

FOUNDATIONAL STUDIES—ETHICS AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Philosophy 201: Ethics and the Good Life

- 1. Understand the historical and philosophical bases of ethical decision-making and social responsibility.** Students will read primary source material in this course, all of which directly involves the great ethicists throughout history. These philosophical readings present different theories for how students should approach both ethical decision-making and social responsibility. The regular quizzes in this course will show students how well they understand this material. Their papers and oral participation will also highlight their understanding of ethical decision-making and social responsibility.
- 2. Use independent thinking, critical analysis, and reasoned inquiry when assessing personal, professional and societal issues.** The midterm paper and the final paper will demonstrate students' independent thinking, critical analysis, and reasoned inquiry in regard to these issues. Half of each paper must show an understanding of an ethical theory while the other half must consist of their own thoughts about the issue under consideration.
- 3. Demonstrate the ability to make personal and professional decisions by applying knowledge and skills obtained from the study of ethics and theories of social responsibility.** Students will be required to apply their ethical knowledge and skills by volunteering at local non-profit organizations, such as Habitat for Humanity, the Humane Society, soup kitchens, and nursing homes. They will have to write a short paper about their experiences.
- 4. Articulate how their ethical framework and understanding of social responsibility shape their actions.** Students will fulfill this requirement through their papers, the volunteer work, and by means of oral participation in class. Of course, their oral participation is part of their grade for this course.

PHIL 201, Ethics and the Good Life
Fall
Dr. Judy Barad

ETHICS AND THE GOOD LIFE

GENERAL DESCRIPTION AND APPROACH

This Foundational Studies course in the Ethics and Social Responsibility category, will expose you to important, classical theory from an historical overview. **(FO 1)** There will be an emphasis on ethics as operative in our lives. **(FO 4)** Most human behavior, and certainly the vast majority of behaviors with which the study of ethics is concerned, takes place within a social context, much of it within a corporate or collective context. Thus the study of ethics, by its very nature, must have a strongly “public” character. This public character requires that each person show respect for the other members of that public. While this does not require that we always agree with other members of the public, it does require that we be willing to listen carefully to what those others have to say, and be open to the possibility that we may learn from one another. Even when the other’s position may be unpopular, or the other may be strange or even obnoxious, responsible public dialogue requires that we listen to what the other has to say. Without this public dialogue a healthy democratic society is impossible. Because of this feature of ethics, this course will focus on the study of ethics as reflective and critical participation in a social dialogue. As in any philosophy course, we will be concerned in this course to reflect on issues in a critical and disciplined manner—to dig out the presuppositions of the positions we are initially inclined to hold, and to explore the additional implications of those presuppositions in order to examine their acceptability. **(FSO 2)** It is important for the student of ethics to learn how to take a position, to provide reflective and reasoned advocacy of that position and to defend it and perhaps revise it in the face of criticism. **(FSO 5)**

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Understand the historical and philosophical bases of ethical decision-making and social responsibility;
- Use independent thinking, critical analysis, and reasoned inquiry when assessing personal, professional, and societal issues;
- Demonstrate the ability to make personal and professional decisions by applying knowledge and skills obtained from the study of ethics and theories of social responsibility; and
- Articulate how their ethical framework and understanding of social responsibility shape their actions.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES OF THE FOUNDATIONAL STUDIES PROGRAM

- Critically evaluate the ideas of others;
- Apply knowledge and skills within and across the fundamental ways of knowing;
- Demonstrate the skills for effective citizenship and stewardship;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the ethical implications of decisions and actions;
- Express themselves effectively, professional, and persuasively both orally and in writing.

SKILL AND LEARNING REQUIREMENTS

Every Foundational Studies designated course must assist students in developing and improving their critical thinking, information literacy, and written communication skills. In this course, you will complete assignments that will help you to develop these skills through your quizzes, papers, midterm paper, final paper, as well as in oral participation. For the midterm paper and the final paper you will have the opportunity to write drafts of each paper, receive feedback, make changes, and submit a final draft. In regard to information literacy, there are suggestions for further reading at the end of each chapter. In regard to critical thinking, students will be taught to actively and skillfully conceptualize, apply, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information generated by observation, experience, reflection, reasoning or communication as a guide to belief and action. As a course in the Ethics and Social Responsibility category, students will also **apply what they are learning to real world scenarios**. Students will also have **opportunities for experiential learning or community engagement**.

