

Phil 201: Syllabus Fall 2009

LA 1014

Adam Willis

TR 4:30-5:45

Email: mawillis1@mail.usi.edu

Introduction

The study of Ethics is irrevocably connected with the study of morals as well. The cultures in which we live shape our view on ethical and moral questions. The place that we grow up, our faith belief system, or status in life all affect the way that we view moral and ethical issues. That being said, we will be looking at the ethical questions that affect us as a western culture. In addition to this, we will be looking at the history of morals and ethics as well to better familiarize ourselves with the history of our beliefs. We will be spending the semester attempting to not only understand our personal and professional ethical obligations, but to also be able to articulate and support our beliefs. “What is right”, “Is there an absolute truth”, “What type of person should I be” are all questions we will address this semester. Hopefully, this semester will cause students to look inward and examine their ethical and moral biases.

Core curriculum and Objectives

Goal #1: A deeper understanding of the history of ethical ideas and moral thoughts

Objective: Students will be exposed to the history of morals and ethics and be shown examples of the moral life

Goal #2: A deeper understanding of the role that “faith” plays in our moral upbringing

Objective: Students should be able to answer the question of whether theism, atheism, and agnosticism is logically defensible.

Goal #3: A deeper understanding of western ethical dilemmas

Objective: Students should be able to articulate their beliefs about pertinent ethical issues as well as defend them logically.

Required Texts

St. Augustine. *The confessions*

Plato. *The Trial and Death of Socrates*

Aristotle. *The Nicomachean Ethics*

Dante. *The Portable Dante*

Course Requirements:

3 exams	100 Points each
1 paper	200 Points
Participation	25 Points

Paper

The student must exhibit an ability to defend, through using the readings, a modern topic of ethical and moral ambiguity. The topic must be approved by the instructor by no later than November 3rd. In order to receive the best possible grade the student should be able to utilize the different readings and viewpoints discussed in class as well as be able to show that they have thought critically about the topic. Paper is due December 15th.

Attendance Policy:

Students are required to attend all classes. Except in exceptional circumstances, students who miss, or are late (entering the classroom after the lecture/discussion has begun) more than four times for any reason will have their final grade lowered 5 points for every additional absence or late arrival. For example, with the fifth absence, a student with a final grade average of (B) who misses will have his/her final grade average reduced to (C). Therefore, students who find that they have personal or job-related problems/responsibilities (illness, change in work schedule, etc.) that cause them to miss more than four classes should seriously consider withdrawing from the course. In order to be given credit for attending a class, a student must attend the whole class. A student who misses more than 8 classes will automatically receive and F in the course.

Make-up exams/quizzes will only be given at the discretion of the instructor. Before considering a request for a make-up, you are required to supply written documentation of some extraordinary circumstance (e.g., a medical emergency) that precluded you from taking an exam at the scheduled time and place.

Classroom Deportment Policy:

Please be respectful of other students and the educational process by adhering to the following classroom deportment policy.

Prior to entering the classroom, all cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices must be turned off.

Except when invited to do so by the instructor, please do not read books, articles, and other printed material once class has begun. Readings assigned for the class should be completed before coming to class. Reading materials unrelated to the class (e.g., newspapers, textbooks assigned for other classes) are never permitted.

Except when asked to do so by the instructor, please do not whisper comments to other students. Contrary to popular belief, whispered comments are often heard by the instructor and are almost always distracting to students in the immediate vicinity of the “whisperer.” This behavior is distracting and shows disrespect to the instructor and other students.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT COMPLIANCE: If you have a disability, you are encouraged to register for disability support services in the Counseling Center. If you require an accommodation, please advise the instructor by the end of the first week of class. You may be required to provide written documentation to support these accommodations. The instructor will work with you to provide reasonable accommodations to ensure that you have a fair opportunity to perform and participate in class."

***As required during the course of the semester, I reserve the right to alter the syllabus. It is the responsibility of the student to be aware of these changes.**

I. Ancient Greek Ethics and Morals

- Week 1 Course Information/ Greek History
- Week 2 No school
- Week 3 *Trial and Death of Socrates/ The Nicomachean Ethic*
- Week 4 *The Nicomachean Ethic*
- Week 5 **Test**

II. Faith and it's impact on Ethical questions

- Week 6 *The Confessions*
- Week 7 *The Confessions*
- Week 8 *Dante*
- Week 9 *Dante*

III. Modern Ethical questions

- Week 10 **Test**
- Week 11 Locke/Kant
- Week 12 Marx
- Week 13 Existentialism
- Week 14 Utilitarianism
- Week 15 **Test**
- Week 16 Final