



Fall 2018

Meeting days: Mon and Wed	Instructor: Dr. Montague Williams
Meeting times: 1pm – 2:15pm	Phone: 619-849-3282
Meeting location: LBST 205A	E-mail: MontagueWilliams@pointloma.edu
Final Exam: Wed, Dec 12, 2018 1:30p – 4p	Office location and hours: Smee 202 Mon: 4p – 5:00p Tues and Thurs: 10a-11:30a

PLNU Mission

To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

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. Moreover, these issues will be addressed without filter yet from within the context of, and in reference to, Christian faith and practice.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Students will engage in the disciplined practices 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 adequate accounts of significant issues that relate to our human condition, the world, ethics and Christian life. (Learning, Growing, Serving)

COURSE FORMAT AND OBJECTIVES

This course will include both lecture and discussion for the sake of guiding students toward critical reflection *of* and *with* the tradition of moral philosophy with an emphasis on discerning Christian ethics. Students will be

invited to engage intersections between the philosophy, Christian faith, various matters in the world, and their own stories. Instead of trying to fit all proposals into a Christian framework, students will be encouraged to embrace the work of wrestling with ideas and proposals for the sake of honest and thoughtful assessment and discernment. It is important to point out here that moral philosophy as a field has historically been a Euro-centric and male-normative (as will be reflected in the reading assignments). However, students will be encouraged to interrogate this reality and what it means for discerning Christian ethics today. While this course requires the acquisition of *conceptual* knowledge (content), course instruction and assignments also aim to develop *sapiential* knowledge (wisdom/understanding).

1. To identify and describe significant figures, ideas, and proposals in philosophical ethics.
2. To analyze current situations and stories in light of philosophical ethics.
3. To wrestle with philosophical proposals and ideas as they relate to Christian faith and meaning-making.
4. To examine what it means to live the good life.

REQUIRED TEXTS (in the order of usage in the course)

- Gaarder, Jostein. *Sophie's World: A Novel About the History of Philosophy*. ISBN-13: 978-0374530716
- Severson, Eric. *Scandalous Obligation*. ISBN-13: 978-0834126121

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Assignments	Point Value
Participation	100 pts
Water and Waves Reflection	50 pts
20 Reading Quizzes	200 pts (10 pts each)
Exam 1	200 pts
Exam 2	200 pts
Ethical Scenario Presentation	250 pts
Total	1000 pts possible

Grading Scale	
A=930-1000	C=730-760
A-=920-900	C-=700-720
B+=870-890	D+=670-690
B=830-860	D=630-660
B-=800-820	D-=600-620
C+=770-790	F=0-590

INCOMPLETES AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Unless otherwise stated by the professor assignments are to be submitted/turned in by the beginning of the class session when they are due—including assignments posted in Canvas. Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual circumstances.

FINAL EXAMINATION POLICY

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination **on its scheduled day**. The final examination schedule is posted on the [Class Schedules](#) site. No requests for early examinations or alternative days will be approved. See Final Project assignment below for more information on this.

PLNU COPYRIGHT POLICY

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

PLNU ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

PLNU ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY

If you have a diagnosed disability, please contact PLNU's Disability Resource Center (DRC) within the first two weeks of class to demonstrate need and to register for accommodation by phone at 619-849-2486 or by e-mail at DRC@pointloma.edu. See [Disability Resource Center](#) for additional information.

PLNU ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY

Regular and punctual attendance at all classes is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent from more than 10 percent of class meetings, the faculty member can file a written report which may result in de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation. See [Academic Policies](#) in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog.

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

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 school urges students, faculty, and staff to avoid sexist language in public discourse, in classroom discussion, and in their writings. Thus, terms like "man" or "mankind" or the

pronoun “he,” should not be used to refer to all humans. Instead “people,” “humanity,” “humans,” and “he or she” better acknowledge women as full persons.