APPLICATION: The assignments in Philosophy 201 (readings, discussions, quizzes, volunteer work, and writing assignments) will allow you to meet these goals as well as the specific goals of the class. The readings for the course will help you understand the historical and philosophical bases of ethical decision-making and social responsibility. **(LO 1)**. Discussions and other class activities will help you use independent thinking, critical analysis, and reasoned inquiry when assessing personal, professional, and societal issues. **(LO 2)** The required writing will allow you to demonstrate your ability to make personal and professional decisions by applying knowledge and skills obtained from the study of ethics and theories of social responsibility. **(FO 3)**. The writing will also help you articulate how an ethical framework and understanding of social responsibility shapes one's actions. **(FO 4)** The most general goal, however, is to allow the readings and discussion to expand your ideas, to challenge your thinking, to create new experiences, to enlarge your perceptions, and to enrich your life. (FS Syllabus)

FURTHER INFORMATION: For information about the Foundational Studies program—specifically the “Sycamore Standard,” academic freedom and the rights and responsibilities of students with disabilities—consult the Foundational Studies website (<http://www.indstate.edu/gened/newfoundationalstudiesprogram.htm>) (FS Syllabus)

COURSE CONTENT

OFFICE HOURS AND PHONE

Office: Root Hall A-138C
Office Hours: Monday & Wednesday: 9-10 am, 11-12:00 noon
Office Phone: (812) 237-3102
E-mail: Judith.Barad@indstate.edu

You should call me with any questions you have about your class work, assignments, or personal concerns about your progress in the course. If I am not in my office, please leave your name, telephone number, and the **best times to reach you**.

TEACHING METHOD

This course is a lecture course in which participation and discussion is expected. I encourage intelligent questions and lively, well-supported debates. Be sure to complete assigned reading prior to each class; otherwise you will be unable to take effective notes and enter into the discussion. **(FS Syllabus)**

CLASS ATMOSPHERE

Any true discussion involves personal exposure and thus the taking of risks. Your ideas may not conform to your neighbors'. However, as long as your points are honest and supportable, they need to be respected by everyone in the classroom. Encouragement, questions, discussion and laughter are a part of this class, but ridicule is never allowable.

TEXTBOOK

Ethics: History, Theory, and Contemporary Issues by Steven M. Cahn and Peter Markie
Prof Pack for Ethics and the Good Life available at Goetz Printing, 16 S. 9th Street, Terre Haute.

CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

The Code of Student Conduct insists that all students are expected to maintain professional behavior, which includes the highest standards of integrity and honesty. The following are examples of academic dishonesty: Plagiarism; Cheating; Fraud; Using another person's material as one's own; Knowingly allowing another person to use one's work or signature as his/her own. Students risk course failure if there is any violation of this code. **(FS Syllabus www.indstate.edu/gened/newfoundationalstudiesprogram.htm)**

TARDINESS

Generally, tardiness is a form of disrespect for the people waiting for you. When you enroll in this course, you must arrive at or before class time, unless you have a good reason for being late. My respect for you also requires me to arrive at or before class time. Although I recognize that occasionally people may have a good reason to be late, I take perpetual tardiness very seriously. If there are specific circumstances that may make you late on a regular basis, please inform me about it.

Laptop Policy: laptops are permitted only for note-taking purposes. **(FS Syllabus)**

EVALUATION AND GRADES (FS Syllabus)

- Students will be expected to participate in class discussions. It must be noted that you cannot participate unless you attend classes. If you have three or more unexcused absences, your participation grade will be lowered accordingly. An absence is excused if you inform me about it at least a half-hour **before** class, either by telephone or message (Call ext. 3102). Please do **not** hand me written medical excuses after you have been absent. **(FS Syllabus)**
- There will be regular quizzes, consisting of true/false and multiple choice questions. These quizzes are designed to make sure you understand your reading assignments. No make-up quiz will be given. However, your lowest 3 quiz grades will be dropped. Thus, if you miss as many as three quizzes, it would not count in the computation of your overall grade. Any further missed quizzes will result in points deducted from your overall grade. **LO 1**
- All students are required to hand in two typewritten papers, **which apply what you are learning to real world scenarios**. Instructions for the topics and performance of the papers are included in the introductory packet for this class. **(FSO 2, 3, 5, 8, and 10; LO 1, 2, 3, and 4; SALRS)**
- You are required to do eight hours of volunteer work (see Prof Pack), followed by a one page paper explaining the experience and expressing empathy for those served. **(SALRS)**
- You may write a three-page extra credit paper on a topic listed on the "Suggested Paper Topics" section of the Prof Pack. **(FSO 2, 3, 5, 8, and 10; LO 1, 2, 3, and 4; SALRS)** As many as three extra credit papers will be accepted, each due within a week after the quiz on a particular paper topic. A paper must be at least "C" quality to receive extra credit. No partial extra credit will be given. (.3 added on to your overall grade for each paper)
- The professor reserves the right to adjust and/or revise the daily syllabus when appropriate to course progress. She will inform you of the adjustments when they occur.
- Grading** will be as follows: **(FS Syllabus)**

