



Your University of Choice

## COURSE SYLLABUS

**Term: 2015-1**

**Course: PHIL 323A (Ethics: How Should I Live?)**

<b>Instructor Information:</b>	
<b>Instructor Name</b>	Michael McGehee
<b>Office Number:</b>	Room 517
<b>Phone Number:</b>	(219) 473-4350
<b>Email:</b>	mmcgehee@ccsj.edu
<b>Hours Available:</b>	Tuesdays/Thursdays, Noon-2pm (by appointment)
<b>Instructor Background:</b>	
M.A., Philosophy, The University of Chicago, 2013 B.A., Philosophy and History, Cornell College, 2009 CCSJ Band Director Advisor to CCSJ Philosophy Club	
<u>Courses Taught at CCSJ:</u>	
Foundations of Western Culture (HUM 110), English Composition (ENG 103), Great Philosophical Ideas (PHIL 200), Business and Professional Ethics (PHIL/BSMT 375), Metaphysics (PHIL 321), Epistemology (PHIL 322), Ethics (PHIL 323)	

<b>Course Information:</b>	
<b>Course Time:</b>	Mondays and Wednesdays, 1:45-3:15pm
<b>Classroom:</b>	TBA
<b>Prerequisites:</b>	PHIL 200, EWPC 103, EWPC 104, or Instructor consent
<b>Required Books and Materials:</b>	* Texts via Blackboard (printed out by the student before each class) * A spiral notebook for taking notes
<b>Learning Outcomes/ Competencies:</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Understand the basic terminology used by contemporary analytic philosophers;</li> <li>2. Analyze philosophical arguments into claims and grounds reasoning;</li> <li>3. Evaluate ethical perspectives and systems for logical consistency and practical utility;</li> </ol>	

4. Reflect critically about the nature of goodness, rightness, justice, fairness, morality, and ethics;
5. Develop a well-grounded personal ethical philosophy through synthesis and reflection.
6. Apply and further develop critical thinking skills, academic writing skills, and oral communication

**Course Description:**  
 In this course, students investigate various ethical frameworks, with the goal of developing a well-formed conscience and ethically reflective mindset in personal and professional life. Frameworks include Aristotle's virtue ethics, the natural law approach of Thomas Aquinas, Kant's deontological approach, the utilitarianism of John Stuart Mill, and the social contract theories of Locke, Rousseau, or Hobbes. Through the application of these approaches, students evaluate and form well-grounded judgments on issues such as honesty, respect, relationships, consent, privacy, prejudice, decision-making, economic and environmental stewardship, individual rights, and personal and social responsibility. Ultimately, students develop an answer to the question, "What is ethics, why do I need it, and how do I apply it to my personal and professional life?"

**Learning Strategies:** Lecture, Group Discussion, Class Discussion, Paper Writing, Journal Writing, Blackboard, Presentations

**Experiential Learning Opportunities:**

**Assessments:**

<b>Grading</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seminar Participation</li> <li>• Blackboard Posts</li> <li>• Journal Entries</li> <li>• Discussion Starters</li> <li>• Final Paper</li> <li>• Oral Defense/Examination</li> </ul>	20% of Final Grade 20% of Final Grade 10% of Final Grade 10% of Final Grade 30% of Final Grade 10% of Final Grade
<b>Class Participation</b>	Class is divided into alternating lecture and seminar days.  On lecture days, students are responsible for taking notes, being respectful, and responding to questions from the instructor and comments of their fellow students, as well as writing journal entries, bringing any required	

	<p>texts to class, and completing all in-class activities.</p> <p>On seminar days, students are responsible for bringing the required text for the day printed out (with their quote from their blackboard post highlighted), participating in class discussion of the text, being respectful, and taking notes.</p> <p>In order to receive credit, <b>students must attend class on time and stay for the full duration</b> (unless instructor permission is sought to leave class early or arrive late). Students may use the restroom as they need to during lecture days, but during seminar days, students should only leave when they would not interrupt anyone speaking.</p>	
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**Explanation of Assignments:**

**Seminar Participation**

Your attendance of class lecture and active engagement in class discussion during seminar is a very significant part of your overall performance in the course. It is essential that you attend class having done the reading in advance and ready to ask well-thought out questions about the reading in class.

Your participation in seminar each week will be graded based on the following (out of 10 points):

1. Demonstrating your understanding of the text through thoughtful questions and comments during seminar. (4 points)
2. Politely listening to your fellow classmates questions and comments and stayed attentive through seminar. This means no checking your phone, no sleeping, no talking to your neighbor, and, in general, no leaving the room. (3 points)
3. Showing up with the text in-hand, annotated and with your quote from your Blackboard post highlighted or marked. (3 points)

**Blackboard Posts**

Before seminar each week, students will post a quote from the reading, an interpretation of the meaning of that quote, and a question about the quote for the class. Then, you will respond to one of your fellow students' questions.

