

Philosophy 200 Online is a good course for students who:

- 1) are motivated and disciplined enough to do their work and keep up with class without faculty reminders;
- 2) are curious and like to use the www to learn new things;
- 3) are creative in figuring out what to do when some material makes them feel stuck or confused;
- 4) can type well enough to concentrate on what they are trying to say rather than finding the right keys;
- 5) are willing to risk saying what they think even though they might be wrong.

Learning Goals: By completing assignments and participating in weekly virtual class meetings, successful students will:

- 1) become acquainted with some of the concepts from classical moral philosophy that influence contemporary policy and norms;
- 2) gain a better understanding of important contemporary moral issues;
- 3) learn to parse and analyze the arguments that some people use in important moral debates of our time;
- 4) clarify own reasons for holding particular positions.

Evaluation

100 pts: Weekly discussion board (10 points based on the best out of 12 weeks')

100 pts. Weekly homework (10 points based on the best out of 12 weekly assignments)

50 pts. Midterm

50 pts. Weekly Virtual Class Participation (5 points each based on the best out of 12 weeks)

100 pts. End of the semester analytic writing

Course Process

The virtual class meets Monday, 6-8 p.m. Monday is the CONCLUSION of the previous week's work. So, if you first log on for class on Monday, September 9 at 6 p.m., you have already missed a week of class work. Monday, September 9 is the end of the first week.

Please complete all reading assignments and discussion board assignments PRIOR to the Monday class. Immediately following the Monday night class, the homework assignment for the week will be made available.

Here is an explanation and schedule for specific parts of the course:

- 1) Reading Assignments: Read the concept outline that you will find in the section called COURSE DOCUMENTS for the week (e.g., beginning with Week I, which ends Monday, September 9). Print out the concept outline for your reading. Read the text material assigned for the week. If you are totally confused about the material, go surf the web. Look up the philosopher or the important ideas – the concept outline will give you a good idea of what those are each week. There is nothing wrong with using secondary sources (like

annotations or explanations on the web) to help you understand what you are reading. But, be careful about the source of the web help – some sources are better than others.

2) Discussion Board: Between noon on Wednesday and noon on Monday, you should participate in the weekly discussion board (DB). The week's question will appear on the DB at noon on Wednesday. If you are the first to respond, then you need only respond to the question itself (for your first response). If others have responded first, your job is to read through those responses and add to what others have had to say, but you don't have to respond to all of the other comments. If you are still confused about something in the reading, don't be afraid to post a question for other students to think about. The DB is supposed to be a true discussion about the material for the week. Students will not lose points for being confused by the material, but they will gain points for helping clarify others' areas of confusion. Here's how the DB will be graded:

8-10 points: student has posted 2 or more responses and has moved the discussion forward;

5-7 points: student has posted at least 1 response and has been correct in his/her response;

1-4 points: student has posted at least 1 response, but has not understood the material and has not used others' posting as a way of furthering his/her knowledge

0 points: student has not posted at least 1 response by noon, Monday.

You will have 12 opportunities to respond to DB questions. I will drop the two lowest grades and figure your DB grade out 100 points (10 weeks).

3) Homework. You will receive a weekly homework assignment at the end of the Monday night virtual class meeting. Homework is due in the digital drop box (DDB) no later than noon on Wednesday. The homework will ask you to write a short essay in response to some important concept from the week's work. You will be given a word count maximum/minimum for each exercise. That word count is an important target of the exercise so that you learn both to flesh out an explanation sufficiently and so that you also learn to be concise. You will lose points if you are more than 20 words over the word count or more than 20 words under the word count. Here is how the homework will be graded:

8-10 points: student has responded appropriately to the question and has kept within the word count range;

5-7 points: student has either responded inadequately or has not kept within the word count range;

1-4 points: students has both responded inadequately and has not kept within the word count range;

0 points: student has not submitted the assignment to the electronic drop box by noon, Wednesday.

You will have 12 opportunities to complete homework assignments. I will drop the two lowest grades and figure your homework grade out 100 points (10 weeks).

4) Midterm: You will complete an objective short answer exam. You will be able to choose when to take the exam, but you will have a time limit and will not be able to access the exam questions more than once. The exam is worth 50 points.

5) Weekly Virtual Class Participation: You are expected to attend class through

your computer every Monday from 6-8 p.m. We will have large and small group discussions and exercises. Each class participation is worth 5 points.

4-5 points: student has attended the entire class and has moved the process forward in either the small or large group discussion;

2-3 points: student has attended the entire class, but has not made comments or has not moved the process forward;

1 point: student has logged on at some point during the class;

0 points: student has not attend the virtual class meeting.

You will have 12 opportunities to attend the virtual class. I will drop the two lowest grades and figure your participation grade out of 50 points.

6) Final Analytic Product: You will be asked to write a short (750-1000 word) analytic paper in which you connect some of the concepts that we have discussed in class with a contemporary issue. You will receive this assignment no later than midway through the class. You will have an opportunity to turn in a draft for professor/teaching assistant comments. The final analytic product is worth 100 points.

