

Course Syllabus

Summer Semester 2015

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| CONTACT INFORMATION: | Professor \_\_Dr. Andrew Alexander\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  West Campus Building \_\_5\_\_\_, Room \_\_5259\_\_\_\_\_  Phone: 407-582-\_1473\_\_\_\_  Email: \_\_aalexander@valenciacollege.edu\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Office Hours: See documentation in Faculty Front Door | |
| COURSE TITLE: | ETHICS AND CRITICAL THINKING:  PHI 2600, W20 | |
| COURSE DESCRIPTION: | This course is a study of major theoretical principles on which claims to good life and moral action have been based, such as hedonism, utilitarianism and rationalism. Each theory illustrated by representative selections from works of great philosophers from classical period to 20th century. | |
| PREREQUISITE: | None | |
| TERM: | SPRING 2015 | |
| CREDIT HOURS:  CRN:  REQUIRED TEXTS: | 3 credit hours  32323  *Waller, Bruce, Consider Ethics, 3rd ed.,*  *ISBN 13: 978-0-205-01773-7* | |
| IMPORTANT DATE: | Memorial Day Holiday: May 25, 2015  Drop/Refund Deadline: May 18, 2015  Withdrawal Deadline, July 10, 2015 | |
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| COURSE FORMAT & METHOD OF INSTRUCTION  Electronic Devices in class | | The course will be taught through a combination of lecture, hands-on classroom exercises and homework assignments. Students should not assume that there will be class time to complete homework assignments. Required readings, assignments and other activities will be provided.  **Cellular phones cannot be on your desk at any time. Text messaging or answering your cell phone while in-class will be considered disruptive behavior and can be a cause for your dismissal from class. NO ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND NO TEXT MESSAGING. At no time will you be allowed to listen to your IPOD or MP3 player in class. You are not allowed to have any music device on your desk. Also, notebooks (computers) are not to be used during class. It is distracting to other students.** |

