**PHI 2600 Course Syllabus**

**Ethics and Critical Thinking**

**Fall 2019**

**West Campus Building 5-253**

**Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:30 – 3:45**

**Course Information**

**General Information**

*Course Title:* Ethics and Critical Thinking

*Course Reference Number:* PHI 2600 W96 17785

*Credit Hours:* 3

*Prerequisites:*Minimum grade of C in ENC 1101 or ENC 1101H or IDH 1110

*Refund Date:* September 3rd, 2019

*Catalog Description:* 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. Gordon Rule course which requires demonstration of college level writing skills through multiple assignments. Minimum grade of C required if used to satisfy Gordon Rule requirement.

**Contact Information and Communication**

*Professor:* Cameron Clark

*Email:* cclark132@mail.valenciacollege.edu

*Office Hours:* On request

*Preferred Communication:* Send me an email! I should be able to get back to you within 24 hours. If I need something from you I will contact you via your Valencia email.

**Textbooks and Reading**

*Ethics: Theory and Contemporary Issues* (ISBN 978-1-305-077050-8) by Barbara MacKinnon and Andrew Fiala is the required text for this class. All other course materials will be posted in Canvas. You will sometimes be required to have these materials with you in class, either as a printed or an electronic copy.

**Course Description**

What is good, right, or just? Can I possibly know? In this course we’ll take an extended look at some of the most prevalent Ethical theories from over the centuries to see if any of them can guide us in our contemporary world.

**Core Competencies**

The faculty of Valencia College has identified four core competencies that define the learning outcomes for a successful Valencia graduate. These competencies are at the heart of the Valencia experience and provide the context for learning and assessment at Valencia College. You will be given opportunities to develop and practice these competencies in this class. The four competencies are:

1. **Think** – think clearly, and creatively, analyze, synthesize, integrate and evaluate in the many domains of human inquiry
2. **Value** – make reasoned judgments and responsible commitments
3. **Communicate** – communicate with different audiences using varied means
4. **Act** – act purposefully, effectively and responsibly.

**Learning Outcomes**

*Cultural & Historical Understanding*: Match authors with their views, arguments, and key terminology.

*Communication Skills*: Post five sets of discussion posts, reading and interacting with their fellow students on the course website [Canvas].

*Ethical Responsibility*: Point to potential contradictions between their particular ethical judgments and theoretical ethical commitments.

*Information Literacy*: Search and find articles as requested.

*Critical Thinking*: Identify the characteristics of good arguments. Describe how and where arguments fall short of the standards of good arguments. Explain how to fix arguments that fall short of the standards of good arguments.

**Student Success**

**Grades**

You will be graded from a potential of 1,000 points distributed among 8 short essays, a presentation, and your scholarly participation in discussion and activities.

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| --- | --- |
| Points | Grade |
| 900 – 1000 | A |
| 800 – 999 | B |
| 700 – 799 | C |
| 600 – 699 | D |
| 500 and below | F |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Assignment | Available Points |
| Short Essays | 400 points |
| Discussion | 400 points |
| Final Exam | 200 points |

**Due Dates**

Reading is to be done **prior** to the class which it is assigned. Essays must be done before their deadline. The Final Exam will take place

**Short Essays**

There will be eight 500 word essays worth 50 points each. They will be due the class after they are assigned. Failure to submit an essay on time will result in a 0. Topics and rubrics for these essays will appear on Canvas.

**Discussion**

Students will be evaluated on their ability to dialogue with interlocuters during each class. Every student will receive a score out of 50 points each class, with their final discussion grade being an average of their eight best scores. There will be ample opportunity to participate in both small group and classroom discussions. Students who contributes thoughtfully during small group activities or large group discussions will receive high marks in this area.

**Final Exam**

You will select a topic from the semester on which to give a 5 minute oral argument or submit a written 1000 word essay. Topics will be chosen within the first 10 weeks of class, and presentations will occur on exam day. A rubric for both the oral presentation and written essay will appear on Canvas.

**Attendance and Tardy Policy**

In accordance with Valencia’s requirements attendance will be taken every class. As classroom participation is a key component of your grade attendance in class is highly recommended but will not directly influence your grade.

