**PHI 2600 – Ethics and Critical Thinking**

Fall 2022

Faculty Information

**Professor**: Jeffrey Orlando

**Email**: [jorlando1@valenciacollege.edu](mailto:jorlando1@valenciacollege.edu)

**Office location:** 1-147

**Office hours:** By email or appointment only.

Course Content

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 the classical period to the 20th century. This is a 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.

Course Outcomes

Upon completion of this class, you should be able to:

\*Identify key assumptions and implications of major moral theories and concepts;  
 \*Define moral concepts;

\*Identify key assumptions and key arguments in the public debate surrounding contemporary moral issues;

\*Evaluate moral arguments in the public debate for coherence, consistency, and plausibility, using understanding of moral theories;

\*Construct moral arguments;

\*Reflect on the connection between moral perspectives and personal and civic responsibilities;

\*Demonstrate college-level writing on diverse and relevant topics.

Textbook & Educational Materials

*Ethics: Theory & Contemporary Issues (****Concise****)*, Ed. Mackinnon, 2015 Cengage, Edition 8 >>

(Supplemental content posted in Canvas. This may include PowerPoint, media articles and links to videos.)

Assessment Methods and Evaluation

Grade scale - 100-90=**A**, 89.9-80=**B**, 79.99-70=**C**, 69.99-60=**D**, 59.99-0=**F**

**Quizzes:**10% To ensure you are reading the materials and paying attention to the discussion posts, there will be a few **online** quizzes. There will be a window of time for you to complete these quizzes. If you miss the deadline, then you receive a zero for the quiz. **No makeup quizzes allowed.**

**Theory Summaries:** 20% In your own words, you will be required to summarize a key some of the ethical theories we study. This means that you must read the chapter, understand the theory and then be able to explain the main points of it in a concise manner—in your own wording. No quoting or citations. These will be assigned in the first half of the semester. **Summary word count should range from 250-300 words each** to demonstrate a sufficient understanding on your part. \*A low word count results in partial or no credit. If you greatly exceed 300 words, you will lose points. For instance, 310 is fine, but 350+ is considered excessive. A challenge for the assignment is to contain your writing. This means you may need to write a lot, then edit down. If you copy and paste text from an outside source, you’ll get a zero and a referral to the Dean and/or the Director of Disciplinary Action. Each paper will be worth a total of 6 points. Grading criteria as follows:

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Accuracy – 2 points | Clarity – 2 points | Organization – 2 points |
| The paper must accurately represent the ethical theory, well-defined and noting the most relevant details. | The paper must be written with clarity and legibility. You must demonstrate a degree of command over the topic, writing with some measure of confidence. | The paper must be well organized. This means that sentences are structured such that they flow well together and connect ideas in appropriate pacing. |

**Mid-Term Paper:** 25% A **1200-word minimum**, typed double-spaced essay analyzing two ethical theories or your choice. MLA format. Strengths and/or weaknesses may be addressed. You may even find commonalities and explore that. You must make an argument in the paper. Simply presenting information isn't sufficient. I will give you more information as we advance along in the course. Font size 12, in a traditional font style. A low word count results in partial or no credit.  **A late paper gets zero credit.** If you plagiarize or copy and paste a definition from an outside source, you’ll get zero credit and a referral to the Dean and/or the Director of Disciplinary Action. A grading rubric will be posted in Canvas, so you know how to receive maximum credit.

**Final Paper:** 30% 1200-word minimum, typed double spaced-essay that addresses a single controversial ethical topic of your choice. The objective is to explain a topic with clarity and address its central points of contention. Once you’ve explained the topic, you must make an argument in favor or against it using critical thinking skills and give supporting reasons as to why you believe what you do. You must include reference to a single theory we’ve studied and apply it to your argument effectively. You can choose from a topic we cover in class, or something outside of our curriculum. Please speak to me beforehand if you choose the latter. MLA format, font size 12, in a traditional font style. A low word count results in partial or no credit.  **A late paper gets zero credit.** If you plagiarize or copy and paste a definition from an outside source, you’ll get zero credit and a referral to the Dean and/or the Director of Disciplinary Action. A grading rubric will be posted in Canvas, so you know how to receive maximum credit.

*Note: Evaluation is based mainly on discussion and essay writing and therefore a competency in such writing is expected. Students’ writing will be judged by its clarity and precision. Do not churn out a paper an hour before class. Academic writing requires proofreading before submission, along with the other hallmarks of good writing: editing, correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar. The focus should be on the point, topic, or subject that is congruent with the scope of the assignment and should have a logical progression of ideas, arguments, counter arguments, and conclusions supported by evidence.*

**Class participation** 15% - I expect you to contribute to class, having read the assigned readings and prepared to engage.  Discussion Board*.*We will be covering a variety of interesting and engaging topics, some of which will inspire as well as challenge you. At times, there may be ideas or opinions related to the material that you do not agree with.*I expect everyone to conduct themselves in a civilized manner.*I do not expect you to have studied ethics or any kind of philosophy in an academic setting prior to taking this course. Therefore, asking questions and clarifying ideas is a necessary part of the learning process, and other students can benefit from the questions you might ask. **In order to receive maximum credit for participation, you must speak up in class and/or post content at least TWICE each week.**This can be an original post or a response to me or a fellow student. I will be keeping track of your contributions. At the end of each week, I will close the discussion. **There is no “going back” and submitting posts for previous topics and lessons.**You must stay current with participation.

