

PHL230: Ethics (Online)
Missouri Western State University / Spring Semester 2020
Dr. Jason Costanzo / Popplewell Hall Room 115F
Office Hours: W 1-3; T/R 2-3:30 / jcostanzo@missouriwestern.edu

Course Description

Ethics is the study of moral action, i.e., right and wrong, the just and unjust, etc., along with the various ways in which we commonly think and talk about moral action. Within this class, we will focus on two branches of ethics, viz., *normative ethics* and *applied ethics*. Normative ethics examines moral theories. A moral theory is a theory about moral action. We will study various moral theories that have developed throughout the history of ethics from Plato to present times. Alternatively, applied ethics is the study of real-life ethical questions and problems. Within our assignments and discussions, we will examine applied ethical topics as they relate to everyday life.

Course Objectives

Students will obtain a general understanding of what ethics is, the major subdivisions of ethics and some of the major moral theories within history along with applied ethical problems. Students will also develop evaluative skills, critical thinking, and argumentation skills through written assignments, discussions and exams.

Required Readings

The following texts will be used in this class and may either be purchased at the Missouri Western bookstore or else read online (links to e-texts available on Canvas website):

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*
Kant, I., *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*
Mill, J.S., *Utilitarianism*
Nietzsche, F., *On the Genealogy of Morals*
Plato, *The Republic*

Note: Other e-texts available on Canvas will also be assigned in relation to course modules and assignments.

Student Evaluation

Assignment Type	Grade %	Total%	Grade
Quizzes (7 total)	35	90-100	A
Essays (3 total)	30	80-89	B
Forum Activities (2 total)	20	70-79	C
Midterm Exam	20	60-69	D
Final Exam	20	0-59	F

Quizzes (7 total, 5 points each)

During each module, students will be required to complete a short quiz. Quizzes assess your knowledge of both the assigned readings as well as any accompanying material and media (audio / video) for that module.

Assessment

1. Quizzes are automatically graded by Canvas based upon question type.
2. Late policy: Quizzes must be submitted on time. / No late submissions accepted.

Essays (3 total, 10 points each)

Throughout the class, students will be assigned an essay question that builds upon a larger humanistic theme (historical, philosophical, literary, aesthetic, religious, etc.) as developed within the assigned text. Students *may* be assigned extra reading material, videos, etc., for this assignment. Students will then write a ~500-750 word essay responding to this question.

Assessment

1. You meet the required word length (~500-750 words). (2 pts)
2. You address all parts of the question and/or provide any required supporting citations / information. (2-4 pts)
3. Your answer is well-written, informative and adequately addresses the questions. (2-4 pts)
4. Late policy: submissions accepted up to a week late after the due date with -20% (-2 pts) automatic late penalty.

Forum Activities (2 total, 10 points each)

Throughout the course of the semester, forum discussion boards (2 total) will be announced. The forum discussion boards are meant as a place for engagement and discussion of a problem related to the course readings. Students may be assigned extra reading and/or videos to watch. Students will then respond to a general question writing a ~400-500 word opinion piece that they will post on the online forum discussion board. Following this, students will respond to three (3) posts of their fellow students writing ~50-100 words.

Assessment

1. You meet the required word length for the primary post (~400-500 words). (2 pts)
2. Your primary post is well-written, informative and adequately addresses the questions. (3-4 pts)
3. Your response posts are informative and ~50-100 words. (1-2 pts for each post)
4. Late policy: submissions accepted up to a week late after the due date with -20% (-2 pts) automatic late penalty.

Midterm and Final Exam (2 total, 20 points each)

The midterm and final exams assess your knowledge of the assigned material covered in class. Each exam contains approximately 5 essay questions covers assigned material up to that exam. Exams are timed (90 minutes), can only be taken once, and must be completed by the due date (= not late submissions). Exams can only be made-up with a formal excuse.

Assessment

1. You offer an informative and accurate answer to all parts of the question. (4 points / each)
2. Your answer is mostly correct but contains some minor omissions or errors. (3 points)
3. Your answer contains a number of notable inaccuracies. (2 points)
4. Your answer is uninformative or incorrect. (1 point)
5. You do not answer the question. (0 points)

Course Regulations & Policies

Make-up Policy: Missed assignments can only be made up with a formal excuse (doctor's notice, etc.).

