

*The mission of LCU is to teach students the spiritual dimension of life, provide a quality education,  
and impart a system of values for living and for service to family, community, and church.*

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## **Course Description & Objectives**

This course examines various theoretical and practical issues related to the pervasive talk about ethics in contemporary society. As a philosophy class taught under the direction of the Bible department, Ethics draws from both important classical arguments related to moral theory and rich biblical-theological insights provided by the Judeo-Christian heritage. A wide variety of issues are discussed, from matters of truth-telling in business to uses of technological wizardry in medical settings, from questions of personal sexuality to concerns about the need for values in public life. Necessarily, most areas receive only very minimal coverage. Generally speaking, the aim throughout the course is not on answering every question but rather on knowing the questions and questioning the answers. Thus, we seek to develop a more careful--and Christian--approach to the complexities of "ethics" in contemporary life. In short, we aim to encourage serious thinking.

Specifically, the course is designed to provide students with the following:

- an overview of major theories of philosophical ethical theory
- an overview of principle Judeo-Christian ethical teachings
- adequate demonstration of the powerful dynamic of ethics and faith
- an arena for serious academic inquiry
- general guidelines for ways to make ethical decisions
- an atmosphere that encourages both more committed attention to one's own faith and more respectful tolerance toward the diverse views of others

Throughout the course of the semester, students will be encouraged to think critically, read carefully, and write clearly. They will be asked to integrate scholarly resources from the university library and from the internet with contemporary issues met through the news media and through local community service projects.

## **Required Texts**

- Louis P. Pojman, ed. *The Moral Life: An Introductory Reader in Ethics and Literature*. New York: Oxford, 2000.
- Paul T. Jersild, Dale A. Johnson, Patricia Beattie Jung, and Shannon Jung. *Moral Issues and Christian Response*. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: Harcourt Brace, 1998.
- Other readings (either distributed in class or linked from my web syllabus)

## **Course Requirements**

**Reading.** A **Reading Journal** must be kept, with entries completed as the reading assignments on the schedule are due. Journals must be typed, double-spaced, and must be submitted (simply staple the pages together; please do not provide a folder or notebook cover).

Students have some choice in the specific articles that they will read. At least 8 readings must be from the assignments in the "theory" section of the course. Journal entries should include, for each reading the following:

- a 1-paragraph summary of the reading. Provide basic bibliographic information, the overall theme/idea of the reading, and the general organization of the reading.
- some connection of the reading to material/discussions from class lecture and discussions (about 1 paragraph)
- one question about the reading that is relevant to the course, or a reflection/insight that you have drawn from the reading that causes you to think more seriously about this issue (1-2 paragraphs)

Journals will be assessed a final evaluation based on the following criteria:

- Outstanding (A+) journals will include entries for 15-20 readings, address in each entry the three components listed above, show evidence of engagement with the actual texts, show progressively improving reflection and deeper philosophical insights as the readings progress, and be written with proper grammar.
- Good but Not Great (A) journals will include entries for 15-20 readings, address in each entry the three components listed above, show evidence of engagement with the actual texts, show progressively improving reflection as the readings progress, and be written with proper grammar.
- Satisfactory (B+) journals will include entries for 12-15 readings, address in each entry most of the three components listed above, show some evidence of engagement with the actual texts, and be written with few minor grammatical errors.
- Well, . . . Okay (B) journals will include entries for 12-15 readings, address in each entry most of the three components listed above, and be written with few minor grammatical errors and no more than two major grammatical errors.
- Marginal ( C ) journals will include entries for 10-15 readings, address in each entry most of the three components listed above, and be written with no more than 6 major grammatical errors.

A Note: Some of the reading is not easy. Philosophy is very rewarding, but it does demand considerable time and effort. Your success or failure in the course largely will depend upon your willingness to try to read carefully and think seriously. There are study aids on the web (check my pages), including some study questions linked from this syllabus. As a start for your reading, consider the essay on "[How to Read a Philosophy Article](#)." As you read and when you have difficulties, consider looking at one of the "Study Help" texts (below) or a link from the "Ethics Updates" (<http://ethics.acusd.edu/index.html>).

