



## Course Syllabus: Ethics

College of Humanities and Social Sciences

PHIL-2033 (online)

Spring 2025

### Contact Information

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### Course Catalogue Description

A historical and theoretical introduction to the study of moral philosophy or *ethics*. Questions to be explored include, but are not limited to, “what are good and evil?”, “how ought one to live?”, and “how ought one to act?”

### THECB Course Objectives and Assessments

- Critical Thinking Skills
  - To assess the student’s critical thinking skills, the Final Examination Rubric will be applied to the Take-Home Final Examination.
- Communication Skills
  - To assess the student’s written communication skills, the Final Examination Rubric will be applied to the Take-Home Final Examination.
- Personal Responsibility
  - To assess ethical use of sources as a measure of personal responsibility, the Final Examination Rubric will be applied to the Take-Home Final Examination.
- Social Responsibility
  - To assess the student’s ability to understand differing points of view, the Final Examination Rubric will be applied to the Take-Home Final Examination.

### Textbook & Instructional Materials:

- Aristotle. *Nicomachean Ethics*. Trans. Terrence Irwin. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. Indianapolis: Hackett.
- John Stuart Mill. *Utilitarianism*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Indianapolis: Hackett.
- Immanuel Kant. *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*. Trans. James Ellington. Indianapolis: Hackett.

## **Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes**

Course objectives for PHIL-2033 are:

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 arguments of their own.
5. To help students improve their ability to read and write clearly and critically.
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.

## **Student Handbook**

Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

## **Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures**

Students are expected to uphold the standards of “Academic Integrity” set forth by the [MSU Student Honor Creed](#). The instructor will notify the appropriate authority of any infringement of academic honesty.

“Cheating” includes the unauthorized use of certain information, materials, or devices in exams, papers, or assignments. “Plagiarism” includes but is not limited to using the published or unpublished works of another person without recognition. This includes attempts to portray AI-generated material as evidence of a student’s personal knowledge of course content and/or academic skill. A student who makes use of plagiarized material, or anyone that profits from (or abets) cheating, will be dismissed from the course and referred to the Dean of Students.

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work, not the individual to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the [Office of Student Conduct](#).

## **Moffett Library**

Moffett Library provides resources and services to support student’s studies and assignments, including books, peer-reviewed journals, databases, and multimedia materials accessible both on campus and remotely. The library offers media equipment checkout, reservable study rooms, and research assistance from librarians to help students effectively find, evaluate, and use information. Get started on this [Moffett Library webpage](#) to explore these resources and learn how to best utilize the library.

## Grading

Students will be able to view their “real time” grades in the D2L Gradebook according to the following allocation:

*Table 1: Points allocated to each assignment*

Assignments	Percentage	Points
Quizzes (10 quizzes at 10 points each)	20%	100
Multiple-Choice Midterm Examination	15%	75
Take-Home Midterm Examination	25%	125
Multiple-Choice Final Examination	10%	50
Take-Home Final Examination	25%	125
Engagement	5%	25
Total	100%	500

*Table 2: Value of final letter grades*

Letter grade	Percentage value	Point value range
A	90-100%	448-500
B	80-89%	398-447
C	70-79%	348-397
D	60-69%	298-347
F	0-59%	0-297

## Homework

As an “asynchronous” online course, there is no official class time. Students can pace their own way through each week’s course content, provided that they are completing the required weekly assignments on time. Homework assignments comprise readings, which should be completed before watching the corresponding lecture video. Lecture videos will be based on the readings and will work under the assumption that students have already prepared the reading. Students are encouraged to meet with the professor for help on reading strategies or on the reading’s content. All other homework assignments are listed below.

### *Quizzes*

10 quizzes will be administered online throughout the semester. Dates for these quizzes appear on the Course Schedule. Quizzes will be comprised of multiple-choice questions pulled randomly from a larger “pool” of available questions. Questions are entirely multiple-choice and will be based on that week’s readings and lecture videos. Because quizzes are intended to ensure that students are keeping pace with the course, missed quizzes cannot be retaken after the fact.

