PHIL 213: Contemporary Moral Problems

Monday and Wednesday lecture: 12-12:50 in Education 353

Friday discussion sections:
Section A: 9-9:50 in Eng 307
Section B: 10-10:50 in SSci 114
Section C: 11-11:50 in Eng 311

Instructor: Michael Gill
Office: Social Sciences 205
Office Hours: Thursday and Friday, 10-11:30
Phone: 621-7101
Email: gillm@email.arizona.edu

Please email me only to arrange an appointment to talk in person, not as a substitute for face-to-face meetings. Please also be aware that I may not always reply to your email on the same day you have sent it.

Discussion Leader: Marc Johansen
Office: Social Sciences 130
Office Hours: Monday 1:00-3:00 and Friday 12:00-1:00
Email: mejohans@email.arizona.edu

Course Overview
We are all familiar with disputes over moral issues — such as whether the death penalty ought to be implemented, whether euthanasia ought to be allowed, whether abortion is immoral, and what obligations we are under to animals and the environment. In this course, we will take a philosophical approach to these questions, aiming to explore responses to them that are justified by defensible reasons. Our goal is not only to gain insight into these specific issues but also to develop a deeper understanding of ethical thought and conduct in general.

Academic Integrity
You are expected to know and strictly follow the University of Arizona Code of Academic Integrity. Read the Code thoroughly, if you have not already done so. You can find it at: http://w3.arizona.edu/%7Estudpubs/policies/cacaint.htm. Any violation of academic integrity — any instance of cheating — is grounds for the unconditional failure of the course and possible expulsion from the University.

Policy on for-profit note-taking. There are a number of organizations that sell notes from classes to students — such as Notehall, ClassNotes, ClassBusters, and the like. Any such endeavor is prohibited in this class, and anyone found to be engaged in selling or buying such notes will be in violation of the rules of
academic integrity for this course. All lectures and class materials are copyrighted, and any reproduction or distribution of them for profit is prohibited.

**Code of Conduct**

Students are expected to behave appropriately and to treat others with respect. *While in class, please turn off all electronic equipment: that includes cell phones and computers.* Refrain from eating, reading the newspaper, and disruptive whispering. Arrive on time and remain until the end of class; getting up and walking out of class in the middle of a lecture is distracting and disrespectful.

**Text**


Please bring your book to class every day, as we will regularly consult texts during discussion.

**Requirements**

**Attendance and Participation**

You are expected to attend and pay close attention to every lecture. You should do the assigned reading before each lecture. You are also expected to attend and participate in your Friday discussion section. Your attendance and participation in discussion section will count for 5% of your grade.

**Midterm Exams**

There will be midterm exams on March 28 and April 18. These exams will cover the assigned readings as well as the material presented in class. Each midterm will be worth 20% of your final grade.

**Writing Assignment**

You will write two short essays on assigned topics. You will receive the first assignment on January 26 and it will be due on February 4; this first essay will be worth 15% of your final grade. You will receive the second assignment on February 16 and it will be due on February 25; the second essay will be worth 20% of your final grade.

**Final Exam**

There will be a final exam on Wednesday, May 11, from 10:30 to 12:30. It will cover the assigned readings as well as the material presented in class. It will be worth 20% of your final grade.

**Grading Summary**

- 5% Attendance and participation
- 15% First writing assignment
20% Second writing assignment
20% First midterm
20% Second midterm
20% Final exam

Schedule
You should be aware that this schedule may change somewhat as the term progresses. Any changes will be announced on D2L. Make sure you remain up-to-date of what we will be discussing each day.

Bring your textbook to class every day.

The Death Penalty
January 12: Introduction and course mechanics
January 14: Discussion section
January 17: No class
January 19: Read pp. 478-480 of Timmons’ DMI; it’s a selection from Kant.
January 21: Discussion section
January 24: pp. 481-487 of DMI: article by Nathanson
January 26: pp. 487-491: van den Haag

First writing assignment announced

January 28: Discussion section
January 31: pp. 492-495: Reiman
February 2: pp. 495-503: Liebman et al.
February 4: Discussion section

First writing assignment due

Euthanasia and Physician-Assisted Suicide
February 7: pp. 299-302: Gay-Williams
February 9: pp. 303-307: Rachels
February 11: Discussion section
February 14: pp. 307-312: Steinbock
February 16: pp. 313-316: Brock

Second writing assignment announced

February 18: Discussion section
February 21: pp. 317-322: Doerflinger
February 23: pp. 323-328: Watts and Howell
February 25: Discussion section

Second writing assignment due

World Hunger and Poverty
February 28: pp. 565-571: Hardin
March 2: pp. 571-584: Singer
March 4: Discussion section
March 7: pp. 585-593: Arthur
March 9: pp. 594-599: Sen
March 11: Discussion section
March 21: pp. 600-605: O’Neill
March 23: pp. 600-605: O’Neill (continued)
March 25: Discussion section
March 28: **First Midterm Exam**

**Ethical Treatment of Animals**
March 30: pp. 333-341: Matheny
April 1: Discussion section
April 4: pp. 348-355: Cohen
April 6: pp. 356-361: Warren
April 8: Discussion section
April 11: pp. 362-371: Curnutt
April 15: Discussion section
April 18: **Second Midterm Exam**

**The Environment**
April 20: pp. 619-623: Leopold
April 22: Discussion section
April 25: pp. 624-630: Hill
April 27: pp. 631-641: Wenz
April 29: Discussion section
May 2: pp. 642-657: Sinnott-Armstrong
May 4: pp. 642-657: Sinnott-Armstrong (continued)

May 11: **Final Exam, 10:30-12:30**

**Missed Exams and Late Assignments**
If you have a legitimate excuse for missing a midterm exam or handing a paper in late, please let me know about it before or very shortly after (i.e., within 24 hours) the date on which the exam is held or the paper is due. Make-up exams will be given only to those with a legitimate and timely excuse for missing the scheduled exam. Papers with a legitimate and prompt excuse will not be penalized. Papers that are handed in between 1 and 48 hours late without a legitimate excuse will be docked one grade (e.g., a B paper will be recorded as a C). Papers that are handed in between 48 and 72 hours late will be docked one and a half grades (e.g., a B paper will be recorded as a C-). Papers that are handed in more than 72 hours late will be docked two grades (e.g., a B paper will be recorded as a D). Papers will not be accepted nor will make-up exams be given after the work in question has been marked and returned to the rest of the class.