

General Education Course Submission Form

Date of Submission: 5/15/10

1. Check which area(s) this course applies to.

Inquiry – Arts & Creativity	<input type="checkbox"/>	Composition & Communications - II	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inquiry – Humanities	<input type="checkbox"/>	Quant Reasoning – Math	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inquiry – Nat/Math/Phys Sci	<input type="checkbox"/>	Quant Reasoning – Stat	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inquiry – Social Sciences	<input type="checkbox"/>	Citizenship – USA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Composition & Communications - I	<input type="checkbox"/>	Citizenship - Global	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Provide Course and Department Information.

Department: Philosophy

Course Prefix and Number: PHI 130 Credit hours: 3

Course Title: Introduction to Philosophy: Morality and Society

Expected Number of Students per Section: 32 Course Required for Majors in your Program? N

Prerequisite(s) for Course? none

This request is for (check one): A New Course An Existing Course

Departmental Contact Information

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Office Address: 1405 POT Phone: 7-7107

3. In addition to this form, the following must be submitted for consideration:

- A syllabus that conforms to the Senate Syllabi Guidelines, including listing of the Course Template Student Learning Outcomes.
- A narrative (2-3 pages max) that explains: 1) how the course will address the General Education and Course Template Learning outcomes; and 2) a description of the type(s) of course assignment(s) that could be used for Gen Ed assessment.
- If applicable, a major course change form for revision of an existing course, or a new course form for a new course.

4. Signatures

Department Chair: David Bradshaw Date: 5/13/10

Dean: Anna R. K. Bosch ARK Bosch Date: 8/5/10

College Deans: Submit all approved proposals electronically to:
Sharon Gill Sharon.Gill@uky.edu
Office of Undergraduate Education

General Education Course Proposal:

PHI 130 – Introduction to Philosophy: Morality and Society

Proposed for Area IV.A, Community, Culture and Citizenship in the U.S.

DESCRIPTION:

As UK students take their place in American society they face a growing number of moral dilemmas that challenge their ideas and values. Economic issues such as disparities between rich and poor, social issues such as the rights of terrorists, immigrants, and the disabled, and political issues such as the rights of citizens to health, education, and welfare pose serious problems that have always been difficult to solve. Today, these issues arise at a time of national crisis when the United States is emerging from financial recession, is engaged in two wars and has incurred unprecedented national debt. In such circumstances it would be easy for young adults to become discouraged, give up, and abandon any search for moral values in favor of a life of self indulgence and egoism. Fortunately, many students are rightly concerned about their place in the world and the role that they will play as citizens, and even those who are not can often be encouraged to develop such interests. The western philosophical tradition abounds in rich resources to help these students reflect critically on their ethical values and the foundations of the moral life.

The present course combines theory and practice. The first half of the course will introduce the major dilemmas that philosophers have posed about morality as well as the main lines of theory that they have proposed to deal with them. Material covered in this half of the course will typically include Plato's criticisms of conventional morality, egoism, and materialism, Aristotle's theories of happiness and virtue, Kant's ideal of a universal moral order,

and J.S. Mill's theory of Utilitarianism. Each of these important theoretical approaches will be explained and illustrated with appropriate examples from contemporary American life.

The second half of the course will be devoted to guided discussion of moral issues. The primary source for this part of the course will be *Taking Sides: Clashing Views on Controversial Moral Issues* (McGraw-Hill, currently in its twelfth edition). The instructor and students may bring in supplementary material as appropriate. The selection of issues to be discussed will be determined by the instructor in light of the interests of the students. Students will be expected to conduct research on both sides of each issue assigned for a given class day. At class time they will be divided into opposing sides for the sake of discussion and debate, or (at the discretion of the instructor) into smaller groups which will report their deliberations to the class. The goal of these guided discussions will be to formulate, analyze, and express the strongest arguments on both sides of each moral issue. Students will be encouraged to apply the moral principles studied in the first half of the course to the ethical issues examined in the second half of the course.

During the second half of the course students will also work on an "Ethical Issues Album." This will consist of the student's own written analysis of ethical issues using materials collected from newspapers, magazines, and the internet. The issues may include, but are not limited to, those discussed in class. Albums will be graded both for the variety of issues addressed and for the quantity and quality of the philosophical analyses. An electronic version of this assignment will be submitted to Blackboard for assessment purposes.