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| MAJOR LEARNING OUTCOMES. | | | 1. Students will be able to define moral concepts 2. Students will be able to identify key assumptions and implications of major theories and concepts 3. Students will be able to identify key assumptions and arguments in the public debate on contemporary moral issues. 4. Students will be able to evaluate moral argument for coherence, consistency and plausibility using understanding of moral theories 5. Students will be able to reflect on the connection between moral perspectives and personal and civic responsibilities |
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| INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS: | The group project handout is available in Faculty Front Door. | | |
| GRADING SCALE: | The following grading scale is used:  A=90-100; B=80-89; C=70-79; D=60-69; F=below 60  Grading Policy  The course consists of three units:  Ethical Theories, Ethical Assumptions and Moral Issues. A unit test comes at the end of each unit and a group project comes at mid-term. The grading system is as follows.   1. Two Regular Unit Tests = 40% (20% each) 2. Mid-term Group Project = 20% 3. Final Project & Presentation = 20% 4. Class Participation = 10% 5. Attendance = 10%   The final exam is on July 30 in class Missing the final exam will result in a grade of F, until the student takes a make-up final..  Make-Up Policy  Tests that are not completed on time must be done in the testing center. Make-up tests are more difficult than regular in-class tests. All tests in the testing center must be completed before the week of final exams.  Extra Credit Policy  Extra credit is not given. To improve your grade, focus on maximizing your score on the final project.  Attendance counts for 10% of the grade. It will be based on the following scale:  0-1 absence = A  2-3 absences = B  4-5 absences = C  6-7 absences = D etc. | | |
| COURSE ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING: | * Complete reading assignments.   **Participate and contribute to all learning activities - Actively participate in all work, learning and discussions (including completing readings prior to discussions) related to learning activities.**   * **Be a positive student and teammate –- Conduct yourself in a professional and scholarly way that will enable peers and faculty to perceive you as a positive role model.** | | |
| ATTENDANCE POLICY & NO SHOW PROCEDURES: | If you must miss a class or activity or are late it will impact your grade. Classroom and activity attendance and punctuality is vital to academic success. Excused absences will be allowed in accordance with Valencia’s official policies.  You must attend class all semester, be on time and submit the assignments on the due dates to meet the attendance requirement. | | |
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| WITHDRAWAL POLICY: | Per Valencia Policy 4-07 (Academic Progress, Course Attendance and Grades, and Withdrawals), a student who withdraws from class before the established deadline for a particular term will receive a grade of “W”.  A student may withdraw at any time during the term in Atlas. The New Withdrawal Policy has been implemented. Here’s what you need to know about the new Withdrawal Policy:  ·         Students may withdraw themselves for a W up until the withdrawal deadline- 7/10/15.  ·         After the withdrawal deadline each semester, students can no longer withdraw themselves.  ·         WP and WF have been deleted from Withdrawal procedures.  ·         Before the withdrawal deadline, both a student and faculty may withdraw the student.  ·         After the withdrawal deadline, a student cannot withdraw him-/herself.  Excessive absences/ Lateness of fifteen minutes or early departure will count as a missed hour. A professor can withdraw you from a course for excessive absences without your permission. (2002-03 College Catalog p.62) Do not leave early without informing me. This is disruptive and rude.  Student behavior or speech that disrupts the instructional setting or is clearly disrespectful of the instructor or fellow students will not be tolerated. Disruptive conduct may include but is not limited:  . Rude or disrespectful behavior;  . Unwarranted interruptions;  . Failure to adhere to instructor’s directions;  . Vulgar or obscene language, slurs, or other forms of intimidation;  . Physically or verbally abusive behavior.  Student’s behavior that is inappropriate will result in disenrollment from the course.  *Any student knowing he / she is not passing the course but fails to withdraw by*  *July 10, 2015 and decides to stop coming to class should know the professor will* ***Not*** *withdraw him/her from the course. A grade of F will be assigned.* | | |
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| MAKE-UP POLICY:  **CLASS PARTICIPATION** | Exams and Final Exam cannot be made up. NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED.  Only documented special situations will count as exceptions to these rules.  Participation in class involves a number of variables, including but not limited to:  • Your willingness to participate actively in all class activities.  • Your cooperation during group and pair work.  • Your respect and attitude toward the class and your peers.  • Your daily preparation for each class.  • Your instructor may assign written homework that will be collected and graded; these assignments form part of your participation grade  Participation does not mean interrupting the class, leaving the room and coming back, and/or just asking questions.  CLASS PARTICIPATION:  A (90-100) Student prepares for the lesson, volunteers answers,  responds correctly.  B (89-80) Student responds when called upon; answers are generally  correct.  C (79-70) Student has some problems with the subject, but makes an  effort to be prepared, understand, and respond.  D (69-60) Student does not respond correctly, is not prepared for  class, does not have materials ready, and is absent  frequently.  F (59-0) Student can’t answer questions, does other things not  concerning class, and is absent most of the time. | | |
| ACADEMIC HONESTY:  Student Conduct and Academic Honesty: | Each student is required to follow Valencia policy regarding academic honesty. All work submitted by students is expected to be the result of the student’s individual thoughts, research, and self-expression unless the assignment specifically states “group project.” Any act of academic dishonesty will be handled in accordance with Valencia policy as set forth in the Student Handbook and Catalog.  VCC Expected student conduct: 10-03 Student Code of Conduct   |  |  | | --- | --- | | Specific Authority: | 1006.60, FS. | | Law Implemented: | 1006.60, FS. |   Valencia College is dedicated to the advancement of knowledge and learning, and to the development of responsible personal and social conduct. By enrolling at Valencia, a student assumes the responsibility for knowing and abiding by the rules of appropriate behavior as articulated in the Student Code of Conduct. The primary responsibility for managing the classroom environment rests with the faculty. Faculty may direct students who engage in inappropriate behavior that results in disruption of a class to leave the class.  Such students may be subject to other disciplinary action which may include a warning, withdrawal from class, probation, suspension, or expulsion from the college.  Please read the Student Code of Conduct in the current Valencia Student Handbook.  Here is the link to Valencia’s Student Code of Conduct website: <http://www.valenciacollege.edu/policies/policydetail2.cfm?PolicyCatID=10&PolicyID=3>  Exams and homework are considered individual effort; any submissions that are too similar for coincidence will receive no credit.  