

Introduction to Ethics PHIL-2030

Fall 2020 Section 01 3 Credits 08/12/2020 to 12/05/2020 Modified 11/19/2020

Description

An introduction to the central concepts in ethics and an exploration of such contemporary ethical issues as abortion, genetic engineering, euthanasia, and capital punishment. Required for the major in Philosophy.

Requisites

Prerequisites:

Corequisites:

Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Robert Lane

Email: rlane@westga.edu

Office: TLC 2247 (no office hours this semester)

Website: https://www.westga.edu/administration/profile.php?emp_id=410 (https://www.westga.edu/administration/profile.php?emp_id=410).

Because it is impossible to practice social distancing in my small office, **I will not be holding in-person office hours this semester**. I am usually available for telephone calls and video conferencing (Google Meet, Zoom or Facetime) by appointment, between 9am and 5pm on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. I will also be available on some weekend days, so if you cannot schedule an appointment during the work week, feel free to request one on Saturday or Sunday. Just email me to make an appointment.

Meeting Times

Monday and Wednesday

9:30-10:45am

Pafford Building Room 302

Materials

Elements of Moral Philosophy

Author: James Rachels and Stuart Rachels

Publisher: McGraw-Hill

Edition: The 9th edition (2019) is preferred, but you may also use the 8th edition (2015). When the online Lecture Notes cite a page from this book, citations will be of the 9th edition.

ISBN: 978-1-259-91425-6 (9th ed.)

Availability: Campus Bookstore and online book retailers. New printed copies are available from Amazon but are relatively expensive. However, you can purchase or rent an electronic copy from Amazon for under \$30.

Other required readings will be available online for no charge.

Outcomes

By the end of the course, each student will be able to

- recognize and apply basic patterns of logical reasoning within ethical contexts;
- describe selected theories within meta-ethics and normative ethics, as well as selected arguments for and against those theories;
- describe positions and facts relevant to selected issues within applied ethics (such as abortion, physician-assisted suicide, capital punishment, world poverty, and animal rights);
- summarize the contributions of historically important figures (such as J. S. Mill and Immanuel Kant) to ethical thought;

- discuss the ethical theories and issues explored in the course.

These course-specific learning outcomes contribute to the departmental learning outcomes of the Philosophy Program by enabling students better to

- discuss the views of at least three major historical figures of philosophy.
- critically analyze and explain a philosophical issue in written communications.

✓ Evaluation

A	90% - 100%	248 points – 276 points
B	80% - 89%	220 points – 247 points
C	70% - 79%	193 points – 219 points
D	60% - 69%	165 points – 192 points
F	< 60%	< 164 points

Criteria

Breakdown

☰ Assignments

You must score 100% on the Syllabus Quiz (located in the Orientation Module) before you can access the rest of the course. You may take the Syllabus Quiz multiple times, and it does not count toward your course grade.

Assignment name	Description	Due Date	Points
Tests on Readings and Lecture Notes	<p>Each test consists of 20 multiple choice questions. You will have 25 minutes to complete each test.</p> <p>One attempt per test.</p> <p>There are 6 tests total, and your lowest test grade will be dropped. So only your 5 best test grades will count toward your final course grade.</p> <p>5 tests x 20 points each = 100 points</p>	<p>Test 1: 11:59pm on Saturday August 29</p> <p>Test 2: 11:59pm on Saturday September 12</p> <p>Test 3: 11:59pm on Saturday September 26</p> <p>Test 4: 11:59pm on Saturday October 17</p> <p>Test 5: 11:59pm on Saturday November 7</p> <p>Test 6: 11:59pm on Saturday November 21 Monday November 23</p>	100