This course directly addresses the learning outcomes specified for "Community, Culture, and Citizenship in the U.S." The contemporary moral issues to be discussed generally involve historical, societal, and cultural differences within American society, as well as competing understandings of social justice and civic responsibility. They likewise raise issues of power and

resistance, civic engagement, and (in most cases) require understanding of social and cultural change over time. Active engagement is integral to the course, particularly in the second half when the students will debate these issues and prepare their Ethical Issues Albums.

PHI 130
Introduction to Philosophy: Morality and Society

Sample Syllabus

Prof. xxx
CB xxx, TR xxx
14xx Patterson Office Tower
Office Hours: xxx

Phone: xxx
e-mail: xxx

Course description: How should we live our lives? Is there any objective right or wrong? Are moral values only a matter of custom, taste, or subjective opinion? Are human beings really free, or are we programmed to act as we do? Does human life have meaning and purpose, or is it ultimately chaotic and absurd? Is there any basis for moral responsibility? Do human beings have rights, and, if so, what are they? Our purpose in this class will be to examine these questions and explore major answers to them in the western philosophical tradition. We will also apply the resulting insights to particular ethical issues in contemporary American society, discussing them extensively with the aim of discovering the best arguments on each side.

Besides these primary aims, a secondary aim will be to introduce you to Philosophy as a discipline and to develop your habits of careful, critical reading and reflection. For this reason, as well as for the sake of your understanding of the course material, it is essential that you read the assigned text before class. Although you may not understand it fully, you should strive to grasp at least its vocabulary and its central points. Skill at reading and discussing philosophical ideas will develop as you make this effort.

Learning outcomes: The following are the learning outcomes to be achieved in this course:

1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of major historical and contemporary ethical theories, including virtue ethics, Kantian ethics, and utilitarianism, and of arguments for and against popular ethical views such as egoism and moral relativism.
2. Students will demonstrate an ability to recognize the philosophical issues at stake in contemporary ethical and political controversies.
3. Students will demonstrate an ability to defend a particular standpoint on such issues in light of their understanding of the ethical theories mentioned above.

Grades: Final grades will be based on five units of work, each worth 20%: three hourly exams, an "Ethical Issues Album" (described below), and a final examination. There may also be an adjustment based on attendance, as described below. All grades are on a 10-point scale, i.e., 90-100 = A, 80-89 = B, 70-79 = C, 60-69 = D, below 60 = E.

Absence policy: If at the end of the semester you have *no* unexcused absences, you will receive a bonus of two points on your final grade. If you have *more than three* unexcused absences, you will be penalized one point, followed by an additional point for each additional unexcused absence. To count as excused an absence must be accompanied by appropriate documentation. Please make sure your name is on the documentation so I can record it correctly. The categories of excused absence are those recognized in *Student Rights and Responsibilities*, i.e., sickness; death in the immediate family; university-sponsored trip; and religious holiday for which you have provided notification at the beginning of the semester.

Plagiarism: For a clear definition of plagiarism see the Academic Ombud's essay, "Plagiarism: What Is It?" (www.uky.edu/ombud/plagiarism.pdf). The penalty for plagiarism, including helping another person copy your work, will be a zero for the exam or assignment in which it occurs.

Disability policy: If you have a documented disability that requires academic accommodations, please see me as soon as possible. In order to receive accommodations in this course, you must provide me with a Letter of Accommodation from the Disability Resource Center (Room 2, Alumni Gym, 257-2754, email address jkarnes@email.uky.edu).

Other class policies

- Please turn off and put away all electronic devices, including lap tops, blackberries, and cell phones.
- Bring your book to class. The books we will use are small and will not weigh down your backpack.
- Coming late and leaving early are disruptive. If on a rare occasion you *must* do this, please sit near the door and be as unobtrusive as possible. If either of these becomes a repeated pattern you will be given fair warning, after which your grade may be penalized.
- Speak up and take part in the discussion! This is important not only for getting your questions answered, but for sharing your opinions and ideas with others.

Required texts:

Louis Pojman, *Moral Philosophy: A Reader* (Hackett, 1998)

J.S. Mill, *Utilitarianism* (Hackett or Prometheus) (=M)

S. Satris, *Taking Sides, Clashing Views on Controversial Moral Issues*, 12th edition (McGraw-Hill, 2009) (=S)

**** Schedule ****

Note: This is a sample schedule for illustrative purposes only. The selection of readings for specific moral theories, as well as the use of films and selection of moral issues for class discussion, will be determined by the individual instructor.