Each Quiz = 1.7% X 23	39 %
Midterm Paper (3-4 pages)	20 %
Final Paper (5-7 pages)	28 %
Volunteer work	5%
Participation	8 %

Grade Chart

A+ = 4.2	A = 4.0	A- = 3.7
B+ = 3.3	B = 3.0	B- = 2.7
C+ = 2.3	C = 2.0	C- = 1.7
D+ = 1.3	D = 1.0	D- = .7

To determine your grade:

- a. Find the numerical grade your letter grade corresponds to.
- b. Multiply that grade by the percentage it is worth of your overall grade. For example, a 'B+' on your midterm paper corresponds to 3.3 points. Multiply 3.3 by 25% (the percentage of your overall grade the paper is worth) and you will find you have achieved a total of .825 points for that paper.
- c. Add up all your grades using the same process for each grade.
- d. A missed assignment will subtract points from your overall grade.
- e. **Late Policy:** If your final paper is late, it will be graded down two full letter grades. For example, if it is an 'A' paper, it will be adjusted to a 'C' grade, if a 'C' paper it will become an 'F' and if a 'D' it will be graded below an 'F.' No late extra credit papers will be accepted

COURSE OUTLINE
Phil 201 - Ethics and the Good Life

* = Quiz

August

- 25 Introduction to the course; distribution of syllabi and handouts; discussion of Kohlberg's stages of moral development. **(FSO 3)**
- 30* Moral judgments: Consider the problems of conduct in the prof pack. Then decide what would be the right thing to do in each case, and why; The Correct Method for Answering Moral Questions. When you hear or read a moral argument, ask yourself:**(LO, 2; FSO 2)**
- Have important concepts been analyzed correctly?
 - Does the author/speaker argue from a basis of knowledge of the real-life setting in which a moral question arises?
 - Does the author/speaker observe the rules of logic?
 - Is there a lack of impartiality?
 - Are things argued for in a state of strong emotion?
 - Are the moral principles involved valid ones?

These questions explicitly develop your critical thinking skills.

- Sept** 1* Euthyphro, pp. 5-16; Plato illustrates the correct method for answering moral questions. He established the importance of seeking evidence, closely examining reasoning and assumptions, analyzing basic concepts, and tracing out implications, which are critical thinking skills. The central question of this reading is, is ethics independent of religion? **(LO 1, FSO 2)**
- 6 Explanation of papers; Procedure for ethical decision-making (see prof pack) **(FO1)**
- 8* Rachels, pp. 645-652; Is ethics relative to culture? Is the majority of a society always right? **(LO 2; FSO 5)**
- 13* Plato's Republic, pp. 51 (second column) – 60; 62-65; For Plato, justice determines social and public policy. But what is the nature of justice? Does might make right? How should a government frame its laws? **(LO 1, 2; FSO 2, 3, 5)**
- 15* Republic, pp. 65-68; Do we only act rightly because we fear the consequences, the political or social repercussions, of acting wrongly? Do political institutions form in order for people to keep from harming each other? **(LO 1, 2; FSO 3)**
- 20* Republic, pp. 99 (d) – 107; What is Good? What are the steps necessary for moral development in the individual? Why can this be painful? Do we have a responsibility to help others develop morally? (Film) **(LO, 1, 4; FSO 2, 5, 8)**
- 22* Republic, pp. 120 (second column) – 128. **(LO 1, 4; FSO 2, 5, 8)**
- 27* Aristotle, pp. 130-132; 134-137 (up to section 10); section 13, pp. 138-140. Can we reach exact conclusions about political matters? What is happiness? What is the meaning of happiness? What are the criteria for truly good actions? What does it mean for an individual to actualize her or his potential? **(LO 1, 2; FSO 2, 3, 5, 8)**
- 29* Aristotle, pp. 140-144 (up to section 7). What is virtue? How can we achieve the "Golden Mean?" What is the importance of individual choice? **(LO 1, 2, 4; FSO 2, 8)**

