

ST. EDWARDS  
NEW COLLEGE

A-PHIL 3327.01: MORAL REASONING  
SUMMER 2015  
TUESDAYS, 6:30-9:20, JBWS 268

Instructor: Jerry Green  
Email: [jgreen8@stedwards.edu](mailto:jgreen8@stedwards.edu)  
Office Hours: By appointment

**EXCERPT FROM THE ST. EDWARD'S MISSION STATEMENT**

“Graduates should be prepared, through training in critical and creative thinking as well as moral reasoning, to analyze problems, propose solutions, and make responsible decisions.”

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

People become morally educated, rather than trained, insofar as they achieve a grasp of the principles of ethical analysis and the motivation to choose, organize, and assess their own values and actions by means of those principles. Ethics is more than being religious, following a code of conduct, or having proper etiquette. It implies deciding for ourselves by means of a moral decision making process, based upon human reason and defensible moral principles, what to do and to believe. To be ethical implies that one has acted through self-motivation, with open-mindedness, and always with an eye to normative moral principles. This course will focus on normative theories and moral decision making. By means of lectures, class discussions involving your own reflective thinking, and group working sessions, we will explore the question, “what does it mean to be ethical?”

Date	Topic	Reading <sup>1</sup>	Assignment
6.30	1) Introduction, Relativism	E:TB Intro, Ch. 1	Quiz1
7.7	2) Natural Law, Social Contract	E:TB Ch. 3, 4	Quiz2 , Essay 1
7.14	3) Care Ethics	E:TB Ch. 7	Exam1
7.21	4) Utilitarianism	E:TB Ch. 5	Quiz3, Essay 2
7.28	5) Deontology	E:TB Ch. 6	Quiz4,
8.4	6) Virtue Ethics	E:TB Ch. 2	Exam2, Essay 3
8.11	7) Conclusion	E:TB, Ch. 8	DiT Exam, Group Essay

**COURSE MATERIALS**

- Mizzoni, John. *Ethics: The Basics*. Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.
- Ursery, Danney. *Moral Reasoning: Values-Morality-Ethics*, available at the SEU Bookstore.
- Various online material either on Blackboard, through the SEU Library, or on Prof. Ursery's homepage: <http://sites.stedwards.edu/ursery/moral-reasoning/>

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<sup>1</sup> E:TB = J. Mizzoni, *Ethics: The Basics*

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- A. Demonstrate the ability to promote critical and creative thinking by
  - a. demonstrating a caring attitude about how we understand, judge and act;
  - b. learning to ask the right questions about complex moral issues and situations;
  - c. accurately and impartially applying normative principles to specific moral situations;
  - d. analyzing ethically oriented material and case studies with the goal being to produce a clear, objective, and impartial essay which demonstrates insight into thoughts, values, feelings, and the effect of our actions on others.
- B. Demonstrate the ability to promote moral awareness by
  - a. repeatedly identifying moral issues, facts, and values in both written and collaborative work;
  - b. using examples and cases which reflect the everyday experiences of students;
  - c. creating a personal code of ethical conduct.
- C. Demonstrate the ability to promote responsible decision-making by
  - a. repeatedly recognizing “bad ethical reasons” for judging and acting through the list of appropriate written exercises;
  - b. synthesizing subject-matter insights and knowledge into a clear, unbiased, and well-defended moral judgment;
  - c. demonstrating through oral and written exercises independent thinking and intellectual responsibility.

## EVALUATION

In-class Quizzes (4 @ 2.5% each)	10%
Summary of Personal Moral Dilemma (Paper A)	5%
Discovery Essay (Paper B)	20%
Justification Essay (Paper C)	25%
In-Class Exam One	15%
Exam Two	20%
Group Essay	5%

Grades will be assigned according to:

A = 90-100%	<u>Truly outstanding</u> job of meeting assignment guidelines
B = 80-89%	<u>Very good</u> job of meeting assignment guidelines
C = 70-79%	<u>Adequate</u> job of meeting assignment guidelines
D = 60-69%	<u>Below average</u> job of meeting assignment guidelines
F = Below 60%	<u>Poor</u> job of meeting assignment guidelines

## ATTENDANCE

Since we have only a limited number of class meetings, absences become highly problematic. You are therefore expected to attend every class from beginning to end. If there is some emergency which would necessitate your absence or tardiness this should be settled with the instructor before the class in which you will be absent or tardy. Assignments will still be due on the designated date. (See also the policy on late work below.)

## PAPER SUBMISSIONS

Quizzes and Exams will be held in-class. Your three papers will be submitted through Blackboard. If you have technical problems, call the Help Desk at 512.448.8443.

### **EXTRA CREDIT & REVISIONS**

There will not be extra credit in the class. But, it will be possible to earn a few extra points. I will give you feedback on each of your first three Essays. You can then revise a second draft based on my feedback. If I think your paper addresses my comments and is significantly improved, I'll regrade it for a higher score. NOTE: Only papers getting below an 80% can be resubmitted; if you get a 'B' or higher, you should be happy with it. If you do revise, the highest possible new score is a 'B'.

### **LATE WORK**

We have only 7 meetings, so each session really matters. You are expected to attend all three hours of every class. If you miss an in-class quiz, you forfeit the points. If you miss an exam, you must schedule a make-up with me *before your absence*, or you forfeit the points. You are responsible for submitting out-of-class assignment by their due dates, even if you miss class on that day. Late Essay assignments will be accepted for no more than one week after the due date. A penalty of one letter grade will be applied to late work. Any assignment not submitted by one week after the due date gets an automatic 0 points.