Assignment name	Description	Due Date	Points
Online Discussion	<p>Post at least <i>one</i> response in each week's discussion (5 points max).</p> <p>*Exception:</p> <p>Week of Nov.23: Post at least <i>two</i> responses (10 points max).</p> <p>See each Discussion for instructions and the Discussion Grading Rubric for how you will be graded.</p> <p>14 Discussions x 5 points each = 70 points, plus 1 Discussion worth 10 points = 80 points</p>	<p>August 20 through November 19:</p> <p>Every Wednesday by 11:59pm.</p> <p>Week of November 23:</p> <p>First post due Monday 11/23 by 11:59pm;</p> <p>Second post due Wednesday 11/25 by 11:59pm.</p>	80
Papers	<p>Three papers. See each Assignment Folder for instructions and the Grading Rubric for Papers for how you will be graded.</p> <p>3 papers x 32 points each = 96 points</p>	<p>Paper 1 due before 11:59pm on Saturday October 3</p> <p>Paper 2 due before 11:59pm on Saturday October 31</p> <p>Paper 3 due before 11:59pm on Monday November 30</p>	96
TOTAL	--	--	276

Note: All times are EST. Dates may change at the instructor's discretion; all changes will be posted in the Announcements section of CourseDen.

Schedule

Some of the "weeks" described here are longer than seven days, and some overlap with each other. This is to offer greater flexibility for students to access each Learning Module and complete the Tests on the schedule that works best for them. For example, the Learning Module for Week 3 will open before the deadline for completing the Test that closes Week 2.

“EMP” refers to *The Elements of Moral Philosophy*, the required textbook for this course.

When	Topic	Notes
Learning Module 1 Week 1: Wednesday August 12 – Wednesday August 18	Philosophy, Ethics, and Genuine Inquiry	<p><i>Wednesday August 12: Class meeting for Wednesday group. Learning Module 1 opens (after you complete the Syllabus Quiz). Before coming to the next class meeting, study the Module 1 Lecture Notes.</i></p> <p><i>Monday August 17: Class meeting for Monday group.</i></p> <p><i>Wednesday August 19: Class meeting for Wednesday group. Deadline for students in both groups to post on this week's Discussion Board.</i></p>
Learning Module 2 Week 2: Thursday August 20 – Saturday August 29	The Minimum Conception of Morality	<p><i>Thursday August 20: Learning Module 2 opens. Before coming to the next class meeting, read EMP ch. 1 and study the Module 2 Lecture Notes.</i></p> <p><i>Monday August 24: Class Meeting for Monday group.</i></p> <p><i>Wednesday August 26: Class Meeting for Wednesday group. Deadline for students in both groups to post on this week's Discussion Board.</i></p> <p><i>Saturday August 29: Deadline for completing Test 1 (covers Learning Modules 1 and 2).</i></p>
Learning Module 3 Week 3: Thursday August 27 – Wednesday September 4	Moral Reasoning	<p><i>Thursday August 27: Learning Module 3 opens. Before coming to the next class meeting, study the Module 3 Lecture Notes.</i></p> <p><i>Monday August 31: Class Meeting for Monday group.</i></p> <p><i>Wednesday September 2: Class Meeting for Wednesday group. Deadline for students in both groups to post on this week's Discussion Board.</i></p>
Learning Module 4 Thursday September 3 – Saturday September 12	Moral Skepticism	<p><i>Thursday September 3: Learning Module 4 opens. Before coming to the next class meeting, study the Module 4 Lecture Notes.</i></p> <p><i>Monday September 7: Labor Day: Monday group does not meet.</i></p> <p><i>Wednesday September 9: Class Meeting for Wednesday group. Deadline for students in both groups to post on this week's Discussion Board.</i></p> <p><i>Saturday September 12: Deadline for completing Test 2 (covers Learning Modules 3 and 4).</i></p>
Learning Module 5 Week 5: Thursday September 10 – Wednesday September 16	Cultural Relativism and King's Moral Law	<p><i>Thursday September 10: Learning Module 5 opens. Before coming to the next class meeting, read EMP ch.2 and King's "Letter from Birmingham City Jail", and study the Module 5 Lecture Notes.</i></p> <p><i>Monday September 14: Class Meeting for Monday group.</i></p> <p><i>Wednesday September 16: Class Meeting for Wednesday group. Deadline for students in both groups to post on this week's Discussion Board.</i></p>
Learning Module 6 Week 6: Thursday September 17 – Saturday September 26	Morality and Religion	<p><i>Thursday September 17: Learning Module 6 opens. Before coming to the next class meeting, read EMP ch.4 and study the Module 6 Lecture Notes.</i></p> <p><i>Monday September 21: Class Meeting for Monday group.</i></p> <p><i>Wednesday September 23: Class Meeting for Wednesday group. Deadline for students in both groups to post on this week's Discussion Board.</i></p> <p><i>Saturday September 26: Deadline for completing Test 3 (covers Learning Modules 5 and 6).</i></p>
Learning Module 7 Week 7: Thursday September 24 – Wednesday September 30	Utilitarianism and Euthanasia	<p><i>Thursday September 24: Learning Module 7 opens. Before coming to the next class meeting, read EMP ch.7 and Rachels' "The Morality of Euthanasia", and study the Module 7 Lecture Notes.</i></p> <p><i>Monday September 28: Class Meeting for Monday group.</i></p> <p><i>Wednesday September 30: Class Meeting for Wednesday group. Deadline for students in both groups to post on this week's Discussion Board.</i></p>
DEADLINE FOR PAPER 1 Saturday October 3		Paper 1 covers material in Learning Modules 3 through 6.