ASSIGNMENTS

Participation – Participation makes up 100 points (10% of the student’s course grade). The professor may call upon any student to answer a question or expound upon a particular topic or reading. Students who are regularly punctual and present without unexcused absences/tardies can expect to earn at least a 75 points for their participation score at the end of the semester. Students who do this but *also* regularly participate in classroom dialogue can expect to earn at least a 90 points for their participation grade. Regularly participating in class means you are consistently offering thoughtful comments and questions as well as respectfully supporting the participation of fellow students.

Water and Waves Reflection—The Water and Waves Reflection is worth 50 points (5% of the student’s course grade). For this assignment, each student will quietly spend 15 to 30 minutes near naturally flowing water and produce a reflection that provides insight regarding the following questions:

1. If I did not already have an understanding of God’s creation of the universe and the scientific make up of water, what would I think about this water? What would I think about the purpose of water and waves?
2. If the communities I am a part of needed to create story about the origin of water, what characters, plot, conflict, and message would be part of that story?
3. In what ways can water offer insight regarding experiences in life and the meaning of life?

This reflection can be produced in a variety of forms—a story, a poem, a photograph and complimentary explanation, a painting, an essay. In all cases, you need to bring your completed Water and Waves Reflection to class on its due date and be ready to talk about it.

Reading Quizzes – Reading Quizzes make up 200 points (20% of the student’s course grade). There will be 20 short reading quizzes. The first portion of each reading quiz includes self-reporting regarding the students’ completion of the reading assignment as well as their quality of reading (*Yes, honesty is part of an ethical life*). To be more specific, students will score their own reading based on the following scale:

- 5 = I read every word of the assignment and took notes.
- 3 = I read more than half of the reading assignment.
- 1 = I read less than half of the reading assignment.
- 0 = I did not read the assignment for today.

The second portion of the reading quiz will include one or two questions or prompts that relate to the reading. The student’s response will be scored on a scale of 0 – 5. For example, one prompt could say:

In your assigned reading from *Sophie's World*, Alberto asserts that the philosopher, David Hume uniquely "...took the everyday world as his starting point" for discerning meaning in life. In one to three sentences, explain why Alberto makes this claim.

Because the reading quizzes will be open-book, the responses need to be thorough and thoughtful to receive a score of 5. The two portions give total possible score of 10 for each Reading Quiz. Reading Quizzes will be offered during the beginning of each class in which reading is due.

Ethical Scenario Project – The Ethical Scenario Project is worth 250 points (25% of the student's course grade). In groups of two or three, students will give a 15-minute presentation that makes use of the ethical theory in philosophical ethics to analyze and suggest responses to an assigned scenario. Students will choose their own groups (although some flexibility may be needed to make sure all students fit into a total of 12 groups). However, the professor will assign each group its ethical theory and scenario. Please remember that the purpose here is not for the group to analyze and make suggestions in light of their personal opinions or ethical leanings. Rather, the goal is to take a perspective seriously, even if it does or does not line up with students' own conclusions. The presentation will also require the group to critique the given ethical theory in light of arguments in *Scandalous Obligation*. The 15 minute presentation will include 5 minutes of responding to questions from the class.

To assist the professor in offering fair individual grades amidst this group project and to make space for communication about complications, students will submit one peer evaluation form on Canvas by 11:59pm on the day of their group presentations. This form asks direct questions to help you evaluate and grade yourself as well as the contributions of each person in your group. Submitting this form is very important. *Students who do not submit a peer evaluation form have not yet completed their portion of the ethical scenario presentation, and will receive a 0% on the entire project.*

The professor will provide rubric for this project toward the middle of the semester.

Two Exams – The two exams in this course make up a total of 400 points (40% of the student's course grade). The exams will cover course readings, class lectures, and additional terms and figures. At least 50% of each exam will reflect the content from the reading assignments. The remainder of the exam will reflect class lectures as well as assigned terms and figures. See the course schedule for the exam dates.