### **TIME COMMITMENT**

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), <http://sacscoc.org/> , which is one of the accrediting agencies in the U.S. in conjunction with the Department of Education, now requires all faculty to list the approximately number of hours each assignment will take. The general rule of thumb is that each three-credit hour course will take approximately 135 – 150 hours of work and so in a seven-week class this averages out to about 20 hours per week. Of course, depending on the skill level of each student, some may take less time and others more, but in general ***those who strive for an 'A' will probably study more than those to strive for a 'C'***. Having read the material is not equal to having learned the material. After each week and/or assignment I list the number of hours I estimate it will take you to complete the work at 'A' level. This should help you plan your schedule. See the Assignments section below for specific estimates.

#### **EXPECTED TIME COMMITMENT:**

<b>Class time</b>	<b>20 hours</b>
<b>Class preparation and assignments</b>	<b>115 hours</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>135 hours</b>

### **STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

St. Edward's complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with a disability. If you qualify, let me know immediately. Students will need to present documentation of their disability to the disability coordinator in Academic Planning and Support Services, location in Moody Hall. For more info, see here: <http://think.stedwards.edu/studentdisabilityservices/>

For more academic support, see here: <http://think.stedwards.edu/academicsupport/>  
And here: <http://think.stedwards.edu/newcollege/helpful-links>

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Students are expected to maintain high standards of academic integrity in all work for this course. The core values of academic and personal integrity include: honesty, fairness, trust, respect, and responsibility. Plagiarism is a serious offense, but is often committed unintentionally when a student fails to cite a source properly (or at all) or when she or he inadequately paraphrases a source. Intentional plagiarism will result in an automatic “F” for the course and will be reported to the Registrar. The St. Edward's University *Undergraduate Bulletin* and the *Student Handbook* state that a student who is dishonest in any work may receive the maximum penalty of a mark of F for that course. Withdrawal from a course is not allowed when an F in the course for academic dishonesty has been imposed. Students caught intentionally committing academic dishonesty in this course will be subject to the full range of penalties as described in the *Undergraduate Bulletin* and in the *Student Handbook*. <http://think.stedwards.edu/deanofstudents/studenthandbook/academicintegrity>

## **INCOMPLETES POLICY**

The grade of I (Incomplete) is given at the sole discretion of the instructor and with the approval of the dean. A grade of I must always be requested by the student; it is not automatically earned. To qualify for an Incomplete, students must have completed no less than one-half of the work in a course and have attended no fewer than one-half of the scheduled class meetings. The student must be able to document that the situation qualifies as exceptional. Exceptional circumstances include but are not restricted to a death in the immediate family; the onset of a serious medical condition; or an unexpected change in job or family circumstances. Exceptional circumstances do not include situations that can be considered a normal part of living. Course work must be completed and a grade submitted by the instructor to the Office of the Registrar no later than October 1 for summer courses, March 1 for fall courses and July 1 for spring courses, or a grade of F will be entered on the transcript. Please consult the *Undergraduate Bulletin* for details which can be found online at [http://think.stedwards.edu/avpacademicaffairs/sites/think.stedwards.edu.avpacademicaffairs/files/undergraduate\\_bulletin.pdf](http://think.stedwards.edu/avpacademicaffairs/sites/think.stedwards.edu.avpacademicaffairs/files/undergraduate_bulletin.pdf)

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

Quizzes will be administered in class. These will have a short-answer format (multiple choice, matching, etc). Quizzes are meant to test your basic comprehension of the reading and the concepts we discuss in class. Quizzes are your early-warning system: If you're not doing well on the quizzes, you need to reevaluate your study habits.

Exams will be administered in class. These will include both short-answer and long-answer questions (written answers from one sentence to one paragraph in length). Exams are meant to test your ability to analyze and apply the main concepts in the course. Exams are your change to practice the skills needed for your papers.

In addition to quizzes and exams, you will have four essay assignments. These count for more than half your total grade. In-depth instructions are available on pp. 10-14 of the *Moral Reasoning* coursepack.

**FULL SCHEDULE<sup>2</sup>**

Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment
6.30	Introduction to Moral Reasoning Relativism and Universalism	E:TB Intro, Ch. 1	Quiz 1
	<i>To Do: Read pp. 1-7, 8-17 before class Review Syllabus Review MR §II-IV (pp. 3-9, 9-13)<sup>3</sup> Start working on Dilemma Essay</i>		
7.7	Natural Law & Social Contract	E:TB Ch. 3, 4	Quiz 2
	<i>To Do: Read pp. 41-56, 60-76 before class Review MR §V.e (pp. 46-56) Submit Dilemma Essay</i>		Dilemma Essay due
7.14	Care Ethics	E:TB Ch. 7	Exam 1
	<i>To Do: Read pp. 127-143 before class Review MR §IV (pp. 10-13) Start working on Discovery Essay</i>		
7.21	Utilitarianism	E:TB Ch. 5	Quiz 3
	<i>To Do: Read pp. 81-98 before class Review MR §V.c (pp. 27-39) Submit Discovery Essay</i>		Discovery Essay Due
7.28	Deontology	E:TB Ch. 6	Quiz 4
	<i>To Do: Read pp. 103-122 before class Review MR §III, V.d (pp. 10-13, 39-46) Start Working on Justification Essay</i>		
8.4	Virtue Ethics	E:TB Ch. 2	Exam 2
	<i>To Do: Read 21-37 before class Review MR §V.b (pp. 16-27) Submit Justification Essay</i>		Justification Essay due
8.11	Conclusion	-----	DiT Exam
	<i>To Do: Review MR §III, VI (pp. 10-14, 57-62)</i>		Group Essay (in class)

<sup>2</sup> E:TB = J. Mizzoni, *Ethics: The Basics*, MR = D. Ursery, *Moral Reasoning: Values-Morality-Ethics*

<sup>3</sup> MR § = online version, pp. = printed version