SEMESTER AT SEA COURSE SYLLABUS

Voyage: Fall 2013
Discipline: Philosophy
PHIL 2510: Global Ethics
Division: Lower Division
Faculty Name: Brian R. Clack

Pre-requisites: One lower division philosophy course.

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This upper division class will explore some major elements in moral philosophy, with a focus upon moral and cultural diversity. The class will consider and evaluate the relativist and subjectivist conclusions often drawn from the facts of moral diversity, and will explore different religious systems of morality (Christianity, Islam, Buddhism) as well as the differences between religious and secular approaches to ethics. After these theoretical matters have been addressed we will turn our attention to issues of practical moral concern. Such issues will include perennial matters of life and death (abortion, euthanasia, the killing of animals) and global issues arising from our increasingly interconnected global situation (world poverty, environmental ethics, war, torture and terrorism).

COURSE OBJECTIVES
By the end of the course students should be able:
(i) To describe the main tenets of the major ethical theories (e.g. Utilitarianism, Kantianism) in essay form.
(ii) To identify specific moral problems and apply these ethical theories to them.
(iii) To appreciate the diversity of moral perspectives and explain how each perspective makes judgments about specific moral problems.
(iv) To understand the specific range of global moral problems arising from an increasingly inter-related world.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS
AUTHOR: James Rachels
TITLE: The Right Thing to Do: Basic Readings in Moral Philosophy
PUBLISHER: McGraw Hill
ISBN #: 978-0078038235
DATE/EDITION: 2011, Sixth Edition

AUTHOR: Heather Widdows
TITLE: Global Ethics: An Introduction
PUBLISHER: Acumen
TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE

A1- August 27: First responses to moral diversity: Relativism
READING: Widdows, pp. 30-42.

A2- August 29: First responses to moral diversity: Subjectivism and Emotivism
READING: Rachels, chapter 6 (‘The Subjectivity of Values’, by J. L. Mackie)

A3- September 3: Moral Theories: (I) Kantianism
READING: Widdows, pp. 53-58; Rachels, chapter 7 (‘The Categorical Imperative’, by Immanuel Kant)

A4- September 9: Moral Theories: (II) Utilitarianism
READING: Widdows, pp. 44-52; Rachels, chapters 3-5 (selections from Mill, Williams, and Nozick)
ASSIGNMENT DUE: 500 word reflection-piece on Schopenhauer, sympathy and the Dialogue in the Dark field lab.

A5- September 17: Moral Theories: (III) Virtue Ethics
READING: Widdows, pp. 59-65; Rachels, chapter 8 (‘The Virtues’, by Aristotle)

A6- September 23: Morality and Religion: Some Preliminary Issues
READING: Rachels, pp. 5-7.

A7- October 1: Religious Approaches: (I) Biblical Ethics
READING: The Gospel of St Matthew, chapters 5-7 (in electronic course material folder)

A8- October 7: Religious Approaches: (II) Islamic Ethics
READING: Azim Nanji, ‘Islamic Ethics’ (in electronic course material folder)
A9- October 9: Religious Ethics: (III) Buddhist Ethics
READING: The Buddha, ‘The First Sermon and the Synopsis of Truth’ (in electronic course material folder)

A10- October 12: In-class midterm test

October 13-16: Tema

A11- October 18: Life and Death: Abortion
READING: Rachels, chapters 11-13 (essays by Marquis, Thomson and Warren)

A12- October 21: Life and Death: Euthanasia
READING: Rachels, chapters 34 & 35 (essays by Rachels and Gay-Williams)

October 23-27: Cape Town

A13- October 28: Life and Death: The Death Penalty
READING: Rachels, chapters 18 & 19 (essays by Pojman and Bright)

A14- October 31: Life and Death: Animals
READING: Rachels, chapters 14-16 (essays by Singer, Norcross and Machan)

A15- November 2: Sexual Ethics
READING: Rachels, chapters 26-29 (essays by Russell, McMurtry, Sullivan and Boonin)

A16- November 5: Drugs
READING: Rachels, chapter 25 (‘America’s Unjust Drug War’, by Michael Huemer)
ASSIGNMENT DUE: 1500 word paper

November 7-9: Buenos Aires
November 10-12: Montevideo

A17- November 13: The Concept of Global Ethics
READING: Widdows, chapters 1, 2, & 4.

A18- November 15: Global Human Rights
READING: Widdows, chapter 5.

November 16-18: Rio de Janeiro

A19- November 20: World Poverty
READING: Widdows, chapter 7; Rachels, chapter 17 (‘The Singer Solution to World Poverty’, by Peter Singer)

A20- November 22: War
READING: Widdows, chapter 8; Rachels, chapters 20-22 (essays by Gawande, Lackey and Rawls)
A21- November 25: (enter Amazon) Terrorism and Torture
READING: Widdows, chapter 8; Rachels, chapters 23 & 24 (essays by Nagel and Luban)

November 27-29: Manaus

A22- December 1: (exit Amazon) Global Bioethics
READING: Widdows, chapter 9; Rachels, chapters 38 & 39 (essays by Burrows and Childress)

A23- December 3: Environmental and Climate Ethics
READING: Widdows, chapter 10

A24- December 10: A Day Finals; Journal also due this day.