When	Topic	Notes
Learning Module 8 Week 8: Thursday October 1 – Wednesday October 7	Utilitarianism and World Poverty	<p><i>Thursday October 1: Learning Module 8 opens. Before coming to the next class meeting, read Singer's "The Singer Solution to World Poverty", and study the Module 8 Lecture Notes.</i></p> <p><i>Monday October 5: Class Meeting for Monday group. Last day to withdraw with a grade of "W".</i></p> <p><i>Wednesday October 7: Class Meeting for Wednesday group. Deadline for students in both groups to post on this week's Discussion Board.</i></p>
Learning Module 9 Week 9: Thursday October 8 – Saturday October 17	Utilitarianism and the Pandemic	<p><i>Thursday October 9: Learning Module 9 opens. Before coming to the next class meeting, read Savulescu, Persson and Wilkinson's "Utilitarianism and the Pandemic", and study the Module 9 Lecture Notes.</i></p> <p><i>Monday October 12: Class Meeting for Monday group.</i></p> <p><i>Wednesday October 14: Class Meeting for Wednesday group. Deadline for students in both groups to post on this week's Discussion Board.</i></p> <p><i>Saturday October 17: Deadline for completing Test 4 (covers Learning Modules 7, 8 and 9).</i></p>
Learning Module 10 Week 10: Thursday October 15 – Wednesday October 21	Kant and Absolute Moral Rules	<p><i>Thursday October 15: Learning Module 10 opens. Before coming to the next class meeting, read EMP ch.9 and Kant's "The Categorical Imperative" study the Module 10 Lecture Notes.</i></p> <p><i>Monday October 19: Class Meeting for Monday group.</i></p> <p><i>Wednesday October 21: Class Meeting for Wednesday group. Deadline for students in both groups to post on this week's Discussion Board.</i></p>
Learning Module 11 Week 11: Thursday October 22 – Wednesday October 28	Kant and Respect for Persons	<p><i>Thursday October 22: Learning Module 11 opens. Before coming to the next class meeting, read EMP ch.10 and study the Module 11 Lecture Notes.</i></p> <p><i>Monday October 26: Class Meeting for Monday group.</i></p> <p><i>Wednesday October 28: Class Meeting for Wednesday group. Deadline for students in both groups to post on this week's Discussion Board.</i></p>
DEADLINE FOR PAPER 2 Saturday October 31		Paper 2 covers material in Learning Modules 7 through 9.
Learning Module 12 Week 12: Thursday October 29 – Saturday November 7	Capital Punishment	<p><i>Thursday October 29: Learning Module 12 opens. Before coming to the next class meeting, read Pojman's "A Defense of the Death Penalty" and Bright's "Why the U.S. Will Abandon Capital Punishment" and study the Module 12 Lecture Notes.</i></p> <p><i>Monday November 2: Class Meeting for Monday group.</i></p> <p><i>Wednesday November 4: Class Meeting for Wednesday group. Deadline for students in both groups to post on this week's Discussion Board.</i></p> <p><i>Saturday November 7</i> NEW DEADLINE: Sunday November 8: Deadline for completing Test 5 (covers Learning Modules 10, 11 and 12).</p>
Learning Module 13 Week 13: Thursday November 5 – Wednesday November 11	Abortion: Don Marquis's Pro-Life View	<p><i>Thursday November 5: Learning Module 13 opens. Before coming to the next class meeting, read Marquis's "Why Abortion is Immoral" and study the Module 13 Lecture Notes.</i></p> <p><i>Monday November 9: Class Meeting for Monday group.</i></p> <p><i>Wednesday November 11: Class Meeting for Wednesday group. Deadline for students in both groups to post on this week's Discussion Board.</i></p>
Learning Module 14 Week 14: Thursday November 12 – Saturday November 21	Abortion: Judith Jarvis Thomson's Pro-Choice View	<p><i>Thursday November 12: Learning Module 14 opens. Before coming to the next class meeting, read Thomson's "A Defense of Abortion" and study the Module 14 Lecture Notes.</i></p> <p><i>Monday November 16: Class Meeting for Monday group.</i></p> <p><i>Wednesday November 18: Class Meeting for Wednesday group. Deadline for students in both groups to post on this week's Discussion Board.</i></p> <p><i>Saturday November 21</i> Monday November 23: Deadline for completing Test 6 (covers Learning Modules 13 and 14)</p>

