

SPRINGFIELD COLLEGE IN ILLINOIS: COURSE SYLLABUS

Spring, 2006A
Classroom: D223 – Dawson Hall
Phone: 544-8441 (day) 787-7317 (eve)
Class Meeting Times: 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.
Office Hours: W 5:45 – 6:00 p.m.

Instructor: Jon Gray Noll
Office: D223
E-mail: noll@noll-law.com
Class Meeting Days: Wednesday

PHI 213-70 General Ethics

I. Course Description:

A fundamental course in traditional Western ethical theories from ancient to modern, covering basic ethical questions such as the meaning of what is good, the problem of determinism vs. free will, the nature of social good and justice and the meaningfulness of moral language.

Number of Credit Hours: Three

Prerequisites: None

II. Textbook and Materials:

Hinman, Lawrence M., *Ethics: A Pluralistic Approach to Moral Theory*, 3rd ed. (Thomson Wadsworth, 2003) – To be purchased by each student.

III. Mission Statement:

The mission of Springfield College in Illinois is to provide students the best liberal arts education in the Ursuline tradition of a nurturing faith-based environment. We prepare students for a life of learning, leadership and service in a diverse world.

IV. Goals, Objectives and Outcomes

A. Goals:

- To give students an understanding of basic ethical theories, their significance and their implications.
- To assist students in developing a methodology for addressing ethical questions in their day-to-day lives.
- To present to students classical theories of ethics, including an overview of the great religions of the world.

B. Common Student Learning Objectives (CSLOs): The following Common Student Learning Objectives (adopted December 9, 2004) are addressed:

- Content Knowledge (Lifelong Learning) CK-1. Know and apply the central concepts

of the subject matter.

- Communication Skills (Lifelong Learning and Leadership) CS-1. Communicate effectively in oral and written forms.
- Social Responsibility (Service & Leadership) SR-1. Evaluate how choices and actions affect others.
- Global Perspectives (Diversity) –GP-1. Recognize the importance of diversity of opinion, abilities and cultures.

C. Course-based Student Learning Objectives (CBSLOs): Upon completion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate their mastery of the following outcomes, addressing the following CLSOs:

- CBSLO-1: To apply ethical reasoning to factual scenarios in a decision-making context. (CK-1, CS-1, SR-1, GP-1)
- CBSLO-2: To understand classical theories of ethics. (CK-1)
- CBSLO-3: To analyze various ethical theories. (CS-1, SR-1, GP-1)

V. Teaching Methods/Delivery System:

In-class lecture/discussions sessions

VI. Course Requirements:

A. Attendance Policy:

Since the course involves only eight classes within the module, students are expected to attend and participate in each class. Students cannot expect to be able to maintain an acceptable level of performance in this class without attending each session. There will be weekly assignments and material presented to each class that cannot be picked up through reading or review of other student's notes. Students will be given credit for participation in class, and this participation will be an integral part of the overall grade in the class. If an absence is unavoidable, the student is responsible for notifying the instructor, in advance when possible, and to advise the instructor as to the reason for the student's absence.

B. Reading assignments:

Reading assignments will be made during each class meeting when appropriate. Students should utilize the basic text listed previously in this syllabus to gain a basic understanding of topics to be covered in advance of that class dialogue.

C. Reading Requirements:

At no cost, each student will be provided a copy of the following books:

- (i) *Tuesdays with Morrie*
- (ii) *Life's Greatest Lessons*
- (iii) *Judaism for the Non-Jew*
- (iv) *The 2,548 Best Things Anybody Ever Said*
- (v) *The Power of Positive Thinking*

The student will be expected to stay current on assigned reading materials from these books, which reading assignments will be spread over the length of the course to allow each student to absorb the specifics of the book on a gradual basis.

An analysis of "*Tuesdays with Morrie*", "*Life's Greatest Lessons*" and "*The Power of Positive Thinking*" will be required to be submitted.