Students may collaborate in group assignments. Collaboration should be used to edit or to clarify doubts. If anyone is involved in incidents of cheating a zero will be given. Each student is expected to be in complete compliance with the college policy on ***Academic Honesty*** as set forth in the admissions catalog and the student handbook. Any student(s) cheating on an exam will receive a zero on the exam. This cannot be replaced with the final score and the professor at his/her discretion can withdraw you from the class.  Students are responsible for preparing for class by reading pre-assigned readings and completing assignments.      Cellular phones cannot be on your desk at any time. Text messaging or answering your cell phone while in-class will be considered disruptive behavior and can be a cause for your dismissal from class. NO ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND NO TEXT MESSAGING. At no time will you be allowed to listen to your IPOD or MP3 player in class. You are not allowed to have any music device on your desk. Also, notebooks (computers) are not to be used during class. It is distracting to other students.   1. The use of the computers in the language lab is exclusively for activities relevant to the class. The language lab is not a printing lab, so you are not allowed to print papers in the language lab. Also, you are not allowed to "chat" or go to sites like “My space" or check your bank account during your time in the lab. You will be warned not to do so once but if the behavior continues, you could be asked to leave the language lab. You are not to modify any hardware or software system configuration or setting. Activities not in accordance with the Valencia Student Code of Conduct will be considered a violation. | | |
| **INTERNET RESEARCH**  INTERNET RESEARCH STATEMENT: | Students who are absent are fully responsible for all material covered in class. Leaving a message on my phone or sending an e-mail will not be an excused absence. Make sure you can contact your classmates too.  Students should bring the textbook and any other material required for class.  During exams and quizzes, students may not leave the room.  The instructor’s office extension is \_\_1473\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Messages should consist of your name, your class and class time, and a brief message. Questions such as “What did we cover in class?” will not result in a response. Due to the problem of “phone tag”, student phone calls will normally not be returned. Emails with specific questions will be answered as soon as possible, usually within 24 hours (during week days). Students who need more than a brief response should arrange a meeting with the instructor.  Wandering in and out of the classroom without prior permission is unacceptable and you could lose participation points for doing so. Doing such things will affect your grade.  Also, improper conduct like interrupting too much, talking with peers, been disrespectful to professor and peers will affect your grade. Joking and having small conversations while the professor or peers are talking are considered disruptive behavior and it will not be tolerated.  Cellular phones cannot be on your desk at any time. Text messaging or answering your cell phone while in-class will be considered disruptive behavior and can be a cause for your dismissal from class. NO ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND NO TEXT MESSAGING. At no time will you be allowed to listen to your IPOD or MP3 player in class. You are not allowed to have any music device on your desk. Also, notebooks (computers) are not to be used during class. It is distracting to other students.  The use of the computers is exclusively for activities relevant to the class. Activities not in accordance with the Valencia Student Code of Conduct will be considered a violation.  Because of the variety of sources, ease of publication, lack of central control and proliferation of commercial information on the free Internet, it is often hard to tell if the information is reliable.  Many sites contain research and information of high quality.  However, unlike traditional print publications or library-based electronic resources, there is usually no process of peer review, nor is there an editor verifying the accuracy of information presented on the Internet.  There are an increasing number of sites containing information that may be incomplete, anonymously written, out-of-date, biased, fraudulent, or whose content may not be factual. Students should, therefore, use caution in use of the Internet for their research needs when working on activities.  For academic topics that are addressed in scholarly literature, uses of electronic databases or visiting the library may better meet your needs.  **However, each professor makes the final determination of what is or is not accepted as a valid source so review the syllabus for specific guidelines from your professor**. | | |
| Office of Students with Disabilities:  TESTING CENTER-WEST | | Students who qualify for academic accommodations must provide a letter from the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) and discuss specific needs with the professor, preferably during the first week of class.  The Office for Students with Disabilities (West-SSB 102) determines accommodations based on appropriate documentation of disabilities.  The goal at the OSD is to open doors, remove barriers and assist you in any way the can. The key to success is matching your needs to the services provided. Please contact this office to discuss your individual needs.  The link to Valencia’s OSD website: http://www.valenciacollege.edu/osd  The TESTING CENTER-WEST is located in Building 11 Room 142 --407-582-1323  Please note!!!  No tests are given out the last hour before closing—for example, if the Center closes at 9 p.m., the last test is given out at 8 p.m. Tests will be collected 5 minutes prior to closing.  Fall and Spring Terms:  Monday through Thursday 8:00 a.m. – 9 p.m.  Friday 8:00 a.m. – 5 p.m.  Saturday 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.  Summer Full Term, Session A, and Session B  Regular Hours except for Fridays: Fridays: 8:00 am- 12:00 Noon  WHAT YOU NEED TO BRING  Your Valencia Photo I.D. is REQUIRED for all tests!  Valencia Photo IDs are taken in the Student Development offices on each campus (West Campus office is on the 1st floor of Building 3). The Valencia photo I.D. also has your VID number on it.  The name of the course you are taking and your instructor’s name.  All supplies you will need to take the test. If your test requires bluebooks or green scantron sheets, purchase them in the bookstore. The Testing Center does not provide notebook paper, pens or pencils. Dictionaries and calculators may be borrowed.  WHAT YOU DO NOT BRING  1. Beepers, cell phones, personal tape or CD players, palm pilots, laptop computers.  2. Food or beverages. You will not be allowed to take these to your seat.  3. Children are not permitted in the Testing Center – The Testing Center does not provide sitting services during your test. | |
| Valencia General Education Student Learning Outcomes  IMPORTANT VALENCIA WEBSITE LINKS: | | **CULTURAL & HISTORICAL UNDERSTANDING**: Demonstrate understanding of the diverse traditions of the world, and an individual's place in it.  **ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITY**: Demonstrate awareness of personal responsibility in one's civic, social, and academic life.  **CRITICAL THINKING**: Effectively analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and apply information and ideas from diverse sources and disciplines.   * College Calendar: <http://valenciacollege.edu/calendar/> * College Catalog: <http://valenciacollege.edu/catalog/> * Valencia Policy and Procedures: <http://valenciacollege.edu/generalcounsel/policy/> * FERPA: <http://valenciacollege.edu/ferpa/> * ADA: <http://valenciacollege.edu/osd/handbook/sec4.htm> * Medical Records: <http://valenciacollege.edu/generalcounsel/policy/ValenciaCollegePolicy.cfm?policyID=186> | |
| ***DISCLAIMER:*** | | ***Changes may be made at the discretion of the instructor.*** | |