So, your weekly schedule should look something like this:

Wednesday, Noon – Monday, Noon: You have completed the reading assignment. You participate in the DB related to that reading by making a response, but going back to the discussion board a couple of more times to read the discussion and add to it.

Monday, 6-8 p.m.: Participate in the virtual class meeting.

Monday, 8 p.m.: Pick up your homework assignment. Complete that and drop it in the digital drop box no later than Wednesday, Noon.

Pick up the concept outlines that go along with next week's reading assignment and be ready to participate in the discussion board between Noon, Wednesday and, Noon, Monday.

Collaboration Policy: Up to two students may work together on a homework assignment and submit it under both of their names. The resulting assignment should be twice the assigned length. No collaboration is allowed for discussion board postings, midterm or final product work. Any outside source used by the student in completing an assignment must be cited or listed with the assignment.

Weekly Reading and Topic Schedule

Note: All reading must be completed BEFORE each Monday's virtual class meeting

(A) indicates that the reading is to be found in Arthur, John, Morality and Moral Controversies.

(G) indicates that the reading is to be found in Gert, Bernard, Common Morality.

(N) indicates that the reading is to be found in Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics

(K) indicates that the reading is to be found in Kant, Lectures on Ethics

The page number of the beginning of the section or article to be read is listed.

You are expected to read the full section or article unless otherwise indicated.

Week I, September 9

Online Orientation/Introduction to Ethics/Why Be Moral

(A) Trying Out One's New Sword, p. 77

(A) Relativism in Ethics, p. 81

(G) Preface, and Intro to p. 40 (stop at Violations of The Moral Rules)

Week II, September 16

Be All That You Can Be and Start Out Right

(N) Book I, Book II, Book III, Book X

(K) Duties Arising From Differences in Age, p. 247

Week III, September 23

Obligations to Self and Others

(A) Rich and Poor, p. 308

(A) No-Faulty Family Law and the Unencumbered Self, p. 630

(A) Selling Babies, p. 625

(A) Licensing Parents, p. 637

(G) Violations of Moral Rules (p. 40) through end of Section I, p. 66

Week IV, September 30

Be the Self That You Want Every Person to Be

(K) Introductory Observations, p. 71

(K) Duties to Oneself, p. 116

(K) Proper Self Respect, p. 126

(K) Conscience, p. 129

(A) The Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysic of Morals, p. 16

(G) Part II, 1-46 (stop at Informal Public System)

Week V, October 7

Moral Philosophy and Public Policy – Death Penalty

(K) Degrees of Responsibility, p. 62

(K) Duties Dictated by Justice, p. 211

(A) Desert and Capital Punishment, p. 129

(A) The Ultimate Punishment, p. 138

(A) Justice, Civilization and the Death Penalty, p. 143

(A) Refuting Reiman, p. 149

(G) Part II, p. 46-end.

Week VI, October 14 – NO Class

MIDTERM EXAM

Week VII, October 21

Love, Sex, and Friendship

(N) Book VIII, Book IX

(K) Duties Towards the Body in Respect of Sexual Impulse, p. 162

(K) Crimina Carnis, p. 169

(K) Friendship, p. 200

(K) Ethical Duties Towards Others: Truthfulness, p. 224

(A) The Saturated Self: Personal Relationships in the Inform. Age, p. 592

Week VIII, October 28

Choosing Among Harms and Benefits - Abortion

(A) Utilitarianism, p. 26

- (A) The Constitutional Right to Abortion, p. 190
- (A) A Defense of Abortion, p. 195
- (A) An Argument that Abortion is Wrong, p. 218

Week IX, November 4

Individual Rights and State Control – Freedom to Speak and Listen

- (A) On The Liberty of Thought and Discussion, p. 417
- (A) Prohibiting Racist Speech on Campus, A Debate, p. 428
- (A) Political Correctness, Speech Codes and Diversity, p. 434

Week X, November 11

NO CLASS

Week XI, November 18

Individual Rights and State Control – Freedom to Act

- (A) On Liberty, p. 368
- (A) The Ethics of Addiction, p. 380
- (A) Feminism, Pornography and Censorship, p. 442
- (A) Freedom, Conditioning and the Real Woman, p. 405

Week XII, November 25

Gender Equality and Moral Theory

- (A) Feminist Transformations of Moral Theory, p. 53
- (A) The Subjection of Women, p. 457
- (A) Sexual Harassment, p. 465
- (A) Sex Equality and Discrimination, p. 470
- (A) Social Movements and the Politics of Difference, p. 498

Week XIII, December 2

Animals, Environment and Moral Theory

- (K) Duties Toward Animals and Spirits, p. 239
- (K) Duties Toward Inanimate Objects, P. 241
- (A) All Animals are Equal, p. 154
- (A) Speciesism and the Idea of Equality, p. 164
- (A) People or Penguins, p. 171
- (A) The Land Ethics, p. 176

Week XIV, December 9

TBA

Week XV, EXAM WEEK. End of Semester Analytic Writing due no later than Monday, December 16 at 6 p.m.