- Oct** 4* Aristotle, pp. 146-152. (LO 1, 2, 4, FSO 2, 8);
- 6* Aristotle, pp. 167-175; 177-180 (sections 6, 7 and 8). What is friendship? Are there different kinds of friendship? How should we behave toward our friends? (LO 2, 3)
- 11* Epicurus, pp. 184-186. Is pleasure the chief good in life? How should we view events that happen to us by chance? Should we fulfill all our desires? (LO 1, 2, FSO 2, 8)
- 13* **Midterm Paper Due (SALRS).** Epictetus, pp. 189-200. What should we try to control and what should we try to accept in life? How should we face death? What should be our attitude to our family members and close friends? (LO 1, 2, 3; FSO 2, 8)
- 18* Kant, pp. 290-294. Are there exceptions in morality? Are intentions or consequences more important in evaluating the moral worth of an action? (LO 1, 2; FSO 2, 8)
- 20* Kant, pp. 298-304. Is there a test to determine our duties? Can we ethically violate a promise? Lie? Commit suicide? Not help others in need? Not develop our talents? (LO 1, 2, 3; FSO 2, 5, 8)
- 25* Kant, pp. 306-309. Should we ever use people to accomplish our goals? Commitment to moral principles. (LO 2, 3, 4; FSO 2, 5, 8)
- 27* Kierkegaard, pp. 379-385. What difference does religion make in ethical matters such as euthanasia? (LO 2, 3; FSO 2, 8)
- Nov** 1* Mill, pp. 346-356. Should we be more concerned about our own happiness or the happiness of society? Should we try to rid society of poverty? Should we encourage preventive medicine? (FO 1, 2, 3, 4; FSO 2, 5, 8)
- 3 Debate. Philosophical chairs: should we build a soup kitchen or an architecturally marvelous office building? What are the ethical principles underlying our decision? (FO 3, 4; FSO 5, 8)
- 8* Sartre, pp. 443-450. Freedom and responsibility. Should we always follow orders? Do we form our own characters? What is personal responsibility? Do we have responsibilities to society? (FO 1, 2, 3, 4; FSO 2, 8)
- 10* Ross, pp. 477-486. Conflicts of moral duties. Are duties conditional? Could there ever be a time when you are justified in breaking a promise? (FO 1, 2, 3, 4; FSO 2, 8)
- 15* Frye (Prof Pack). Feminist Philosophy (FO 1, 2, 3, 4, FSO 2, 5, 8)
- 17* Contemporary Moral Problems: Euthanasia pp. 782-786. (FO 2, 3, 4; FSO 2, 3, 5, 8)
- 22* Cohen: Animal Rights, pp. 833-839. (FO 2, 3, 4; FSO 2, 3, 5, 8)
- 29* Singer, (Prof Pack). (FO 2, 3, 4; FSO 2, 3, 5, 8)
- Dec** 1* Capital Punishment, pp. 840-849. (FO 2, 3, 4; FSO 2, 3, 5, 8)
- 6* Bedau, pp. 850-860. (FO 2, 3, 4; FSO 2, 3, 5, 8)
- 8 Review

Finals Week: FINAL PAPER IS DUE (SALRS)

Philosophy Paper Requirements

FORM OF PAPER

1. Papers should be typed, double-spaced. Do not skip four lines between paragraphs.
2. Margins should be approximately one inch from all four sides of the paper.
3. The first paragraph should contain the point you are making and the method you will employ to prove your point.
 - a. Mention the philosopher and topic you are writing on.
 - b. State your general view of the philosopher on the issue. For instance, "I mostly agree with (Kant) on . . . although I think his argument about . . . is too weak to merit my support."
 - c. Specify the order in which you will present your paper. For example, "I will first present (Kant's) position on . . . followed by his views of . . . I will then evaluate his arguments and give my own position on this issue. In conclusion, I will indicate the points of agreement and disagreement between (Kant's) view and my own view."
4. A good paragraph should have one central point and its lesser points should be related to the main point. If your paragraphs run a page or more in length, they probably need to be broken up into more coherent units. Each paragraph, other than the introductory paragraph and the concluding one, should consist of the following:
 - a. The point being made;
 - b. A definition(s), if appropriate;
 - c. At least 2 sentences explaining each point;
 - d. An example of the point.
5. If you use a philosophical term make sure its meaning is clear by giving a definition or using an example. Do not use the term "rationalization" without looking it up in a dictionary.
6. Use concrete examples to make your meaning clearer.
7. If you are asked to evaluate, below are some questions you can incorporate into your evaluation. Use a point-by-point refutation or support, building up to an overall evaluation of the theory:
 - a. Is the answer given a good one—does it really answer the question? Does it really prove the point?
 - b. Has he met all the objections that might bear the other way?
 - c. Has he overlooked any facts he should have considered?
 - d. Does the answer fit the facts the philosopher is trying to explain?
 - e. Support and justify with evidence and reasons all your contentions about the philosopher's theory as fully as you can.
8. Everything you write in the explanation section should also be found in your evaluation section. Other Material is irrelevant to the topic. On the other hand, do not write anything in the evaluation section that you have not discussed in the explanation section of your paper.
9. Good writers give internal organization to their paragraphs by using transitions such as "also," "in addition," and "moreover." These words indicate that you are introducing information that will expand on a previous point. Expressions like "for instance" and "for example" prepare readers for illustrations and examples. Contrast is indicated by such expressions as "on the one hand . . . on the other hand," "however," "on the contrary," and similar expressions.