### *Exams*

Students will complete a midterm and a final exam. Exams are not cumulative. A week of preparation time precedes each exam submission deadline to ensure that students are as prepared for the exams as possible. Each exam is divided between a multiple-choice section and a take-home written exam. The multiple-choice portion will be completed in D2L, just like the quizzes. Exams will require a

LockDown browser and webcam video monitoring. The take-home written exam will require students to answer longer questions (no shorter than 6 double-spaced pages total) and upload to the appropriate D2L submission dropbox. These longer questions will combine exegetical questions (where students are required to explain complicated ideas in detail) and applicative questions (where students are required to apply moral philosophies to real-world cases).

### **Extra Credit**

There are no extra credit assignments in this course. Students are encouraged to meet with the professor to strategize study skills and to clarify course content before the need for extra credit would arise.

### **Late Work**

Extensions will not be granted, except for highly exceptional circumstances. A wide enough range is provided for each assignment to be completed according to each student's individual schedule. "Exceptional circumstances" include dire emergencies and official university activities. Deadline rescheduling needs to be discussed with the professor prior to the original deadline. Written work will be deduced the equivalent of one-third of a letter grade per calendar day late.

### **Make-up Work/Tests**

Missed quizzes or exams cannot be made up after the deadline passes. If a student needs an alternate deadline for a scheduled exam, they are required to arrange that alternate time with the professor prior to the original exam deadline. Instances that warrant such rescheduling include documented illness, medical emergency, or official university activity.

### **Important Dates**

*Last day for term schedule changes: August 29, 2024*

*Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" November 25, 2024*

*Refer to: [Drops, Withdrawals & Void](#)*

### **Desire-to-Learn (D2L)**

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

### **Attendance**

As an "asynchronous" online course, there is no classtime to attend. However, ample opportunity exists for engagement to discuss course content either with the professor during office hours and/or online in the course's Question Board. Office hours and question board posts are not requirements; they're options. Students are required to complete all modules in the course within the timeframes outlined on the Course Schedule.

## Online Computer Requirements

This course relies entirely on D2L for its content delivery. It is your responsibility to have (or have access to) a working computer in this class. ***\*Assignments and tests are due by the due date, and personal computer technical difficulties will not be considered a reason for the instructor to allow students extra time to submit assignments, tests, or discussion postings.*** Computers are available on campus in various areas of the buildings as well as the Academic Success Center. ***\*Your computer being down is not an excuse for missing a deadline!*** There are many places to access your class! Our online classes can be accessed from any computer in the world that is connected to the internet. Contact your instructor immediately upon having computer trouble. If you have technical difficulties in the course, there is also a student helpdesk available to you. The college cannot work directly on student computers due to both liability and resource limitations; however, they are able to help you get connected to our online services. For help, log into [D2L](#).

## Instructor Class Policies

### *Help*

Students should discuss any concerns with the instructor as soon as possible. Office hours are available throughout the week and appointments can also be made on a case-by-case basis.

### *Recordings*

Lectures, lecture notes, assignments, etc. remain the intellectual property of the instructor. Students are not permitted to disseminate the content of our class without the prior permission of the instructor. This policy does not apply to a student's own hand-written notes.

### *Conduct*

Actions that diminish the quality of other students' learning will not be tolerated. Insults, slurs, or attacks of any kind will be grounds for permanent removal from the course. Every student is expected to engage with the course material in a responsible and respectful manner. This course requires discussion of a diverse array of philosophical ideas. Students are likely to find some ideas popular and others unpopular. That's normal. Neither the course nor the instructor will defend any one philosophical viewpoint except insofar as it advances the teaching outcomes of the course. Therefore, disagreement is normal in classes of this nature; disagreement is conducive to positive learning outcomes, regardless of whether this disagreement pertains between texts themselves, between texts and readers, or between students. Disagreement that turns negative, derogatory, hostile, or otherwise demeaning *in any way* will not be tolerated in class.