**Two Examinations.** Both mid-term and final examinations will be given. Both exams will focus on the student's comprehension of course content, as it is presented in class lectures and discussions. Both exams will include a combination of objective-type questions and essay questions. Students who miss the mid-term exam date will be penalized ten percentage points on the exam. Students must take the final exam at the scheduled time.

**An Applied Ethics Group Presentation.** In the final third part of the semester, students will research, prepare, and present some kind of project related to a specific ethical problem. Students will work in groups of no more than 4. While a more detailed guide will follow, general requirements for this assignment include:

- Evidence of research with at least four scholarly sources exclusive of the course textbooks
- Fair attention to opposing positions, or to the primary positions, of an issue
- Creativity in group work and presentation, including the use of non-traditional media
- "Real faces" contact (where possible) with people in the community related to the issue
- Some kind of written summary (with sources) for the class members and professor

These projects will be presented at the relevant places, according to subject matter, in the course.

**Final Grade Calculation**

Your final grade will be calculated according to the following breakdown:

- Reading Journal 30%
- Midterm Exam 20%
- Final Exam 20%
- Group Project/Presentation 30%

The grading scale for this course follows the departmental policy: A=100-90; B=89-80; C=79-70; D=69-65; F=64-0. Students should understand that an A equates with outstanding, high-quality work; a B equates with work that is above average; a C equates with average work. Attitude & attendance may affect final letter grades in borderline cases.

**Bonus Points Opportunities.** Students may earn up to 15 points to be added to mid-term or – if not needed on the midterm -- final exam scores by taking advantage of the following alternative:

- Give 15 hours of time to a local community service project. Volunteer work at the Lubbock Food Bank, Habitat for Humanity, South Plains AIDS Resource Center, Carpenter's Kitchen at the Broadway Church of Christ, or Contact Lubbock are some examples of possible service projects. However, this work must be volunteer work done to fulfill obligations for this course. Thus,
  - a. This work must not be work done to fulfill obligations for your primary job or vocation; and
  - b. This work must not be work done to fulfill obligations for another course
- Provide documentation of your time with the service project. A letter or standard form from the contact person is sufficient.
- Submit by the date assigned a three-page essay (typed, double-spaced) that
  1. Provides an overview of the agency served and the basic work done (about 30% of essay)
  2. Reflects on some aspect of this service that relates to the Ethics course content (35%)
  3. Reflects more personally on how this experience has been beneficial to you (35%)
  4. Is written with proper grammar and style

## **Other Matters**

**Attendance.** Students who miss (a) more than 25% of the total class meetings or (b) more than 2 consecutive class meetings may be dismissed from the class. Excused absences are included in the total number of class absences; thus, keep track of your absences. Please note: I do not assume that your absences are excused. Therefore, if you are late for a class, please inform me on paper at the end of class; if you miss a class, please inform me on paper when you return. In either case, include name, dates late/missed, and reason(s). (This procedure applies to school-sponsored excused absences as well.) Students late to class, or students who leave a class meeting prior to the time of dismissal by the professor, will be assessed a one-half absence.

**Class Participation and Demeanor.** This course is designed for discussion, and I encourage it at every juncture. However, only one conversation should be occurring at any one time, and there must never be any sign of disrespect toward an person in the class. Carrying on private conversations while another person is talking, laughing at someone or talking about them in your conversations, snoring loudly during class lectures or discussions, or repeatedly cutting someone off in mid-conversation will not be tolerated. If I perceive a problem, I will give the appropriate person(s) one warning, followed by a removal from the class and the assignment of a full day's absence to the appropriate person(s).

This course provides room for a very wide variety of thoughts, positions, and discussions. I encourage the sharing of ideas and questions, but we will understand that

- No question, idea, or position vocalized should be equated with that person's own deep beliefs

- Both refusing to participate in discussions and dominating discussions are problematic.

**Contacting Me.** If you have any concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to come visit me during my office hours, or send me an e-mail ([stacy.patty@lcu.edu](mailto:stacy.patty@lcu.edu)). I prefer that you not phone me at home unless it is a true emergency.

**Web Site.** This is an active web-page syllabus, which may be found from the LCU start page or at <http://www.lcu.edu/faculty/website/FacultyHomePages/Patty.Stacy/index.htm>. Please utilize this page and the links associated with it.