So, each week you will be responsible for and graded on the following (out of 10 points):

1. Reading the assigned text at least twice (for understanding) before seminar.
2. Finding, posting, and interpreting a quote from the text online. (4 points for your interpretation, 2 points for the quote)
3. End your post with a question that you had about the reading for the class to try to answer. (2 points)
4. Responding to *at least one* fellow student's post with a thoughtful comment or question. (2 points)
5. Coming to seminar with the text printed out and with your quote highlighted.

### Journal Entries

During the first fifteen minutes of every lecture class, students will write two or more paragraphs in response to a prompt, typically concerning the previous night's reading. Students will turn these entries in near the end of the course, and are responsible for keeping track of them and making them up on their own. These journal entries are a low-stakes way to start thinking through the issues we will discuss in class. Students should refer to their journal entries to remember what they are interested in discussing and writing about for their final paper.

### Discussion Starters

Twice during the semester, students will be responsible for starting off seminar discussion with a 5-10 minute presentation on the section of text being discussed that day. Students will be evaluated on their comprehension of the text, their public speaking ability, and their ability to explain and discuss the text in question in a clear and earnest manner. These assignments function as both practice for your oral defense of your final paper, as well as a way to make class discussion of the text more natural.

### Final Paper

The final paper will be 8-12 pages, double spaced, on a topic in ethical philosophy, utilizing at least one primary text from the course. More on this assignment as the semester progresses, but you should note that, between the paper itself and the defense of the paper, it's worth 40% of your total grade.

Note: You cannot pass the course without turning in a final paper that follows the prompt, is discipline appropriate, and is your own work, and then successfully defending that paper.

### Oral Defense

You will defend a thesis in an oral presentation of your final paper, in front of the class. You will be asked to present the thesis of your paper clearly, and explain how the parts of your paper support that thesis, as well as answer some possible objections. I will also ask you questions for clarity and to check for understanding.

You should dress as you would for an interview, that is, formally. You will also be graded on your public speaking ability; you will get good practice at this during seminar, so don't sweat it. By the time you defend, you'll be ready, as long as you've done good work on your paper and regularly participated in seminar, class discussion, and blackboard. As per Philosophy and Religious Studies program standards, this presentation will be recorded, both to act as a formal record and so that the videos will be assessed.

## Course Schedule:

<b>* All texts should be downloaded and printed out from Blackboard unless otherwise noted.</b>		
<b>* You will post on Blackboard and be responsible for participating in Seminar every single week.</b>		
<u>Class Meeting Date</u>	<u>Class Topic/Readings</u>	<u>Papers Due</u>
Week 1 - 08/31/15	Introduction to the Course Meta-Ethics	
Week 1 - 09/02/15	Seminar: Plato's Apology, Crito, and Meno (Excerpts)	Discussion Starter On _____
Week 2 - 09/07/15	NO CLASS – LABOR DAY	
Week 2 - 09/09/15	Natural Law Introduction to Normative Ethics	
Week 3 - 09/14/15	Seminar: Thomas Aquinas	Discussion Starter On

		Aquinas: _____
Week 3 - 09/16/15	Deontology	
Week 4 - 09/21/15	Seminar: Kant's Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals	Discussion Starter On Kant: _____
Week 4 - 09/23/15	Deontology, Part II	
Week 5 - 09/28/15	Seminar: Rawls' Justice As Fairness	Discussion Starter On Rawls: _____
Week 5 - 09/30/15	Deontology, Part III	
Week 6 - 10/05/15	Seminar: Nagel's War and Massacre	Discussion Starter On Nagel: _____
Week 6 - 10/07/15	Utilitarianism	
Week 7 - 10/12/15	Seminar: Bentham's Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation	Discussion Starter On Bentham: _____
Week 7 - 10/14/15	Utilitarianism, Part II	
Week 8 - 10/19/15	Seminar: Mill's Utilitarianism	Discussion Starter On Mill: _____
Week 8 - 10/21/15	Utilitarianism, Part III	
Week 9 - 10/26/15	Seminar: Peter Singer's Famine, Affluence, and Morality	Discussion Starter On Singer: _____
Week 9 - 10/28/15	Introduction to Applied Ethics	
Week 10 - 11/02/15	Seminar: Peter Caws' Minimal Consequentialism	Discussion Starter On Caws: _____
Week 10 - 11/04/15	Applied Ethics Topics	
Week 11 - 11/09/15	Seminar: Emma Watson's Speech to the U.N.	Discussion Starter On Watson: _____
Week 11 - 11/11/15	Applied Ethics Topics	
Week 12 - 11/16/15	Seminar: Peter Singer's Animal Liberation	Discussion Starter On Singer: _____
Week 12 - 11/18/15	Applied Ethics Topics	<b>Rough Draft of Final Paper Due (Optional)</b>
Week 13 - 11/23/15	Seminar: Bertrand Russell's In Praise of Idleness	Discussion Starter On Russell _____
Week 13 - 11/25/15	Introduction to Political	