10. When you explain the philosopher's arguments, identify each claim he/she is making and the evidence used to support that claim.

11. In a comparison and contrast paper, you should only write on material that can be used to compare and contrast the 2 philosophers you are writing about. That is, everything you write in the explanation section should also be found in your evaluation section and your comparison and contrast section. Other material is irrelevant to the topic. On the other hand, do not write anything in the evaluation section or the comparison and contrast section that you have not explained in the explanation section of your paper.

AVOID

1. Biographical material.
2. Mention of the historical importance of this problem.
3. Quotes over 3 lines long or more than 3 quotes per page. If they are necessary to your paper, put the entire quote in an endnote.
4. Do not write on any reading not contained in the syllabus. If you do not comply, you will receive an 'F' on your paper and will not be allowed to rewrite it. This prohibition includes any readings which are removed from the syllabus during the course of the semester.
5. Repetition.
6. **Plagiarism:** Do not pass off as your own the words of another. If you do not give the author credit by putting his/her words in quotation marks, citing his/her name, and citing the page number of the quote, you will, at the very least, receive an 'F' for the paper. It is more likely that you will receive an 'F' for the class. There is no specific style that is required for citation.

VOLUNTEER PROJECT

When you have completed 8 hours volunteering at Habitat for Humanity, the Humane Society, a soup kitchen or a nursing home, fill out the form provided in the prof pack. Then write a reflective one page paper, showing empathy, describing how you would feel if you were in the place of one of the subjects you provided service for. That is how would you feel if you were a senior citizen in a nursing home, who is alone with no one to visit you or care about you? How would you feel if you were a dog or cat, who at one time lived with a family that gave you care and attention, but turned you out on the street to fend for yourself when they moved? How would you feel if you were a single mother, abandoned by your husband, who could not afford decent housing for your children? How would you feel if you were often hungry, unable to afford regular meals, and had no place to turn except a soup kitchen?

In the following exercise, scheduled for the second class meeting, students are asked to make moral judgments on **real world scenarios**, which gives students **the opportunity to identify and solve problems**.

MOAL JUDGMENTS

Everyone is continually faced with the need to make decisions. However, there are many issues that cannot be decided quickly and easily. What shall be the basis for judgment in such cases? Consider the following problems of conduct, thinking each over carefully. Decide what would be the right thing to do in each case, and why.

1. A student who has been working conscientiously at his studies has been getting only mediocre grades. He is eager to make good grades because he wants to repay his parents for the sacrifice they are making to keep him in college. He realizes that he is getting lower grades because many of the other members of his class are copying, thus forcing down the grades of those who are not cheating. Shall he accept the lower grades and say nothing? Shall he report to the professor that the others are cheating? Shall he himself cheat?
2. A businessman is presented with a scheme whereby he will be able to make a large sum of money within a short time. The scheme, he admits to himself, is morally wrong, but it is possible to carry it out without actually violating the law. He thinks of three or four splendid projects, including a library for his alma mater, for which he would use a considerable portion of the money. This would bring credit to him and also serve worthy causes. Shall he seize the opportunity that is before him to make the money?
3. A woman who is a servant in a family comes to see the physician. He finds that she is suffering from a communicable skin disease. If the family is informed, she will lose her position. She is unwilling to make the facts known. Is it the doctor's duty to tell her employer?
4. As part of the conditions for attendance at a particular college, a student has agreed to abide by college regulations and be law-abiding, yet on one issue he now feels strongly that the local law is wrong and incompatible with the national constitution. On another issue he agrees with the law, but is disturbed because the law is not being enforced by the local authorities. Is he justified in either case in joining a protest march if such action has been forbidden by the city council or by court action?
5. In a school in which the girls are expected to wear shorts in the gymnasium, one girl, for religious reasons, refuses to wear shorts but is willing to wear slacks. The school authorities threaten to expel her. Do you think it would be right or wrong to expel her?
6. In a community in which there is much unnecessary noise that disturbs many people, the city council is considering passing an anti-noise ordinance. Some people say that this action would interfere with their personal freedom. Do you think it right or wrong to pass laws of this type?