COURSE OUTLINE

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| Sessions | Dates | Topics |
| 1 | 5/12 | Course Intro, Unit Intro. Group Intro, Theories Overview |

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| 2 | 5/14 | Fallacies, Theological Voluntarism  UI #1 |

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| 3 | 5/19 | Egoism, Relativism  UI #2 |
| 4 | 5/21 | Sentimentalism, Intuitionism  UI #3 |
| 5 | 5/26 | Kantian Rationalism  UI #4 |
| 6 | 5/28 | Hedonism, Utilitarianism  UI #5 |
| 7 | 6/2 | Rationalism vs. Utilitarianism  (Group Check #1) |
| 8 | 6/4 | Pragmatism  UI #6 |
| 9 | 6/9 | Social Contract  UI #7 |
| 10 | 6/11 | Virtue Ethics  UI #8 |
| 11 | 6/16 | Care Ethics  UI #9 |
| 12 | 6/18 | Review Unit  (Group Check #2) |
| 13 | 6/23 | Review,  Test #1 |
| 14 | 6/30 | Project Review, Role Contributions, Unit Intro. |
| 15 | 6/24 | Non-objectivism, Moral Realism  UII #1,2 |
| 16 | 7/2 | Scope, Final Draft Review  UII #3 |
| 17 | 7/7 | Midterm Project (Papers, Presentations)  Final Project Preview |
| 18 | 7/9 | Library Research  (Final Project Topics) |
| 19 | 7/14 | Free Will  UII #4 |
| 20 | 7/16 | Moral Responsibility, Moral Difficulty, Review  UII #5 |
| 21 | 7/21 | Review  Test #2 |
| 22 | 7/23 | Unit Intro., Pros & Cons  UIII #1,2,3 |
| 23 | 7/28 | Textual Arguments, Work-In-Progress  UIII #4,5,6 |
| 24 | 7/30 | Final Papers & Presentations |