When	Topic	Notes
Learning Module 15 Thursday November 19 – Wednesday November 25	Summing Up	<p>**Remote instruction: no class meetings this week</p> <p><i>Thursday November 19: Learning Module 15 opens</i></p> <p><i>Monday November 23: Deadline for all students to make first post on this week's Discussion Board.</i></p> <p><i>Wednesday November 25: Deadline for all students to make second post on this week's Discussion Board.</i></p>
DEADLINE FOR PAPER THREE Monday November 30		Topic (a) covers material in Learning Modules 10 through 12; topic (b) covers material in either Learning Module 13 or Learning Module 14.

* Course Policies and Resources

Late Work

- Apart from extraordinary circumstances, there are no deadline extensions for **Tests**—all Tests must be completed by the due date, no exceptions.
- There are no deadline extensions for **Discussion Board posts** – each week's Board closes at 11:59pm EST each Wednesday, and no late posts will be allowed apart from extraordinary circumstances.
- Each of the three **Papers** will be accepted up to two days late, **but with a 20% grade penalty for each day that it is late**. For example, the first Paper is due on Saturday October 3. I will accept it on Sunday October 4 for a 20% penalty and on Monday October 5 for a 40% penalty. Late papers may be accepted without penalty in case of extraordinary circumstances.

Expectations of Students

- You **must** be willing to devote at least 8.5 hours each week doing work for this course: attending one class meeting per week (if you choose to do so), reading the assignments from your textbook and elsewhere, studying the online lecture notes, watching the optional videos (if you choose to do so), contributing to the Message Boards, studying for and taking Tests, and writing Papers.
- You **must** stay on top of the schedule of work for this course and be aware of all deadlines.
- The **textbook and lecture notes** are essential elements of the course. You must study that material just as you would study for a traditional in-person class, before taking the online Tests that cover that material. The online Tests will not cover the **optional videos**, but you may integrate information from the videos into your Discussion Board posts and your Papers if you wish.
- The **online Discussions Boards** are a central part of this course where we will explore the concepts introduced in the reading assignments and lecture notes. The online Discussions will involve active learning in which you will apply what you have been learning in original ways and in response to your peers. The **Grading Rubric** for the Discussion Boards is found in the Orientation Module.