**Weekly Topic and Reading List**

**Week 1: Intro and Ethical Reasoning**

August 27th, 2019

Syllabus

August 29th, 2019

MacKinnon, Fiala *Ethics* p. 1 -14

**Week 2: Religion and Ethics**

September 3rd, 2019

MacKinnon, Fiala *Ethics* p. 15 – 23

King, *Letter from Birmingham Jail*

September 5th, 2019

MacKinnon, Fiala *Ethics* p. 23 - 28

Plato, *Euthyphro*

**Week 3: Ethical Relativism**

September 10th, 2019

MacKinnon, Fiala *Ethics* p. 30 – 34

Benedict, *Anthropology of the Abnormal*

September 12th, 2019

MacKinnon, Fiala *Ethics* p. 34 - 39

W.T. Stace *Concept of Morals p. 45 – 62*

**Week 4: Egoism**

September 17th, 2019

MacKinnon, Fiala *Ethics* p. 41 – 44

Rand, *The Virtue of Selfishness* Ch. 3 “The Ethics of Emergencies”

September 19th, 2019

MacKinnon, Fiala *Ethics* p. 41 – 44

Plato, *The Myth of Gyges*

**Week 5: Utilitarianism**

September 24th, 2019

MacKinnon, Fiala *Ethics* p. 54 – 59

Mill, *Utilitarianism* p. 4 – 18

September 26th, 2019

MacKinnon, Fiala *Ethics* p. 59 – 64

Thomson, *The Trolley Problem*

**Week 6: Deontology**

October 1st, 2019

MacKinnon, Fiala *Ethics* p. 67 – 70

Rachels, *The Elements of Moral Philosophy* Ch. 9 “Are There Absolute Moral Rules?”

October 3rd, 2019

MacKinnon, Fiala *Ethics* p. 70 – 78

Kant, *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, Section One

**Week 7: Virtue**

October 8th, 2019

MacKinnon, Fiala *Ethics* p. 90 - 94

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* Book I

October 10th, 2019

MacKinnon, Fiala *Ethics* p. 94 - 97

Anscombe, *Modern Moral Philosophy*

**Week 8: Existentialism**

October 15th, 2019

Kierkegaard, *On the Dedication to that ‘Single Individual’*

October 17th, 2019

Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil* First Essay ‘Good and Evil’

**Week 9: Feminism**

October 22nd, 2019

MacKinnon, Fiala *Ethics* p. 99 – 105

Nel Noddings *Caring* Ch. 4 An Ethic of Caring

October 24th, 2019

MacKinnon, Fiala *Ethics* p. 105 - 109

de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* Introduction

**Week 10: Natural Law and Human Rights**

October 29th, 2019

MacKinnon, Fiala *Ethics* p. 80 - 84

Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* Question 94 The Natural Law

October 30th, 2019

MacKinnon, Fiala *Ethics* p. 84 - 89

Locke, *Second Treatise on Government*

**Week 11: Equality**

November 5th, 2019

MacKinnon, Fiala *Ethics* p. 170 – 178

Du Bois, *The Study of the Negro Problems*

November 7th, 2019

MacKinnon, Fiala *Ethics* p. 179 - 188

Rawls, *Justice as Fairness*

**Week 12: Economy**

November 12th, 2019

MacKinnon, Fiala *Ethics* p. 192 – 202

Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom*

November 14th, 2019

MacKinnon, Fiala *Ethics* p. 192 – 202

Marx, *Communist Manifesto* p. 1 - 20

**Week 13: Environment**

November 19th, 2019

MacKinnon, Fiala *Ethics* p. 235 – 243

Leopold, *The Land Ethic*

November 21st, 2019

MacKinnon, Fiala *Ethics* p. 243 – 255

Warren, *Power and Promise of Ecological Feminism*

**Week 14: Animal**

November 26th, 2019

MacKinnon, Fiala *Ethics* p. 258 – 273

Tolstoy, *The First Step*

**Week 15: Global**

December 3rd, 2019

MacKinnon, Fiala *Ethics* p. 318 – 324

Pogge, *Are We Violating the Rights of the World’s Poor?*

December 5th, 2019

MacKinnon, Fiala *Ethics* p. 324 – 333

Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*

**Important Policies**

**Withdrawal Deadline and Policy**

*A student who withdraws from class before the withdrawal deadline of November 1st, 2019 will receive a grade of “W.” The professor will not withdraw any student for any reason; it is the responsibility of the student to withdraw themselves before the withdrawal deadline and to be aware of the date of the withdrawal deadline.*

**Academic Honesty**

Students are expected to maintain the highest degree of academic integrity. Any work that is found to be plagiarized, that is any words or ideas that are not original to the student and are not credited to their source, will automatically count as a 0 and will be considered for referral to the Dean of Students.

**Baycare Behavioral Health’s Student Assistance Program**

Valencia is committed to making sure all our students have a rewarding and successful college experience. To that purpose, Valencia students can get immediate help that may assist them with psychological issues dealing with stress, anxiety, depression, adjustment difficulties, substance abuse, time management as well as relationship problems dealing with school, home or work. Students have 24-hour unlimited access to the **Baycare Behavioral Health’s confidential student assistance program** phone counseling services by calling **(800) 878-5470**. Three free confidential face-to-face counseling sessions are also available to students.

**Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities who qualify for academic accommodations must provide a Notification to Instructor (NTI) form from the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) and discuss specific needs with the professor, preferably during the first two weeks of class; accommodations will not be applied retroactively. The Office for Students with Disabilities determines accommodations based on appropriate documentation of disabilities.

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