	Philosophy	
Week 14 - 11/30/15	Seminar: TBD	Discussion Starter On (TBD)
Week 14 - 12/02/15	Paper Drafting Workshop	
Week 15 - 12/07/15 – 12/9/15 (TBA)	EXAM WEEK: Oral Defenses	<b>Final Paper Due</b>

**Schedule is subject to change at the instructor's discretion to suit the needs of the course.**

<b>Responsibilities</b>	
<b>Attending Class</b>	You cannot succeed in this class if you do not attend. We believe that intellectual growth and success in higher education occur through interaction in the classroom and laboratories. However, we do not want to penalize students for participating in college-sponsored events. When you miss class because of a college event, you must give notice of your absence in advance, and you are responsible for all missed work. Being absent doesn't excuse you from doing class work; you have <b>more</b> responsibilities to keep up and meet the objectives of this course.
<b>Turning In Your Work</b>	You cannot succeed in this class if you do not turn in all your work on the day it is due. Except in rare circumstances, <b>late work will not be accepted.</b>  All assignments should be turned in via Blackboard unless otherwise noted.
<b>Using Electronic Devices</b>	Turn off all cell phones and other electric devices for the full duration of each class. The usage of cell phones, laptops, tablets, and e-readers is allowed for the sole purpose of taking notes. If there is an important reason why you must have your phone or other electronic device turned on (for example, an illness at home or a work emergency), speak to me about it <b>before</b> class.
<b>Participating in Class</b>	Many of the issues we will discuss in class are controversial. Therefore, it is essential that this class is a safe environment for the exchange of ideas. Please be respectful of your fellow students and myself. This means, in the first place, refrain from the use of hate speech, insults, interrupting someone when he or she is speaking, or any other harmful behavior. Class should be a fun and interesting place to be, so if at any time you feel uncomfortable with the way a student or anyone else has made you feel in the classroom, please let me know as soon as possible. Students who cannot show consideration to others <i>will</i> be kicked out of class.
<b>Doing Your Own Work</b>	If you turn in work that is not your own, you are subject to judicial review, and these procedures can be found in the College Catalog and the Student Planner. The maximum penalty for any form of academic dishonesty is dismissal from the College.  Using standard citation guidelines, such as MLA or APA format, to document sources avoids plagiarism. The Library has reference copies of each of these manuals, and there are brief checklists in your Student Handbook and Planner.

	<b>PLEASE NOTE:</b> All papers may be electronically checked for plagiarism.
<b>Withdrawing from Class</b>	After the last day established for class changes has passed (see the College calendar), you may withdraw from a course by following the policy outlined in the CCSJ Course Catalog.

<b>Resources</b>	
<b>Student Success Center:</b>	The Student Success Center provides faculty tutors at all levels to help you master specific subjects and develop effective learning skills. It is open to all students at no charge. You can contact the Student Success Center at 219 473-4287 or stop by the Library.
<b>Disability Services:</b>	Disability Services strives to meet the needs of all students by providing academic services in accordance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines. If you believe that you need a “reasonable accommodation” because of a disability, contact the Disability Services Coordinator at 219-473-4349.
<b>CCSJ Alerts:</b>	<p>Calumet College of St. Joseph’s emergency communications system will tell you about emergencies, weather-related closings, or other incidents via text, email, or voice messages. Please sign up for this important service annually on the College’s website at: <a href="http://www.ccsj.edu/alerts/index.html">http://www.ccsj.edu/alerts/index.html</a>.</p> <p>In addition, you can check other media for important information, such as school closings:</p> <p><b>Internet:</b> <a href="http://www.ccsj.edu">http://www.ccsj.edu</a>  <b>Radio:</b> WAKE – 1500 AM, WGN – 720 AM, WIJE – 105.5 FM, WLS – 890 AM, WZVN – 107.1 FM, WBBM NEWS RADIO 78  <b>TV Channels:</b> 2, 5, 7, 9, 32</p>