Attendance

I will record attendance for each class meeting, and I will also maintain a seating chart. But **I will not penalize students who opt not to attend face-to-face class meetings**. In order to UWG to distribute federal student aid, instructors must verify student attendance. For this class, **students are required to post in the first Weekly Discussion Board by no later than 11:59pm on Wednesday August 19** to be considered as attending class. **Students who do not do so by that deadline may be dropped from the class for non-attendance**. Students who add classes during drop/add are responsible for ensuring that they are verified as being in attendance by contacting the course instructor and participating in the online discussion.

Online Etiquette

Communication in an online class takes special consideration. Please read the short list of tips below:

- Be sensitive and reflective to what others are saying.
- Don't use all caps. It is the equivalent of screaming.
- Don't flame - These are outbursts of extreme emotion or opinion.
- Think before you hit the post (enter/reply) button. You can't take it back!
- Don't use offensive language.
- Use clear subject lines.
- Don't use abbreviations or acronyms unless the entire class knows them. Avoid acronyms that are common in texting (like "LOL" and "SMH").
- Be forgiving. Anyone can make a mistake.
- Keep the conversation friendly and professional.

Emergencies

If you have an emergency, you can reach me at my UWG email address: rlane@westga.edu, which I check multiple times each day, including on the weekend. **Your email must come from your own UWG email account**; UWG policy prohibits me from responding to student emails that come from non-UWG addresses. You may also use CourseDen email, but I check that system less frequently than my UWG email account.

Institutional Policies

Academic Support

Accessibility Services: Students with a documented disability may work with UWG Accessibility Services to receive essential services specific to their disability. All entitlements to accommodations are based on documentation and USG Board of Regents standards. If a student needs course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or chronic illness, or if he/she needs to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, the student should notify his/her instructor in writing and provide a copy of his/her Student Accommodations Report (SAR), which is available only from Accessibility Services. Faculty cannot offer accommodations without timely receipt of the SAR; further, no retroactive accommodations will be given. For more information, please contact [Accessibility Services \(https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/accessibility-services.php\)](https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/accessibility-services.php).

Center for Academic Success: The [Center for Academic Success \(http://www.westga.edu/cas/\)](http://www.westga.edu/cas/) provides services, programs, and opportunities to help all undergraduate students succeed academically. For more information, contact them: 678-839-6280 or cas@westga.edu.

University Writing Center: The [University Writing Center \(https://www.westga.edu/writing/\)](https://www.westga.edu/writing/) assists students with all areas of the writing process. For more information, contact them: 678-839-6513 or writing@westga.edu.

Online Courses

UWG takes students' privacy concerns seriously: technology-enhanced and partially and fully online courses use sites and entities beyond UWG and students have the right to know the privacy policies of these entities. For more information on privacy and accessibility for the most commonly used sites, as well as technology requirements visit the [UWG Online \(https://uwgonline.westga.edu/\)](https://uwgonline.westga.edu/) site.

Students enrolled in online courses can find answers to many of their questions in the [Online/Off-Campus Student Guide \(http://uwgonline.westga.edu/online-student-guide.php\)](http://uwgonline.westga.edu/online-student-guide.php).

If a student is experiencing distress and needs help, please see the resources available at the [UWG Cares \(http://www.westga.edu/UWGCares/\)](http://www.westga.edu/UWGCares/) site. [Online counseling \(https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/index.php\)](https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/index.php) is also available for online students.

Honor Code

At the University of West Georgia, we believe that academic and personal integrity are based upon honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Students at West Georgia assume responsibility for upholding the honor code. West Georgia students pledge to refrain from engaging in acts that do not maintain academic and personal integrity. These include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, aid of academic dishonesty, lying, bribery or threats, and stealing.