**UNIT 1**

**Reading Assignments and Discussion Questions**

1. Pages 1-15
2. How would you define and illustrate the following fallacies – red herring. Ad hominem, and strawman?
3. Are ethical principles based on fixed eternal universal ethical truths or changing particular natural guidelines?
4. What are the merits and possible problems with theological voluntarism?
5. Pages 20-27
6. Explain the similarities and differences between egoism and relativism.
7. What are the strengths and limits of these theories?
8. Pages 39-54
9. Explain the similarities and differences between sentimentalism and intuitionism.
10. What are the positive and negative implications of these theories?
11. Pages 71-78
12. What is the basis for morality, according to Kant?
13. What is the categorical imperative?
14. What are the strengths and limits of Kantian Theory?
15. Pages 85-94
16. What is the basis for moral judgment according to utilitarianism?
17. How do we know what is really right?
18. What are the strengths and limits of utilitarian theory?
19. Pages 105-111
20. Define value pluralism and pragmatism.
21. What are the merits and problems of pragmatism?
22. Pages 131-139
23. How is the social contract theory found in Hobbes, Rousseau, Rawls, and Gauthier?
24. Are moral norms objectively discovered or socially invented?
25. Pages 149-160
26. What is the virtue ethics?
27. What are its strengths and limits?
28. Pages 164-171
29. Explain the value of care ethics.
30. Is it necessarily feminist ethics?

**UNIT 1 REVIEW**

1. Define and illustrate (exemplify) the following logical fallacies: Red Herring, Ad Hominem and Strawman.
2. Match the following theories with the relevant descriptions:

**THEORIES DESCRIPTIONS**

\_\_\_\_ 1. Theological voluntarism a. universal rational principle

\_\_\_\_ 2. Egoism b. individual pleasure

\_\_\_\_3. Cultural relativism c. social agreement

\_\_\_\_ 4. Hume’s sentimentalism d. self interest

\_\_\_\_ 5. Intuitionism e. valuable character traits

\_\_\_\_ 6. Kant’s rationalism f. happy social consequences

\_\_\_\_ 7. Hedonism g. God’s will

\_\_\_\_ 8. Utilitarianism h. feeling of benevolence

\_\_\_\_ 9. Pragmatism i. concern for personal relationships

\_\_\_\_10. Social Contract j. immediate apprehension

\_\_\_\_11. Virtue Ethics k. workable belief system

\_\_\_\_12. Care ethics l. cultural conventions

1. Using some of the following distinctions, explain the similarities and differences between the 12 theories:

**KEY DISTINCTIONS**

1. universal \_\_\_\_\_\_ social \_\_\_\_\_\_ individual
2. absolute \_\_\_\_\_\_ relative \_\_\_\_\_\_ subjective
3. duty \_\_\_\_\_\_ happiness \_\_\_\_\_\_ pleasure
4. reason \_\_\_\_\_\_ emotion
5. principles \_\_\_\_\_\_ consequences
6. fixed (unchanging) \_\_\_\_\_\_ fluid (changing)

**Use the numbers from the matching exercise:**

How are the following theories similar?

1 and 2, 5 and 4, 7 and 8, 8 and 10

How are the following theories different?

1 and 2, 4 and 6, 6 and 8, 2 and 12

1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of each theory?
2. How would you rank order all of these theories?
3. Which theories are in the middle range of your preferences?
4. Which theories represent your bottom two choices? Why?
5. Explain your criteria for a “Good Ethical Theory Which theories represent your top three choices ? Why?

