

Point Loma Nazarene University

Ethics in Context

PHL 211-2

Syllabus

Instructor: Mark Wright
Semester: Spring 2018
Location: City Heights
Meeting Time: T: 2:30-5:30 p.m.
e-mail: markwright@pointloma.com

Office Hours: By Appointment

Texts:

Steven M. Cahn and Peter Markie, *Ethics: History, Theory, and Contemporary Issues* 4th or 5th edition.

Common Book: *Barking to the Choir: The Power of Radical Kinship* by Gregory Boyle

Course Description:

This course will examine the prevailing issues within moral philosophy; considering both its theoretical/foundational developments as well as its attempt to address actual complex social/moral dilemmas. These issues will be analyzed according to the particular philosopher's conception of the Good, or the Good Life, or her/his understanding of the Ethical Goal. Moreover, these issues will be addressed without filter yet from within the context of, and in reference to, Christian faith and practice. Finally, these issues will be considered and evaluated from within a socially and economically varied, multi-racial, urban context.

Course Objectives:

Upon successful completion of the course the student will be able to:

-Identify and describe the aims, methods, issues and problems associated with philosophy as related to the issues of value theory.

-Identify, define, and/or describe the philosophical terminology and concepts commonly used to classify positions, methods/approaches associated with the topics/issues related to value theory.

-Identify and/or describe various facets and basic beliefs in relation to value theory.

-Identify and/or describe the assumptions on which such basic beliefs rest.

- Analyze and/or critically evaluate the evidence alleged in behalf of those basic beliefs.
- Trace the theoretical and/or practical consequences to which those basic beliefs lead.
- Receive an entry level immersion into the neighborhood and diversity of City Heights, San Diego

Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will engage in the disciplined practice of asking questions about God, the world, and of themselves, including questions for which there may be no easy answers. (Learning, Growing)
2. Students will differentiate among interrelated movements or figures in the history of philosophy. (Learning)
3. Students will evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of human reasoning or experience to provide an adequate account of significant issues that relates to our human condition, the world, ethics and Christian life. (Learning, Growing, Serving)

My Expectations:

1. Attend all sessions of the class. Please inform me if you will miss any of the class meetings.
2. Read the textbook sections and the readings prior to the day that we are to discuss them.
3. Each student must prepare to critically evaluate their own beliefs on certain ethical issues that we will discuss in class, being open to philosophical discussion about such beliefs.
4. Hearty and humble engagement with our volunteers and friends who receive food from the distribution.

Inclusive language:

The School of Theology and Christian Ministry has adopted the following statement: The School of Theology and Christian Ministry is committed to the equality of women and men. Recognizing that people have often used the English language in ways that imply the exclusion or inferiority of women, the department urges students, faculty and staff to avoid sexist language in public discourse, in classroom discussion, and in their writings.

Academic accommodations:

While all students are expected to meet the minimum standards for completion of this course as established by the instructor, students with disabilities may require academic accommodations. At Point Loma Nazarene University, these students are requested to file documentation during the first two weeks of the semester with the Academic Support Center (ASC), located in the Bond Academic Center. This policy assists the University in its commitment to full compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Section 504 (a) prohibits discrimination against students with special needs and guarantees all qualified students equal access to and benefits of PLNU programs and activities. Once the student files documentation, the ASC will contact the student's instructors and provide written recommendations for reasonable and appropriate accommodations to meet the individual learning needs of the student.

General Education Statement:

This course is one of the components of the General Education Program at Point Loma Nazarene University, under the category of "Seeking Cultural Perspectives." By including this course in a common educational experience for undergraduates, the faculty supports a survey of human endeavors from a historical, cultural, linguistic, and philosophical perspective, including developing critical appreciation of human expression--both artistic and literary.