Extra Credit – Point Loma Nazarene University is hosting a book discussion on *March Volume 1* by John Lewis, et. al. You can receive 30 points (3%) of extra credit toward your final course grade if you read *March Volume 1* and participate in the book discussion at 6pm on September 18, 2018 in the PLNU Ryan Library.

Course Schedule

All work is due according to the date listed on the course schedule below.

Notes: Gaarder = *Sophie's World* by Jostein Gaarder

RP = Reading Packet (Excerpts of Primary Source Material on Canvas)

Severson = *Scandalous Obligation* by Eric Severson

Date	Class Session Topic	Readings DUE	Other Items DUE
Tues 8/28	Syllabus Review		
8/29	Embracing the Faculty of Wonder		"Water and Waves" Reflection
9/3	No Class – Labor Day		
9/5	Socrates and Plato	Gaarder, 3-48 (46 pages)	Reading Quiz 1
9/10	Aristotle and Virtue	Gaarder, 49-93 (45 pages)	Reading Quiz 2
9/12	Anselm	Gaarder, 94-119 (26 pages)	Reading Quiz 3
9/17	Exam 1	Gaarder, 120-184 (65 pages)	Reading Quiz 4
*Tue 9/18	*Extra Credit Opportunity! – Discussion of <i>March</i> by John Lewis. 6pm. Library		
9/19	Modernity (Guided Discussion in Canvas)	Gaarder, 185-243 (59 pages)	Reading Quiz 5
9/24	Kant and Deontological Ethics (Guided Discussion in Canvas)	Gaarder, 244-317 (74 pages)	Reading Quiz 6
9/26	Kierkegaard (Guided Discussion in Canvas)	Gaarder, 318-367 (50 pages)	Reading Quiz 7
10/1	Nietzsche	Gaarder, 368-440 (74 pages)	Reading Quiz 8
10/3	Seeing Philosophical Ethics at Play	Gaarder, 441-508 (68 pages)	Reading Quiz 9
10/8	Utilitarianism	RP 1 (20 pages)	Reading Quiz 10
10/10	No Class – Prof. Speaking at Conference		

10/15	Rawlsian Justice	RP 2 (20 pages)	Reading Quiz 11
10/17	Virtue Theory Today	RP 3 (10 pages)	Reading Quiz 12
10/22	Responsibility for the Taking	*Severson Preface & Ch. 1 (20 pages)	Reading Quiz 13
10/24	Invisible Crime	Severson Ch. 2 (14 pages)	Reading Quiz 14
10/29	Territorial Rights, House Rules	Severson Ch. 3-4 (28 pages)	Reading Quiz 15
10/31	Being Asylum	Severson Ch. 4-5 (14 pages)	Reading Quiz 16
11/5	Intention's Road, Hakeldema	Severson Ch. 6-7 (30 pages)	Reading Quiz 17
11/7	Scapegoats	Severson Ch. 8 (14 pages)	Reading Quiz 18
11/12	Rent and Torn	Severson Ch. 9-10 (32 pages)	Reading Quiz 19
11/14	Faith and Knives	Severson Ch. 11-12 (25 pages)	Reading Quiz 20
11/19	Christian Responsibility and Ethical Systems		
11/21	No Class – Thanksgiving Break		
11/26	Scenario Presentations 1: Kantian Deontology		Ethical Scenario Presentation Groups 1, 2, 3
11/28	Scenario Presentations 2: Utilitarianism		Ethical Scenario Presentation 4, 5, 6
12/3	Scenario Presentations 3: Rawlsian Justice		Ethical Scenario Presentation 7, 8, 9
12/5	Scenario Presentations 4: Virtue Theory		Ethical Scenario Presentation 10, 11, 12
Final exam	Exam 2		

**Required “seat time” is accomplished through class time and Canvas activity. Note that the following class days are on Canvas: 9/17, 9/19, 9/24, 9/26. These items and all other items on the syllabus and course schedule can change in light of the professor’s discretion.