



AMBROSE

PH 202 Ethics Fall 2011

Time: Wednesday & Friday 9:45 – 11:00

Location: 1085-1 Airhart Theatre

Instructor Information:

Kenneth M. Nickel (MAR, MSc, PhD ABD)

Associate Professor of Philosophy

410-2000 (ext. 6903) : Office: 2103

E-mail: knickel@ambrose.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will introduce students to both classical and contemporary perspectives on moral philosophy. In addition to normative ethics the course will examine issues in value theory and applied ethics. Students will encounter the broad range of ethical controversies including, but not limited to, biomedical and health care ethics, foreign aid, killing and letting die, and other problems of social justice.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Students should learn to appreciate the contributions of prominent historical figures in the development of the Western tradition of moral philosophy such as Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas, Hume, Kant, Mill, Nietzsche, among others.
2. Students should learn to articulate the general distinctions between metaethics, normative ethics, and applied ethics.
3. Students should learn to articulate some of the practical and conceptual implications of various schools of ethical thought such as utilitarianism, deontology, noncognitivism, intuitionism, among others.
4. Students should learn to appreciate how moral philosophy engages with important areas of allied study including, but not limited to, theology, education, and political and legal philosophy.

TEXTBOOK

- Cahn, Steven M., and Peter Markie, eds. *Ethics: History, Theory, and Contemporary Issues*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2009.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Attendance and Participation** 10%
 - Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. Students are expected to attend each class session **with assigned text material and an engaged frame of mind**. Students should be prepared to contribute meaningful conversation to the topics under discussion. **Absence from class merits a deduction half a mark (.5) for the first three absences and one (1) full mark for all subsequent absences.** Class participation is assessed on the balance. For example, if a student misses four classes and generally participates excellently in class he or she *generally* cannot achieve more than 7.5 out of 10 for this portion of his or her grade. **Students in class without text material and otherwise engaged in non-class activities are simply in the same room and may be assessed as absent.** Students who arrive late or leave early may be marked as absent. As a general rule **two late arrivals or early departures** will amount to one absence.
2. **First Research Paper** 15%
 - Due: October 7th @ 9:45
 - A separate handout regarding topics, format guidelines, and late policy will be provided.
3. **Seminar Presentation** 10%
 - See bolded topics in course outline for potential topics
4. **Second Research Paper** 25%
 - Due: December 2nd @ 9:45
 - A separate handout regarding topics, format guidelines, and late policy will be provided.
5. **Final Exam** 40%
 - Date: Monday, December 12 @ 9:00 AM
 - Students **must pass the final exam to ensure a passing grade in the course.** A student who performs well during the term but fails the final exam may fail the course.
 - Students should not schedule flights or travel of any sort that will conflict with the final examination schedule. Final examinations will not be rescheduled to accommodate travel arrangements.

GRADING: The available letters for course grades are as follows:

| <u>Letter Grade</u> | <u>GPADescription</u> | <u>Percentage</u> |
|---------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| A+ | 4.0 | 90-100 % |
| A | 4.0 | Exceptional 85-89 % |
| A- | 3.7 | 80-84 % |
| B+ | 3.3 | 77-79 % |
| B | 3.0 | Exceeds Expectations 73-76 % |
| B- | 2.7 | 70-72 % |
| C+ | 2.3 | 67-69 % |
| C | 2.0 | Meets Expectations 63-66 % |
| C- | 1.7 | 60-62 % |
| D+ | 1.3 | 55-59 % |
| D | 1.0 | Minimal Pass 50-54 % |

F

0.0

Failure

49 < %

Important Dates

- Last day to enter a course without permission, withdraw from course and receive tuition refund, and change from credit to audit is September 18th.
- Last day to withdraw from courses or change to audit without academic penalty is November 14th.
- Last day to request revised time for a final examination is November 28th.

Important Notes

- Students are responsible to check their Ambrose e-mail account regularly. E-mail may be used to notify students of cancelled classes or other important details relating to the course.
- Use of cell phones, recording devices, head phones, and all other non-essential technology is **prohibited**. **Text messaging or other use of handheld devices** during class is **absolutely prohibited**.
- **Lap top computers are prohibited** from general use during class. Exceptions may be made on a case by case basis for students with relevant disabilities. Lap tops used for purposes unrelated to taking lecture notes are prohibited.
- Students are expected to respect the learning environment of the classroom. Make every attempt to be on time and to remain seated until the class session ends. Keep unnecessary conversations to a minimum as they are distracting to both the instructor and fellow classmates.
- *Ambrose is committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university college. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar and the Student Handbook that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean.*
- *Personal information, that is information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual, may be collected as a requirement as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.*
- *Although extensions to coursework in the semester are at the discretion of the instructor, students may not turn in coursework for evaluation after the last day of the scheduled final examination period unless they have received permission for a "Course Extension." Alternative times for final examinations cannot be scheduled without prior approval. Requests for course extensions or alternative examination time must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by the appropriate deadline. Course extensions are only granted for serious issues that arise "due to circumstances beyond the student's control."*
- *Students are advised to retain a copy of this syllabus for their records.*

PH 202 COURSE OUTLINE¹

| | |
|---------|---|
| Sept 7 | Introduction |
| Sept 9 | Plato |
| Sept 14 | Aristotle: Virtue Ethics |
| Sept 16 | |
| Sept 21 | Epictetus (4): Stoicism |
| Sept 23 | Augustine (5), Aquinas (6), Butler (8): Divine Command Theory & Natural Law |
| Sept 28 | Community Days – No Class |
| Oct 30 | Egoism and Social Contract Theory: Hobbes (7), Rawls (25), Gauthier (26), Feinberg (27) |
| Oct 5 | Hume & Non-cognitivism: Ayer (19), Stevenson (20), Hare (21), Harman (34) |
| Oct 7 | |
| Oct 12 | Kant & Deontology: |
| Oct 14 | Bentham & Mill: Utilitarianism |
| Oct 19 | Anscombe (23), Williams (32), Korsgaard (38), Thomson (59) |
| Oct 21 | Famine, Affluence, and Morality: Singer (50), Arthur (51) |
| Oct 26 | |
| Oct 28 | Moral Realism and Moral Relativism: Nietzsche, Ross, Mackie, Harman, Rachels (39) |
| Nov 2 | |
| Nov 4 | Moral Luck: Nagel (43) |
| Nov 9 | Existentialism and the Meaning of Life: Sartre (15) & Taylor (61) |
| Nov 11 | Remembrance Day – No Class |

Applied Issues

| | |
|--------|-----------------------------|
| Nov 16 | Job Discrimination |
| Nov 18 | Animal Rights |
| Nov 23 | Environmental Ethics |
| Nov 25 | Euthanasia |
| Nov 30 | Abortion |
| Dec 2 | Torture |
| Dec 7 | |

¹ This course outline is provisional and may, at the discretion of the instructor, require revision over the course of the term. The instructor reserves the right to deviate from the outline to accommodate, amongst other things, timely issues or pressing concerns.