Grades will be based on the following: 250 points total

Comprehensive Final Exam: 100 points

Two Response Papers to Philosophers Discussed in class (2-3 pages, double-spaced): 25 points each. For these papers the student is to:

- 1) *Identify the philosopher's conception of the Good Life; citations from the philosopher must be included*
- 2) *How is it to be achieved? Include citations*
- 3) *Your response*

***Academic writing tips:** 1. **Introduction:** The first paragraph has a clear, well written thesis statement. The introduction clearly outlines the argument strategy being used. It includes relevant details regarding the major movements the argument will take [e.g. major authors being addressed, important data being used, major examples being highlighted, etc.]. 2. **Organization:** The essay has a clear structure. Each paragraph is concise and talks about only one idea. There are transitions between paragraphs that create a logical progression. The progression builds from premise[s] to conclusion in a way that supports the thesis. 3. **Strength of Argument:** The argument structure is very clear and premises strongly support the

conclusion. No fallacies are committed. The student limited the scope of the paper enabling them to add depth to the argument.

*** Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Please consult the school catalog under the heading of Academic Honesty to learn the professor's intended policy regarding student dishonesty in academic work.**

Reflection Paper on Barking to the Choir: The Power of Radical Kinship (4-5 pages): 50 points

In a four page reflective essay, you will synthesize *Barking to the Choir: The Power of Radical Kinship* with your experience engaging in the Works of Mercy in City Heights. You will then explain the role of the Works of Mercy from within the perspective of Aristotle's conception of training in virtue through practice, i.e. how does doing the works of mercy differ from merely learning about our responsibility to our brothers and sisters in City Heights? I will assess the paper on evidence of completion of *Barking to the Choir: The Power of Radical Kinship*, your reflective abilities on your participation in the Works of Mercy, and your understanding of the importance of "embedded learning" (or hands-on learning) emphasized by Aristotle.

CONSULT COURSE SCHEDULE FOR ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES

Other Requirements:

Attendance of Four Community Classroom Dinners: 100 points or Two Dinners (50 points) and Attendance of Introduction to City Heights (50 points)

***Dinner Dates: Thursday January 25, Tuesday February 20, Thursday March 15, Tuesday April 17**

***Introduction to City Heights: Saturday September 9, 8:30 am to 12:30 pm**

**Mid-City Church of the Nazarene Address:
*4101 University Avenue, San Diego, Ca. 92105***

Complete Distribution Times (in case you were wondering):

***Saturday Morning (8:00-9:45 a.m.), Tuesday Afternoon (2:00-3:45 p.m.),
Thursday Morning (8:00-9:45 a.m.)***

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Historical Sources

Week One	Introduction. Plato/Socrates 1-33; 96-107 (4 th , 5 th)
Week Two	Aristotle/Epicurus/Epictetus 134-146; 178-194 (4 th); Epictetus, 203-214 (5 th)
Week Three	Augustine/Aquinas 195-216 (4 th); 214-235 (5 th)
Week Four	Hobbes/Butler 216-227; 228-243 (4 th); 236-275 (5 th)
Week Five	Hume/Kant 243-254; 308-316 (4 th); 276-287; 341-350 (5 th)
Week Six	Bentham/Mill 319-327; 341-360 (4 th); 353-361; 375-395 (5 th) First Philosopher Response Paper Due Tuesday February 13
Week Seven	Nietzsche 362-394 (4 th); 397-429 (5 th)
Week Eight	Camus/Sartre 397-412 (4 th); 432-447 (5 th)

Modern Ethical Theories

Week Nine	Moore/Ayer 423-429; 449-455 (4 th); 459-465; 485-491 (5 th)
Week Ten	Anscombe/Held/ Rawls 491-503; 724-737; 515-534 (4 th) 527- 539;775-788; 551-570 (5 th) Second Philosopher Response Paper Due Tuesday March 20
Week Eleven	Harman/Sturgeon 633-656 (4 th); 684-707 (5 th)
Week Twelve	Wolf/Nagel 739-760 (4 th); 790-810 (5 th)

Some Contemporary Moral Problems

Week Thirteen	Thomson/Marquis/Foot 765-775; 786-796; 815-820 (4 th); 817- 827; 838-848; 849-861 (5 th) Reflection Paper on <i>Barking to the Choir: The Power of Radical Kinship</i> Due Tuesday April 10
Week Fourteen	Singer/Arthur 821-839 (4 th); 817-827; 838-848; 849-861 (5 th)
Week Fifteen	Review

Finals Week—Our Final will be during regular class time of finals week.