**Disability Notice.** If you have a disability, as defined by the American with Disabilities Act, that might impair your performance in this course, please inform the instructor during the first week of the term.

## **Schedule of Class Meetings and Assignments**

<b>Part One: Ethical Theory, or Thinking Seriously About Why Morality Matters</b>			
<b>Day</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b> (Each reading = 1 entry)
T	8-28	Course Introduction	
Th	8-30	Introduction to Ethics  Why Be Moral?	Golding in ML, 8-31  Plato in ML, 541-48  Melville in ML, 58-69
T	9-4	Because of My Values!	Any readings from ML, Chapter 2
Th	9-6	Because God Says So!	B. Russell, " <a href="#">A Free Man's Worship</a> "
T	9-11	Because Of My Culture!	Benedict or Pojman in ML Chapter 3
Th	9-13	Because It's True for All!	Elshtain or Ibsen in ML Chapter 3
T	9-18	Because It is Best for All!	Any Readings in ML Chapter 4
Th	9-20	Because It is My Duty!	Any Readings (except p. 333) in ML Chapter 5
T	9-25	Because of My Character!	Any Readings in ML Chapter 6
Th	9-27	Because It is the Christian Way!	Any Readings in MIS Chapter 2
T	10-2	Because It is the Christian Way!	Any Readings in MIS Chapter 1
Th	10-4	Because It is the Christian Way!	TBA
T	10-9	Review	
Th	10-11	Review	
T	10-16	<b>MID-TERM EXAMINATION</b>	

Th	10-18	(Fall Break)	
<b>Part Two: Complex Responses to Crucial Situations</b>			
T	10-23	Wealth, Poverty, World Hunger, and Justice	<p><b>(Group Projects/Presentations Begin)</b></p> <p>Tolstoy in ML 462-76</p> <p>Any Readings in MIS Part 5</p> <p>Any Reading (1) from "<a href="#">Literature on Poverty and Welfare</a>"</p>
Th	10-25	Racism and Affirmative Action	<p>Any Readings in MIS Chapter 5</p> <p>Fish, "<a href="#">Reverse Racism, or How the Pot Got to Call the Kettle Black</a>"</p>
T	10-30	Patriotism and Civil Disobedience	<p>Henry David Thoreau, "<a href="#">Civil Disobedience</a>"</p> <p>Martin Luther King, Jr., "<a href="#">Letter from Birmingham Jail</a>"</p>
Th	11-1	Humanitarian Intervention and War	<p>Any Readings in MIS Chapter 10</p> <p>Alex Moseley, "<a href="#">Just War Theory</a>"</p>
T	11-6	Capital Punishment	<p>Any Readings in MIS Chapter 11</p> <p>Van Den Haag, "<a href="#">The Ultimate Punishment</a>"</p> <p>Greenberg, "<a href="#">Against the American System of Capital Punishment</a>"</p>
Th	11-8	Environmental and Animal Concerns	<p>Any Readings in ML Chapters 14 and 15</p> <p>Any Readings in MIS Chapter 9</p>
T	11-13	Business Ethics	Albert Anderson, " <a href="#">Downsizing and the Meaning of Work</a> "
Th	11-15	TBA	
T	11-20	TBA	
Th	11-22	(Thanksgiving Holiday)	
T	11-27	Sexual Ethics and Homosexuality	<p>Kant, Punzo, Leiser, or Bayles in ML, 698-707</p> <p>Wink, "<a href="#">Homosexuality &amp; the Bible</a>"</p>
Th	11-29	Birth Technologies: Genetics, Stem Cells, & Cloning	<p>Any Readings in MIS Chapters 15 or 16</p> <p><b>Last Day to Submit Bonus Work Essays</b></p>
T	12-4	Abortion	<p>Any Readings in ML Chapter 12</p> <p>Any Readings in MIS Chapter 17</p>

			John Paul II, " <a href="#">On the Value of Human Life</a> "
Th	12-6	Death Issues	Any Readings in MIS Chapter 18 <b>READING JOURNALS DUE</b>
W	12-12	<b>FINAL EXAMINATION</b> (3:15-5:15)	