**Extra credit** 0% - There is no extra credit. Please do not ask me if there is anything you can do to raise your grade beyond doing the structured assignments.

Course Policies

**Attendance**: You must be “present” each week but interacting with me and others in the Discussion Board or in person (in the case of hybrid courses). If you disappear for a while, then hope to chime in just enough at the end to get full credit, you will lose points and possibly fail the course.

For severe medical conditions that result in excessive absences, consult the Dean of Students concerning Valencia’s medical withdrawal policy.

**Illness/Emergency provision:** If you are unable to participate in the course due to illness, family emergency, etc., please communicate with me as soon as possible in order to create a plan to complete any missed assignments so that your learning can progress in your course. In the case of a prolonged online absence, please communicate with me as soon as possible in order to create a plan for the best course of action.

International students and students receiving financial aid should be aware of how a “W” will affect their status.

For more information for international students, go to international.valenciacollege.edu and then click on ‘current students’ at the top middle of the page. After that, select ‘Maintaining Visa Status’.

 For financial aid help, it may be best to meet with an advisor at the Answer Center who can better explain your specific arrangement and monetary award. The Answer Center is located in Building 5, and the second floor. Since the campus is closed, they can be reached by phone: 407-582-1507

**No-show procedure**Any student who does not attend class by way of signing in to Canvas and making an initial post **prior to the start** of the no-show reporting period for each part of term will be withdrawn by the instructor as a no-show.  This will count as an attempt in the class, and students will be liable for tuition.  If your plans have changed and you will not be attending this class, please drop yourself through your Atlas account during the drop period for this part of the term.

**Drop / Withdrawal** You have until 11:59pm on **Aug 29th** to drop this Fall 2022 course. After this date, a voluntary exit from the class is considered a withdrawal. The final moment to withdraw is 11:59pm on**Oct 28th**. If you decide not to continue coming to class and do not properly withdraw yourself in Atlas by the deadline, you will receive a failing grade as per the Valencia withdrawal policy.

**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.

**Online Etiquette:**Practice proper “netiquette”. Netiquette is defined as internet etiquette, or the rules for acceptable online behavior. If you have any uncertainty about this, please contact me.

**Presence:**An online course format is new to many people, including myself! Please be courteous to me as well as other students in your interactions. I do encourage a variety of viewpoints, however civility is essential. If you feel hotly charged about an issue, you may consider taking a pause before reacting harshly, especially towards another student or myself. Remember the purpose of the course: To become familiar with the nature of ethics and ways to resolving moral dilemmas. Critical thinking is essential, and it requires a measured reaction.

**Intellection freedom and viewpoint diversity:**As your professor, I’m committed to giving you as many opportunities and resources to support your learning as possible. Therefore, you may find it beneficial to record class lectures to review later. Please keep in mind that you do not have your peers’ permission to record them, and they have a right to privacy; your peers should not be in your recordings. **You may not record class discussions, student presentations, labs, group work, and private conversations.** These recordings are permitted for your own personal use; you should contact me to discuss sharing options. Note that while these recordings are useful for review, we want you to attend class for your insights and questions; these recordings are not substitutes for class participation and attendance. Should you have any concerns or questions, please feel free to contact me through Atlas email or Canvas message.

**Contact**: If you need to contact me outside of class, please stop by my office during my advising hours, or send me an email about setting up an appointment. ALWAYS use Canvas or your Atlas email when sending me anything via email. I ask that you put ‘PHI 2600’ in the subject line.

**Personal Counseling:**In the event you find yourself overwhelmed with school or life in general, **BayCare**is a behavioral health resource you can use free of charge. The confidential toll-free line is (800) 878-5470. Email: [BayCareSAP@baycare.org](mailto:BayCareSAP@baycare.org) Additionally, there are 4 full-time counselors working on campus whom you may meet with to discuss personal matters of any kind. They are located in Building 5, room 210. There are counselors on other campuses as well. At this time, with campus closed, you must reach out to them by way of email or appointments > [advising@valenciacollege.edu](mailto:advising@valenciacollege.edu)

**Support for students with food/housing/financial needs:**

Any student who has difficulty accessing sufficient food to eat, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect his or her performance in the course, is urged to meet with a Counselor in the Advising Center for information about resources that may be available from the college or community.