General Grading Policy: You cannot receive an A in this class without successfully completing all major assignments (Essays, Discussions, Reading Reports, Term Exams). Failure in this class is warranted in the event that (1) your grade point percentage averages an F as established by grading criteria on this syllabus and/or (2) you do not comply with MWSU academic honesty guidelines as listed below.

Academic Dishonesty: Academic dishonesty is defined in the Student Code of Conduct as engaging in acts which include (but not limited to):

1. Falsifying documents or academic records;

2. Any activity that violates the University's Academic Honesty Policy including (but not limited to) any instance of plagiarism, cheating, seeking credit for another's work, using any electronic device to either improperly store information for an exam or to transmit portions of questions or answers to other students, or allowing another student to take your exam for you.

MWSU Attendance & Participation Guidelines: At the beginning of this course you will be required to take an informal quiz. Taking this quiz likewise fulfills the initial attendance requirement for this online class. Students who fail to complete this quiz and/or subsequent quizzes and assignments may be considered absent from the course, following which they will be notified of their absence via MWSU Early Alert System. Subsequent inactivity may result in an unofficial withdrawal or failure for this course.

General Studies Requirements for Bachelor Degrees: General Education at Missouri Western State University consists of a common core of curriculum offerings necessary to equip students for successful and fulfilled lives as educated and active citizens. The required general education curriculum consists of a broad range of courses that assures that all baccalaureate-seeking students acquire academic skills and knowledge necessary for understanding, communicating, and performing in a diverse and complex world. Students completing courses in the general education program will be provided the opportunity to acquire knowledge and skills to: (1) Write and speak clearly and effectively. (2) Think critically and reason analytically. (3) Locate, organize, evaluate, and synthesize information from print and electronic sources. (4) Understand and appreciate moral values and ethical choices. (5) Gain a greater awareness of the present by understanding other cultures and times. (6) Understand and enjoy aesthetic experiences and share in related activities. (7) Develop an understanding of fundamental mathematical concepts and their applications. (8) Understand common phenomena in the physical and natural environment and understand the methods by which they are studied through lectures and the connected laboratory experience. (9) Understand and appreciate the means of gaining and maintaining mental and physical health.

ADA Accommodations: Students seeking accommodations must first provide documentation of needed accommodations to the Accessibility Resource Center (ARC) located in Eder Hall, Suite 203. Once accommodations have been approved by the ARC, students are responsible for notifying their instructors of those accommodations. This should be done within the first two weeks of classes. Accommodations are not retroactive.

Harassment, Discrimination & Sexual Misconduct: Consistent with its mission, Missouri Western seeks to assure all community members learn and work in a welcoming and inclusive environment. Title VII, Title IX, and University policy prohibit harassment, discrimination, and sexual misconduct. Missouri Western encourages anyone experiencing harassment, discrimination or sexual misconduct to talk to someone from the Campus and Local Resources list found in the University Policies and Procedures (<https://www.missouriwestern.edu/studentaffairs/wp.../handbook.pdf>) about what happened so they can get the support they need and Missouri Western can respond appropriately.

There are both confidential and non-confidential resources and reporting options available to you. Missouri Western is legally obligated to respond to reports of sexual misconduct, and therefore we cannot guarantee the confidentiality of a report, unless made to a confidential resource. Responses may vary from support services to formal investigations. As a faculty member, I am required to report incidents of sexual misconduct and thus cannot guarantee confidentiality. I must provide our Title IX coordinator with relevant details such as the names of those involved in the incident. For more information about policies and resources or reporting options, please visit the following website:

<https://www.missouriwestern.edu/titleix/sexual-misconduct-policy/>

Students have received information via email regarding training regarding Title IX. Student employees may have additional required training. Please follow the link in the email sent to your MWSU student account to complete the training. Students who do not complete the training will receive a hold on their account, prohibiting future semester enrollment until the training is complete. These training courses will ensure that all students are appropriately educated about these important regulations.