

## PHIL 2033 Syllabus

### Midwestern State University/Founders Classical Academy of Lewisville (Dual Credit)

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"The line separating good and evil passes not through states, nor between classes, nor between political parties either—but right through every human heart—and through all human hearts"

-Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago*

#### Course Description and Objectives:

This course provides a historical and theoretical introduction to the study of moral philosophy or *ethics*. Moral philosophy is concerned with a wide range of questions including, but not limited to, "what are good and evil?," "how ought one to live?" and "how ought one to act?." Most of the course will be devoted to various historical and contemporary theories regarding "right" and "wrong." Among other things, we will learn how various philosophers have defined "right" and "wrong," what criteria they articulated for deeming certain courses of action "right" and others "wrong," etc. At the end of the course, we will discuss the relevance and application of ethics in "real world" decision-making – for example, in the fields of science, medicine, and public policy.

The main objectives of Philosophy 2033 are as follows:

1. To help students learn, understand, and evaluate the basic issues of moral philosophy from both a historical and theoretical perspective.
2. To help students gain familiarity with various pivotal texts in the history of moral philosophy.
3. To help students develop their skills in interpreting and critically analyzing texts.
4. To help students develop their skills in identifying and evaluating arguments as well as in formulating their own arguments through the effective and responsible use of evidence.
5. To help students improve their ability to read and write clearly and critically.

Other objectives include:

6. To help students appreciate the relevance of ethical discourse in public and private life and to gain a greater understanding of their personal ethical commitments.
7. To inculcate students with a love of wisdom and a desire to live a philosophical life.

Assessment of THECB core objectives for LANGUAGE, PHILOSOPHY, & CULTURE to occur via MSU Exam Rubrics, in areas of Critical Thinking, Communication, Personal Responsibility, and Social Responsibility (see Appendix at end for Rubric).

#### Texts:

*Moral Philosophy Readings Packets*

*The Four Loves* by C.S. Lewis

### **Class Participation:**

Philosophy requires us to actively engage in asking and solving questions. Participation is graded on multiple factors: (1) quality of contributions to daily in-class discussion (asking relevant questions, answering questions, sharing insights); (2) frequency of your contributions to daily in-class class discussion; (3) signs of careful and attentive listening, whether to the teacher or to fellow students (includes note-taking); (4) focus and diligence in performing all in-class assignments.

### **Materials:**

You should come each day with a writing notebook, and have an orderly system (three-ring binder or folder) to keep all handouts.

### **Procedures and Policies:**

- **Late Work and Absences:** Students are expected to complete and turn in assignments in good order and on time. Late work is not accepted for daily assignments; if a student does not have his homework when due, he receives a zero. Major assignments with test weighting will be penalized 20% for each day late and will only be accepted on the next two school days. Regarding valid absences, students will be allowed one extra day for each day missed to turn in work that was assigned while absent (for example, if a student is absent two days, the relevant work will be due two days after he or she returns).
- **If absent**, it is the student's responsibility, on the day of return, to see the teacher to get all assignments/materials, and to get notes from fellow classmates.
- **For tests and quizzes that are missed**, the student must arrange a time to make these up on the day of return. (If the student had advance notice of the test or quiz, the default is for the assessment to be taken on the day the student returns; individual circumstances can affect this, however.)
- **Quality of Work:** All assignments (classwork, homework, assessments, and papers) must be written neatly and legibly. Ripped, torn, or scribbled-on paper will not be accepted. Paper torn out of a spiral notebook is not acceptable. Lined notebook paper/loose-leaf paper is required for all upper school assignments unless specifically directed by the teacher.
- **Extra credit:** Extra credit will not be given to compensate for negligence.
- **Extensions:** If a student needs an extension or help completing an assignment, he or she must request it in advance. A signed note from a parent or doctor may also gain an extension.

### **Plagiarism/Cheating:**

Academic dishonesty, cheating and plagiarism, will not be tolerated. Cheating takes place when a student copies the work of another or allows someone to copy one's own work, or when he or she uses unauthorized aids during assignments or assessments. Plagiarism occurs when a person uses someone else's words or ideas and presents them as one's own (typically on an essay or paper). Student cheating or plagiarism will result in short term consequences, a grade penalty, a meeting with parents, and a discipline consequence. Academic dishonesty will also have long term consequences related to virtue, vice, habit, and destiny. Earning a lower score on an assignment or test is preferable to downgrading one's character. Refer to page five of the campus handbook for details about academic dishonesty.

*Further, note that the default is for all assignments to be worked on individually; there should be no collaboration on any assigned work unless permission is directly granted.*

<b>CRITERION</b>	<b>EXCELLENT</b>	<b>GOOD</b>	<b>SATISFACTORY</b>	<b>POOR</b>	<b>FAILING</b>
<p><b>EXPOSITION</b> (Communication Skills)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the examination provide a clear and correct explanation of the philosophical issue(s), problem(s), or theor(ies) under analysis?</li> </ul>					
<p><b>ORGANIZATION</b> (Communication Skills)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the examination well organized?</li> <li>Does the examination build upon the main idea/thesis statement?</li> <li>Does the examination evince a logical argumentative structure?</li> </ul>					
<p><b>CLARITY &amp; COHERENCE</b> (Communication Skills)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do the main ideas and arguments of the examination relate to one another logically?</li> <li>Does the examination adequately explain main ideas and concepts?</li> <li>Does the examination avoid “going off on tangents” or including otherwise irrelevant information?</li> <li>Does the examination use a clear and consistent writing style?</li> <li>Does the examination avoid significant grammatical and mechanical errors?</li> </ul>					
<p><b>ARGUMENTATION &amp; SOURCES</b> (Critical Thinking Skills)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the examination formulate a clear critical position with respect to the philosophical issue(s), problem(s), or theor(ies) under analysis?</li> <li>Does the examination recognize, understand, and clearly explain differing perspectives and/or possible objections to its own position?</li> <li>Does the examination provide clear, compelling arguments on behalf of its position?</li> <li>Does the examination use textual evidence correctly, responsibly, and effectively (e.g., by correctly using MLA citation and providing a correctly formatted MLA ‘Works Cited’ page)?</li> </ul> <p>(Personal Responsibility)</p>					

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the examination use textual evidence correctly, responsibly, and effectively (e.g., by correctly using MLA citation and providing a correctly formatted MLA 'Works Cited' page)?</li> </ul> <p><i>(Social Responsibility)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the examination recognize, understand, and clearly explain differing perspectives and/or possible objections to its own position?</li> </ul>					
<p><b>CREATIVITY</b> <i>(Critical Thinking Skills)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the examination approach philosophical problems in a creative fashion?</li> </ul>					