FIELD WORK

FIELD LAB (At least 20 percent of the contact hours for each course, to be led by the instructor.) Attendance and participation in the Field Lab is MANDATORY.

First Choice: Hamburg: The theme of this field lab will be empathy and there will be two specific activities: a visit to the Dialog im Dunklen [Dialogue in the Dark], a 90 minute experience during which participants are led through various activities and challenges in total darkness by legally blind guides. The second activity is a visit to the Kunsthalle, an art museum in which we will explore the role of empathic understanding in art. These activities are linked to the sections of the class focused on compassion and empathy in moral theory (principally, the philosophy of Schopenhauer).

Second Choice: Casablanca: We would spend the day at the White Mosque and the field lab would be related to themes in Islamic ethics.

FIELD ASSIGNMENTS

• After completion of the field lab in Hamburg, students will complete an essay on Arthur Schopenhauer and the role of sympathy and empathy in morality.
• In addition to the specific field lab assignment, students will keep a voyage journal. Here, students will respond to class- and port-specific philosophical prompts that will be generated organically during the voyage and assigned before debarkation at each port.
• The journal and the field lab assignment will be graded separately. A detailed breakdown of percentages can be found below.

METHODS OF EVALUATION / GRADING RUBRIC
Grades will be based upon five assessed pieces of work:
(1) Field lab essay on Schopenhauer and sympathy (10%)
(2) A mid-term test on theoretical issues in ethics (20%)
(3) A five-page paper on an issue in practical ethics (30%)
(4) A journal relating to field assignments (10%)
(5) The final examination (30%)
Class participation may also figure in the determination of grades.

**RESERVE LIBRARY LIST**

- **AUTHOR:** John Stuart Mill  
  **TITLE:** *On Liberty and Other Essays*  
  **PUBLISHER:** Oxford University Press  
  **ISBN #:** 978-0-199535736  
  **DATE/EDITION:** 2008

- **AUTHOR:** Aristotle  
  **TITLE:** *Nicomachean Ethics*  
  **PUBLISHER:** Hackett  
  **ISBN #:** 978-0872204645  
  **DATE/EDITION:** 1999

- **AUTHOR:** Hugh LaFollette  
  **TITLE:** *Ethics in Practice*  
  **PUBLISHER:** Blackwell  
  **ISBN #:** 978-1405129459  
  **DATE/EDITION:** 2006 / Third Edition

- **AUTHOR:** Peter Singer  
  **TITLE:** *Practical Ethics*  
  **PUBLISHER:** Cambridge University Press  
  **ISBN #:** 978-0521707688  
  **DATE/EDITION:** 2011 / Third Edition

**ELECTRONIC COURSE MATERIALS**

- **BOOK:** The Bible  
  **SECTION:** Gospel of St Matthew chapters 5-7.

- **AUTHOR:** Azim Nanji  
  **ARTICLE/CHAPTER TITLE:** ‘Islamic Ethics’  
  **BOOK TITLE:** *A Companion to Ethics*, edited by Peter Singer  
  **PUBLISHER:** Blackwell  
  **DATE:** 1993  
  **PAGES:** Pp. 106-119.

- **AUTHOR:** The Buddha  
  **CHAPTER TITLE:** ‘The First Sermon and the Synopsis of Truth’  
  **BOOK TITLE:** *World Ethics*, by Wanda Torres-Gregory and Donna Giancola  
  **PUBLISHER:** Wadsworth
Additional Resources

None required

Honor Code

Semester at Sea students enroll in an academic program administered by the University of Virginia, and thus bind themselves to the University’s honor code. The code prohibits all acts of lying, cheating, and stealing. Please consult the Voyager’s Handbook for further explanation of what constitutes an honor offense.

Each written assignment for this course must be pledged by the student as follows: “On my honor as a student, I pledge that I have neither given nor received aid on this assignment.” The pledge must be signed, or, in the case of an electronic file, signed “[signed].”
The basic reasons why we argue and don't agree over certain main points. Moral Authority. The belief that someone has the authority over you to control you. The Cultural Differences Argument. That we all have cultural differences inside us and we all disagree with certain cultures' beliefs and or we sometimes agree. The Provability Argument. There are various ways to disagree and agree with issues that different people come in conflict with. Provable. Ultimatums. Subtitle Basic Readings in Moral Philosophy. Edition 4th. Author Rachels, James. Intellectual Property Rights. Terms of Use. Chegg Tutors Terms of Service.