University of British Columbia
Department of Philosophy

Philosophy 235 - 921 – Contemporary Moral Issues

Time and Location
Mondays & Wednesdays, 9:30-12:30 incl. one ten minute break
Classes held in ANSO 207

Instructor
Dr. Johnna Fisher
Buchanan E275, phone 604-822-8853, email: DrJohnna@shaw.ca
Office Hours: Mondays & Wednesdays 12:30 – 1:00 pm

Text
James E. White, Contemporary Moral Problems, 10th edition.

Grading and Assignments
1 in-class test on morality & moral theories (Ch. 1), worth 30%
1 at-home set of essay questions, (Ch. 2, Ch. 3), worth 30%
Attendance & Participation, worth 10%
Final exam, worth 30%

Attendance
The success of your experience as students depends on you being physically and mentally present, having read the material beforehand, and being prepared to engage in an analytical discussion of the material. Therefore regular attendance of classes is expected and 10% credit will be given for attendance and participation.

Since it is highly disruptive to others to have a stream of students entering the room in the minutes after class begins, I expect that you will be present in the room at the beginning of class except in extreme, rare situations.

Course Description
This course will introduce you to contemporary moral issues as well as provide you with the methodology for critically assessing these issues. The course welcomes students from all departments; there are no prerequisites.

We will begin with an introduction of the philosophical method and various philosophical theories for guiding behaviour will be introduced. These theories will provide the framework within which we will discuss and evaluate the various contemporary moral issues raised in class and in the text.
Particular issues to be discussed are: the moral status of the fetus with regard to abortion, stem cell research, and infanticide; animal moral status; end-of-life decision making as it relates to the permissibility of euthanasia, physician assisted suicide and a duty to die; the moral permissibility of war, terrorism and torture; and our obligations to current and future generations in response to poverty, hunger, and overpopulation.
Makeup Tests
Any student who is not able to write the originally-scheduled test due to documentable compassionate or medical reasons will be allowed to write a makeup test, but must do so within 7 days of the original test date except in the rarest of circumstances.

Submission of Assignments
All assignments must be handed in as a paper copy—no electronic copies will be accepted except for the sole purpose of stopping late penalties. A paper copy must be submitted for marking.

Late Assignments
I have a strict policy regarding late assignments. I will accept compelling, relevant reasons for handing an assignment in late only if I am made aware of the problem prior to the due date or medical or other appropriate documentation is provided after the due date. In the absence of compelling, relevant and documented reasons, a late penalty of 5% per day including weekends will be subtracted from the grade. No late papers will be accepted after the graded assignments are returned to the class, unless personally approved by the instructor.

Plagiarism
I make every attempt to strictly uphold the anti-plagiarism policies of UBC, which you should familiarize yourself with thoroughly. You may have the assistance of a tutor only with regard to helping correct grammar, spelling, and general presentation of the papers. As a requirement of this course it is expected that the papers submitted are entirely your own work, with the exception of appropriately referenced quoting and paraphrasing of all additional sources. Any papers using material from other sources, whether those sources are published or not or appear on-line, and which do not have appropriate references will receive a mark of zero and must be reported to administration.

Computer Usage in Class
Computers may be used in class only if used for taking class-related notes or searching the internet for class-related material pertaining to the current lecture. Computers MUST NOT be used to surf the internet, watch movies, check email, or engage in any non-course-related purpose.
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<td>Introduction to Philosophy and Morality</td>
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<td>Wed. May 14</td>
<td>Sources of Morality</td>
<td>pp. 1 – 34</td>
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<td>Mon. May 19</td>
<td><strong>Victoria Day Holiday</strong> No Class</td>
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<td>Wed. May 21</td>
<td>Moral Theories from Mill &amp; Kant</td>
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<td>Mon. May 26</td>
<td>Moral Theories from Aristotle &amp; Rawls</td>
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<td>Wed. May 28</td>
<td><strong>TEST 1 – Chapter 1</strong></td>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
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<td>Mon. June 2</td>
<td>End-of-Life &amp; Duty to Die</td>
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<td>Wed. June 4</td>
<td>Fetal Moral Status</td>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
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<td>Mon. June 9</td>
<td>Animal Moral Status <strong>Take-Home Essays DUE (Ch 2/3)</strong></td>
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<td>Wed. June 11</td>
<td>War &amp; Terrorism</td>
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<td>World Poverty &amp; Population</td>
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