

INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS, aka, *RIGHTS AND WRONGS*: PHI 238

Professor: Dr. Larry J. Waggle

Section: 2:00 MWF: 208 TUR

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All Rights and Wrongs Courses in the Department of Philosophy offer students an opportunity to explore current topics in applied ethics. This particular section of the course focuses on topics related to gender, sex, race, class and sexual orientation. Since this is a course in *applied* ethics, we will be looking at a manageable number of topics in current ethical discussions. We will examine a manageable number of concepts used in the discussion of justification of moral beliefs, then turn to the topics.

This is a short version of my syllabus. The syllabus that will be enforce throughout the semester can be found on my website. That syllabus further elaborates the brief descriptions of class policies below. There is other important information on my website concerning my policies about email, grades, and overrides. During the first week of the semester, you should read the complete version of the syllabus on my website, www.philosophy.ilstu.edu/ljwaggl/ All university policies will be enforced. The following additional policies apply in my classes.

Attendance	You are expected to be in class, prepared to work, every scheduled class period. Excessive absences will dramatically affect your performance in this class. Should you want an absence excused, I will need written documentation from your program (a letter informing me what the activity is and the dates and times you will be unable to attend class) or a letter from the Office of Student Affairs. <i>I will not orally waive attendance.</i>
Homework	You are expected to have all of the assigned readings done prior to the class period in which we discuss them. Do not fall behind in your readings. You will not be able to take full advantage of the lectures or the discussions if you are not prepared. This includes checking the class website and WebCt for changes to the schedule, additional materials you are expected to utilize, as well as any and all online quizzes.
Student Learning	You are to set aside at least two hours of out of class time for every hour you are in class per week. That means, you are expected to devote no fewer than 6 hours per week to this class.
Class Participation	You are expected to participate in class discussions. 100 points of your overall grade is based on class participation.
Grading Policy	I use a 10% gradation scale for evaluating all of your work. Your grade is

based on the total number of *points* you have earned, not the letters assigned to the work. The online, secure grade book on my website is available 24 hours a day. *Do not rely on the gradebook in WebCt.*

Office hours	Office hours are not replacement class periods. It is impossible to “reteach” extensive portions of this class. If we cannot find a mutual time for an appointment communicate with me via email. Some matters will require office visits and cannot be done by email. I cannot discuss grades by phone or via email. It is illegal.
Incompletes	A grade of incomplete may be granted only when justified by extreme circumstances where there is a reasonable expectation of completing the course.
Extra Credit	Should circumstances merit extra credit, you should be prepared to discuss the matter extensively with me in my office. Extra credit is <i>not</i> available after the last two weeks of class. I very rarely offer extra credit.
Late Work	Any assignment, without a written extension, not turned in by the expressed deadline on paper, will receive a zero.
Cellular Phones	Cellular phones, and other such devices, are to be turned off in the class room. Period. Please do not test my patience with this.
Professional Conduct	Success in this course depends on consistent attendance and active participation, both in and out of the class room. Students are expected to attend class regularly, since there is no practical way to make up for missed class discussions, group work, or in-class activities. Coming to class unprepared seriously distracts from the group effort. Mere attendance in class is not enough. Students are expected to prepare for class by completing the assignments prior to class. Active participation includes informed and constructive contributions to classroom discussions, positive contributions to collaborative learning projects, active listening, taking notes, etc. Some of the material and topics we will be discussing may be of a sensitive nature. You are expected to conduct yourself with maturity. Be respectful other’s views and others will be respectful of your’s.

You are expected to use standard English grammar and spelling on all written work for this class. If you need assistance with this, please consult University Center for Learning Assistance (UCLA) at Stevenson 133. If you have trouble understanding how to construct a coherent essay, then I expect that you will take the initiative to seek help.

The University policies on cheating on exams, plagiarism of written work or disruption of class will be enforced. The penalties range from censure to expulsion. Please familiarize yourself

with these policies. They can be found on pages 7 and 8 of the Student Handbook. I take a dim view of these activities, and usually ask for the offender's expulsion.

Your degree of success in this class depends on your willingness to explore these topics with an open mind, being respectful of one another's views, and the intensity of work you put into this class. I am committed to your learning and these policies are designed to create a positive learning environment.

Check, prior to class, www.philosophy.ilstu.edu for information concerning class cancellations.

If you have special needs, please either contact Student Services and/or discuss the matter with me, and bring your special needs documentation with you. Any arrangements for alternative testing must be pre-arranged through me and Student Services. **No Exceptions.**

Grades: The work in this class will consist in 10, or so, WebCt quizzes that are reading verification quizzes, 2 to 3 take home assignments, group discussion and participation, a midterm exam and a final exam. Some assignments may be posted on my website, e.g., the take home assignments. If you miss class for any reason and miss an assignment, check there first before asking me about this. **WebCt quizzes cannot be taken after the class period in which we discuss them for any reason.** The purpose of these quizzes is to verify that you are reading the materials and staying current in the class. **If you are absent for any reason, you are expected to take these quizzes prior to the date in which we discuss them in class.** Since these quizzes are online, you do not have to be physically present at ISU in order to take them. Access to any computer with internet capabilities will enable you to access the quizzes. It is your responsibility to check WebCt one day prior to class to verify whether there will be or will not be a quiz. These are announced in class and on WebCt under the quiz link. These quizzes are not listed on the reading assignment sheet.

Group discussion and participation, likewise, cannot be made up if you are absent for any reason. These discussions are in class activities which require your presence in order to engage in them. If, for some reason, you are not able to attend a particular discussion day, then there frankly is nothing that can be done about this.

Expectations: You are expected to bring your text book and/or copies of the web materials to class on the day in which we discuss them. You are expected to explore these topics with an open mind and to listen to others (me included). You are expected to be surprised, excited, bored, annoyed, and the full range of human emotions. If you are not convinced by something that I or someone else says, you are expected to demonstrate the error by using data and facts, not opinions. This is a learning experience. As such, we are all part of the learning. If you disagree with someone, be polite about it. If not, then others might not be so polite when they disagree with you. Remember, you are learning how to use philosophical reasoning in the domain of ethics. This is not a talk show.

You are expected to check the class website and the class WebCt site prior to each class. You are expected to check your university email and the WebCt mail. This is the means by which I

will make you aware of upcoming events, dates, postings, etc. Should you decide not to check your e-mail or WebCt mail, then the onus is on you. You are expected to try to understand the readings even if you do not get it the first time. Trying and not succeeding is as important as trying and succeeding.

Any and all email communications from and to you are made part of the official record of the class. Please take note of the formatting requests on my website concerning email. You should think of email as regular mail for the purposes of this class. I print and file all emails sent to me by students, and hence this is taken as part of the official class record. Keep this in mind when you email me.

Remember, this is an applied ethic course in the general education system. The purpose of this course is to expose you to a number of contemporary issues in current philosophical ethical discussions. Exhaustive analysis and completeness is not our goal. We cannot do everything in four short months. I do not expect you to be philosophy majors or minors for that matter, but I do expect you to try. I target the discussions and reading materials at the sophomore level because this is a two hundred level course. As with any discipline, there will be terms and concepts that you may not be aware of if you are not in philosophy. As with any discipline, you should assimilate those terms quickly. I am a professional philosopher by trade, and I will use philosophical language from time to time. It is unavoidable. Ask if you do not understand something. I cannot read your mind. If you need personalized assistance with something, please set an appointment with me to discuss the matter. We do have some tutoring available through the philosophy department. (309-438-7665).