**UNIT II**

**Reading Assignments and Discussion Questions**

1. Pages 180-186 (Ethical Nonobjectivism)
2. Are there objective truths in ethics?
3. How do the arguments from “moral diversity”, “simplicity”, and “the impossibility of argument” try to refute the idea of objectivity in ethics?
4. Pages 192-199 (Moral Realism)
5. Are there real moral facts?
6. Is nonobjectivism a better paradigm than moral realism?
7. What is the basic assumption of a modest moral realism?
8. Pages 201-209 (Morality’s Scope)
9. Who gets moral consideration according to theological voluntarism, social contract theory, Kantian theory and utilitarian theory?
10. How would you evaluate Tom Regan’s idea of “animal rights”?
11. What is the range of moral concern in Eastern religions and Darwinian ethics?
12. Pages 220-232 (Free Will)
13. Contrast “determinism” and “free will.”
14. Is compatibilism a good mediating theory?
15. What are the arguments for determinism based on religion, physics, biology, social science and literature?
16. What is the difference between “simple”, “deep”, and “rationalist” types of compatibilism?
17. Explain the difference between Campbell’s idea and Sartre’s notion of free will.
18. Pages 244-252 (Freedom and Responsibility)
19. Is “free will” a necessary assumption for moral responsibility?
20. If “determinism” is true, could we praise or blame anyone?
21. Are “rewards” and “punishments” based on the assumption of “free will”?

UNIT II REVIEW

1. Examine the following ethical theories:
2. Theological voluntarism
3. Kantianism
4. Humean sentimentalism
5. Intuitionism
6. hedonism
7. utilitarianism
8. social contract
9. egoism
10. pragmatism
11. ) cultural relativism
12. ) virtue ethics
13. ) Care ethics
14. ) Darwinian ethics
15. Which theories include the widest range of forms of life? Why?
16. Which theories are the most restricted in scope? Why? Who or what is excluded?
17. Explain two arguments for the view that there are no objective truths in ethics? What are the counter arguments?
18. Explain the argument for ethical nonobjectivism based on the impossibility of argument about ethics.
19. Explain the ways in which moral realism is implied by Kantian, utilitarian and theological approaches to morality.
20. Explain the basis for adopting the paradigm of moral realism.
21. Explain two arguments for determinism. Give a counter argument.
22. Explain two arguments for free will. Give a counter argument.
23. Explain the idea or moral responsibility.
24. Is the existence of a free will a necessary assumption for moral responsibility?

**UNIT 3**

This unit focuses on the development of writing skills linked to critical thinking. Competence in argument construction, as it relates to hotly debated topics in ethics, is emphasized. Accordingly, the class format will involve a series of guided group discussions, practices and presentations. The following schedule of events and final evaluation are designed in order to reach this lofty goal.

1. Unit Intro (Topics and Arguments)

The professor will introduce hot moral topics along with procedures for argument construction.

2. STANDARD THEORETICAL APPLICATIONS (Pros)

Students will articulate the reasons for five pro arguments, in their groups, based on their chosen ethical theories.

3. STANDARD THEORETICAL APPLICATIONS (Cons)

Students will articulate the premises for five con arguments, based on their chosen ethical theories, in their groups.

4. REPRESENTATIVE POSITIONS (Pros and Cons)

Students will reconstruct the premises for the pro and con positions, in their groups, by showing their analysis of the textual sources.

5. WORK IN PROGRESS (Presentations and Feedback)

Two groups will present the pros and cons based on their chosen theories and the representative textual sources. The rest of the class will give instant feedback in writing.

6. WORK IN PROGRESS (Presentations and Feedback)

Two other groups will present. The rest of the class will give instant feedback in writing.

7. FINAL EXAM (Papers and Presentations)

Students will turn in their final papers and present the pros and cons based on a summary of their applications of standard theories.

**ETHICS**

**TEST 3**

**Part I: This part is worth 70 points.**

Write an essay on a controversial moral topic by fulfilling the following criteria:

1. Clarifying the basic question

2. Using three standard ethical theories as the bases for pro arguments

3. Employing three standard ethical theories as the bases for con arguments

4. Summarizing the argument for a representative pro position, with a specific

textual reference

5. Reconstructing the argument for a representative con position, with a specific

textual reference

6. Articulating your reasons for a pro or con position

**Part II: This part is worth 30 points.**

Write a paragraph specifying the following:

1. The theory and argument you presented

2. The helpful criticisms of other groups you set forth

3. The representative position, based on a textual source, you summarized and shared