D. Written Assignment:

There will be various written assignments for this course. The primary writing assignments are listed below; however additional assignments may be given:

- If the student so elects, as part of their student project, they could produce an independent research study assignment. Anticipated length of the written exercise will be 8 to 10 pages. A bibliography will be required reflecting the sources utilized in writing the paper. Citations must be in the correct form as designated by the college style book.
(CBSLO 1, 2, 3)
- In the alternative, the student may prepare any type of project they wish. In the past, written poetry and life experience papers have been submitted to meet the project requirement.
(CBSLO 1, 2, 3)
- In-class writing exercises will be assigned from time to time. The format of these exercises will be provided to the students in the course.
(CBSLO 1, 2, 3)
- Each student will be provided a notebook with specific class materials. These homework materials must be completed by the student and are subject to review by the instructor for performance evaluation.
(CBSLO 1, 2, 3)

- There will be two exams during the semester. They will be held during the first hour of classes 3 and 7. The exams will focus almost exclusively on terms, concepts and ethical theories, as highlighted by the course textbook and by the course materials provided to each student.
(CBSLO 1, 2, 3)
- Standing Rules: A copy of the standing rules for the course is attached to the syllabus. These standing rules will be discussed in detail at the first class.

VII. Means of Evaluation of Outcomes:

A. Grading:

| | | |
|----|---|-----------------|
| 1) | Attendance and class participation | 500 pts. |
| 2) | Project & class presentation of project | |
| | (i) Project | 100 pts. |
| | (ii) Class Presentation | 50 pts. |
| 3) | Reading and analysis of : | |
| | <i>"Tuesdays with Morrie"</i> | 50 pts. |
| | <i>"Life's Greatest Lessons"</i> | 50 pts. |
| | <i>"Power of Positive Thinking"</i> | 50 pts. |
| 4) | Exams (100 pts per exam) | <u>200 pts.</u> |
| | Total | 1,000 pts. |

Grade Scale:

| | | |
|----------------|---|---|
| 900 – 1000 pts | = | A |
| 800 – 899 pts | = | B |
| 700 – 799 pts | = | C |
| 600 – 699 pts | = | D |
| 0 – 599 pts | = | E |

Extra Credit: Extra credit exercises will be afforded each student and explained throughout the duration of the course.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is defined as follows: “The deliberate and knowing presentation of another person’s original ideas or creative expressions as one’s own. Generally, plagiarism is immoral but not illegal. If the expression’s creator gives unrestricted permission for its use and the user claims the expression as original, the user commits plagiarism but does not violate copyright laws. If the original expression is copied without permission, the plagiarist may violate copyright laws, even if credit goes to the creator. And if the plagiarism results in material gain, it may be deemed a passing-off activity that violates the Lanham Act.” Black’s Law Dictionary, 8th ed. (2004), p. 1187. [The Lanham Act, 15 U.S.C., is the federal law regulating, and protecting, trademarks.]

Also useful to establish guidelines for delineating plagiarism is Diana Hacker's definition: "Three different acts are considered plagiarism: (1) failing to cite quotations and borrowed ideas, (2) failing to enclose borrowed language in quotation marks, and (3) failing to put summaries and paraphrases in your own words." (*A Writer's Reference*, by Diana Hacker, Bedford St. Martin's Press, 2003, page 331.)

Some instances of plagiarism may, in fact, be violations of copyright law and subject to prosecution. The SCI Student Handbook lists plagiarism as a serious breach of conduct standards and will result in disciplinary action.

VIII. Topical Course Outline/Reading and Exam Schedule: General Ethics

| Date | Discussion Topics: | Assignment |
|-----------------------------|--|---|
| Class I 1/11/06 | Administrative matters; Introduction to Ethics and Study Rules; Video lecture Chapters 1 & 2 – discussion; Class exercises | Read Chap. 1 & 2, Pages 1-64; complete class assignment included in class notebook |
| Class II 1/18/06 | Chapters 3 & 4 – discussion; Video lecture Class exercises; Debate | Read Chap. 3 & 4, Pages 65-134; complete class assignment included in class notebook; prepare for test |
| Class III 1/25/06 | Test – Chapters 1, 2, 3, & 4 Video lecture Chapter 5 – discussion; Class exercises | Test preparation; Read Chap 5; Pages 135-174; complete assignment included in class notebook |
| Class IV 2/8/06 | Chapter 6 - discussion Video lecture Class exercises; Debate | Read Chap 6, Pages 175-203; complete class assignment included in class notebook; |
| Class V 2/15/06 | Chapter 7 – discussion; Video lecture Class exercises; Early submission of projects Guest Speaker | Test preparation; Read Chap. 7, Pages 204-241; complete class assignment included in class notebook |
| Class VI 2/22/06 | Chapter 9 - discussion Class exercises; Debate; Early submission of projects <i>Life's Greatest Lessons</i> analysis Guest Speaker | Read Chap. 9, Pages 268-305; complete class assignment included in class notebook; prepare for test; in-class written book analysis |
| Class VII 3/1/06 | Final exam with emphasis on Chapters 5, 6, 7 & 9; Project presentations <i>Power of Positive Thinking</i> analysis | Complete project presentations; in-class written book analysis; complete class assignment included in class notebook |