August 29 Introduction

- September** 03 *Deliverance* (or another film that raises moral issues)
 05 *Deliverance* and class discussion of moral issues raised in the film
 10 Moral Relativism: Herodotus and Ruth Benedict P 19-20, 33-37
 12 Plato on Justice and Morality, *Republic I* (Conventionalism) P 2-18

September

- 17 Critique of Moral Relativism: Pojman P 38-52
 19 Ethical Egoism: Hobbes & Rand P 62-79
 24 Plato on Egoism, *Republic I* P 53-62
 26 Critique of Ethical Egoism: Rachels P 79-86

October 01 First Examination

- 03 Aristotle: Happiness and the Virtues P 249-260
 08 **Midterm** – Kant’s critique of Egoism P 193-200
 10 Kant and Moral Principles P 193-213
 15 Kant and Moral Principles P 193-213
 17 Kant and Moral Principles P 193-213

22 Second Examination

- 24 Nielsen: Against Moral Conservatism & Intro to Mill P 147-157; M Ch. II
 29 Mill and Moral Consequences M Chs. II, III
 31 Mill and Moral Consequences M Ch V

November 05 Film (Eg. *Affluenza*)

07 Third Examination

- 12 Moral Issues Discussion*: Should physician assisted suicide be legalized?
 14 Moral Issues Discussion: Should drugs be legalized?
 19 Moral Issues Discussion: Should hate-crime laws protect sexual orientation?
 21 Moral Issues Discussion: Homosexuality and rights
 26 Moral Issues Discussion: Is abortion immoral?

28 Thanksgiving Holiday

- December 03** Moral Issues Discussion: Should human cloning be banned?
 05 Moral Issues Discussion: Should handguns be banned?

***** Ethical Issues Albums Due *****

- 10 Moral Issues Discussion: Should the death penalty be abolished?
 12 Ethical Issues Albums returned

December 20, 8:00 am Final Examination

* Issues selected from Satris, *Taking Sides*, and supplemented by student research.

Ethical Issues Album Guidelines

Your album is a written expression of your understanding of ethical issues and how moral principles apply to them. Ethical issues are those that raise questions about how people ought to live. They arise in all areas of human life, and you are encouraged to identify as many of them as you can.

Base each entry on one or more magazine, newspaper, or internet report dated after the first day of this course. Include in the hardcopy of your Album a clipping or printed copy of the articles you have used, and in the electronic version a citation or internet link. For each issue, write an analysis that includes the following:

1. Define precisely the ethical issue at stake. If there are several, mention the others but focus on the most important one. Formulate the issue as a conflict of claims.
2. Clarify the conflict of claims. State which claim or claims are being upheld by the various parties and which are being rejected. Again, if there is more than one, focus on the one that is most important.
3. Offer reasons for one side of the claims. Your opinion on the issue may be stated, but this exercise is not primarily a survey of your opinions. It is an opportunity to express your understanding of, and show how, the principles that we have studied apply to the issues at hand. If you think that this issue reveals in some way the inadequacy of the principles we have studied, you may state that as well. If you are able to do so, explain what better or more reasonable principle you think should be used to resolve the issue.
4. Offer reasoned objections to the position that you have taken in step (3).
5. Give reasoned replies to the objections given in step (4).

The ideas that have been developed in the course should help you in defining the moral issues, deciding which issue is primary, clarifying the conflicts of claims, defending claims, and answering objections. Be aware of underlying moral issues. The statements quoted in your source may not reveal the most important issues actually at stake. Use your skills of clarification and analysis and point them out. Class discussion will afford useful examples of this process.

Mechanics: Entries should be typed, double-spaced on 8.5 x 11 paper. Number each entry on a separate page and paginate your album. Do not cover or enclose your entries in plastic. Present your work in a simple binder. You should also submit an electronic version via Blackboard,

following instructions to be given by the instructor. Spelling words correctly and punctuating sentences properly is your responsibility. Albums that do not meet these standards are unacceptable.

You may want to submit one or two examples of your work for comments. Please do so at the beginning of your work on the Album, i.e., around mid-semester.

Albums will be evaluated both on the quantity and diversity of ethical issues that you analyze and on the quality of your clarifications, observations, and reasoning.