The University of West Georgia maintains and monitors a confidential Academic Dishonesty Tracking System. This database collects and reports patterns of repeated student violations across all the Colleges, the Ingram Library, and the School of Nursing. Each incidence of academic dishonesty is subject to review and consideration by the instructor, and is subject to a range of academic penalties including, but not limited to, failing the assignment and/or failing the course. Student conduct sanctions range from verbal warning to suspension or expulsion depending on the magnitude of the offense and/or number of offenses. The incident becomes part of the student's conduct record at UWG.

Additionally, the student is responsible for safeguarding his/her computer account. The student's account and network connection are for his/her individual use. A computer account is to be used only by the person to whom it has been issued. The student is responsible for all actions originating through his/her account or network connection. Students must not impersonate others or misrepresent or conceal their identities in electronic messages and actions. For more information on the University of West Georgia Honor Code, please see the [Student Handbook \(https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpsa/handbook-code-of-conduct.php\)](https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpsa/handbook-code-of-conduct.php).

UWG Email Policy

University of West Georgia students are provided a MyUWG e-mail account. The University considers this account to be an official means of communication between the University and the student. The purpose of the official use of the student e-mail account is to provide an effective means of communicating important university related information to UWG students in a timely manner. It is the student's responsibility to check his or her email.

Credit Hour Policy

The University of West Georgia grants one semester hour of credit for work equivalent to a minimum of one hour (50 minutes) of in-class or other direct faculty instruction AND two hours of student work outside of class per week for approximately fifteen weeks. For each course, the course syllabus will document the amount of in-class (or other direct faculty instruction) and out-of-class work required to earn the credit hour(s) assigned to the course. Out-of-class work will include all forms of credit-bearing activity, including but not limited to assignments, readings, observations, and musical practice. Where available, the university grants academic credit for students who verify via competency-based testing, that they have accomplished the learning outcomes associated with a course that would normally meet the requirements outlined above (e.g. AP credit, CLEP, and departmental exams).

HB 280 (Campus Carry)

UWG follows University System of Georgia (USG) guidance: http://www.usg.edu/hb280/additional_information# (http://www.usg.edu/hb280/additional_information).

You may also visit our website for help with USG Guidance: <https://www.westga.edu/police/campus-carry.php> (<https://www.westga.edu/police/campus-carry.php>).

Mental Health Support

If you or another student find that you are experiencing a mental health issue, free confidential services are available on campus in the [Counseling Center](#). Students who have experienced sexual or domestic violence may receive confidential medical and advocacy services with the Patient Advocates in [Health Services](#). To report a concern anonymously, please go to [UWGcares](#).

ELL Resources

If you are a student having difficulty with English language skills, and / or U.S. culture is not your home culture, specialized resources are available to help you succeed. Please visit the [E.L.L. resource page](#) for more information.

COVID-19

Proctored Exams/Online Instruction: Students should be aware and plan ahead for the possibility of having to complete all courses and/or exams online or in a proctored environment. This means talking with your instructors about what minimum technical requirements (software and hardware) will be required should your class move online or a student's personal needs dictate. This also includes making plans for internet access at whatever location participation may occur.

Virtual or in-person proctored exams, if your instructor should require them, may result in an additional cost to the student. Please discuss these details with your instructor or see the information provided here.

Face Coverings: Effective July 15, 2020, University System of Georgia institutions, including the University of West Georgia, will require all faculty, staff, students, and visitors to wear an appropriate face covering while inside campus facilities/buildings where six feet social distancing may not always be possible. Face covering use will be in addition to and is not a substitute for social distancing.

Face coverings are not required in campus outdoor settings where social distancing requirements are met. Anyone not using a face covering when required will be asked to wear one or must leave the area.

Reasonable accommodations may be made for those who are unable to wear a face covering for documented health reasons.

Student FAQs: For more information about UWG COVID-19 guidance for students visit the [Student FAQ webpage](#) (<https://www.westga.edu/student-services/health/coronavirus-info/return-to-campus/students-faq-return-to-campus.php>).