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|-----------------------------|--|---|
| Class VIII 3/8/06 | " <i>Tuesdays</i> " book analysis; Project Presentations Class exercises Course Evaluations | In-class written book analysis; complete project presentations |
|-----------------------------|--|---|

IX. American with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Springfield College in Illinois provides individuals with disabilities reasonable accommodations to participate in educational programs, activities, and services. Students with disabilities requiring accommodations to participate in college-sponsored programs, activities, and services or to meet course requirements should contact the Director of the Resource Center as early as possible.

X. Assessment: Classroom Assessment Techniques

Goals, objectives, and learning outcomes that will be assessed in the class are stated in this syllabus in Sections IV and VI. The instructor will use prior knowledge inventory, directed paraphrasing, RSQC2, Assignment Assessments

Students are required to take part in all assessment measures.

Standing Rules

PHI 213: General Ethics

1. Hypothetical propositions ("if" and "what if") are banned.
2. All class participants must be ready, willing and able to think.
3. Truthfulness, candor and honesty are mandatory in all class activities.
4. You have one minute to make your point.
5. Personal and political agendas are forbidden.
6. A sense of humor is a required element for all class discussions.
7. Political correctness is immediately and forthwith banished.
8. A student's common sense must be brought to all classes.
9. "Conclusions" unsubstantiated by provable facts will be disregarded.
10. We will have FUN learning ethics and in expanding our view of the world.

GENERAL ETHICS

CLASS 1 (PHI 213-70)

JANUARY 11, 2006

ROOM: D223 – DAWSON HALL

PROFESSOR: JON GRAY NOLL

6:00 – 10:00 p.m.

TEXT: ETHICS, A PLURALISTIC APPROACH TO MORAL THEORY

TO BE PREPARED FOR CLASS 1, YOU SHOULD:

- A. READ CHAPTERS 1 & 2, PAGES 1-64 INCLUSIVE
- B. COMPLETE CLASS ASSIGNMENT ATTACHED
- C. BE PREPARED FOR CLASS DISCUSSION ON READINGS COVERED IN TEXT AND MATERIALS ATTACHED
- D. BE PREPARED TO ASK ANY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE REGARDING ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES OF THE COURSE

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

It appears to me that in Ethics, as in all other philosophical studies, the difficulties and disagreements, of which history is full, are mainly due to a very simple cause: namely to the attempt to answer questions, without first discovering precisely what question it is which you desire to answer.

Principia Ethica

CHAPTER 1 – THE MORAL POINT OF VIEW

Terms & Concepts (Pages 1 – 26)

Compassion (p 16) -

Categorical imperatives (p 17) -

Determinism (p 11) -

Divine Command Theorists/Fundamentalists (p 10) -

Terms & Concepts (Pages 1 – 26)

Page Two

Ethics (p 5) -

Ethical egoists (p 11) -

Ethical monism (p 10) -

Ethical pluralism (p 10) -

Psychological egoists (p 11) -

Virtue ethics (p 17) -

**CHAPTER 2 – UNDERSTANDING THE DIVERSITY OF MORAL BELIEFS: RELATIVISM,
ABSOLUTISM, AND PLURALISM**

Terms & Concepts (Pages 27-64)

- 1. Ethical Pluralism (p. 32) -**
 - i. Principle of Understanding (p. 32) -**
 - ii. Principle of Tolerance (p. 32) -**
 - iii. Principle of Standing Up Against Evil (p. 32) -**
 - iv. Principle of Fallibility (p. 33) -**
- 2. Ethical Relativism (p. 34) -**