### *Email*

Check your email inboxes regularly. This is the only way students will be informed about cancellations or any changes to the course. Your instructor will email you via D2L. Therefore, either make sure you check your D2L email regularly or change the settings of your D2L inbox to reroute to your MSU address. Please allow 24 hours for a reply to all emails.

### *Use of AI-generated Content in Writing Assignments*

Unless explicitly permitted in the individual assignment description, students are not allowed to produce written work that includes content and/or revisions that rely on AI-generated content. Please refer to the Academic Misconduct policy outlined above. Students suspected of using AI-generated content in their writing assignments will be notified by the professor and will be required

to meet with the professor within five business days of notification. Failure to meet with the professor after notification will be treated as an admission of guilt.

### **Change of Schedule**

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the Schedule of Classes each semester.

### **Refund and Repayment Policy**

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees, and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. However, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans, and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) exist in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

### **Services for Students with Disabilities**

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make an application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

### **College Policies**

#### *Campus Carry Rules/Policies*

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

#### *Smoking/Tobacco Policy*

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by WATC. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated smoking areas at each location.

#### *Alcohol and Drug Policy*

To comply with the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibit the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state, and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

#### *Campus Carry*

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes as prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License-to-carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit [Campus Carry](#).

### *Active Shooter*

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by the MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [MSUReady – Active Shooter](#). Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled “Run. Hide. Fight.” which may be electronically accessed via the University police department’s webpage: ["Run. Hide. Fight."](#)

### **Mandatory Reporting**

Under Title IX, all MSU faculty are “mandatory reporters” of any disclosure from a student of sexual assault, abuse, harassment, dating violence, stalking, or other forms of sexual misconduct. It is the legal responsibility of a “mandatory reporter” to notify the Title IX coordinator if a student reports being the victim of any of the aforementioned abuses. For more information, please visit the [Sexual Misconduct Resource](#).

### **Grade Appeal Process**

Update as needed. Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [MSU Catalog](#)

**\*Notice:** Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

### **Course Schedule**

*WEEK ONE: Tuesday, January 21 to Sunday, January 26*

- Module 1: Course Information & Introduction.
- Module 2: Week One Assessments.
- Submit "Week 1 Scenario Assessment: Lying to the Murderer at the Door" to the D2L submissions dropbox no later than 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, January 26.
- Submit "Week 1 Scenario Assessment: The Queen v. Dudley and Stevens" to the D2L submissions dropbox no later than 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, January 26.
- Completion of these two scenario assessments will count at Quiz 1.
- Ensure you have reliable access to all technological requirements for this course (including the Lockdown browser software and the webcam hardware).

*WEEK TWO: Monday, January 27 to Sunday, February 2*

- Module 3: Divine Command Theory.

- Module 4: Consequentialism Introduction.
- Module 5: Effective Altruism.
- Take Quiz 2 between 5:00 a.m. on Friday, January 31 and 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, February 2.

*WEEK THREE: Monday, February 3 to Sunday, February 9*

- Read pages 6-12 of Mill's Utilitarianism and complete Module 6.
- Read pages 12-20 of Mill's Utilitarianism and complete Module 7.
- Take Quiz 3 between 5:00 a.m. on Friday, February 7 and 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, February 9.

*WEEK FOUR: Monday, February 10 to Sunday, February 16*

- Read pages 20-26 of Mill's Utilitarianism and complete Module 8.
- Read pages 27-34 of Mill's Utilitarianism and complete Module 9.
- Read pages 35-41 of Mill's Utilitarianism and complete Module 10.
- Take Quiz 4 between 5:00 a.m. on Friday, February 14 and 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, February 16.

*WEEK FIVE: Monday, February 17 to Sunday, February 23*

- Module 11: Deontology Introduction.
- Read pages 63-67 of Kant's Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals ("On a Supposed Right to Lie") and complete Module 12.
- Read pages 1-5 of Kant's Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals and complete Module 13.
- Take Quiz 5 between 5:00 a.m. on Friday, February 21 and 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, February 23.

*WEEK SIX: Monday, February 24 to Sunday, March 2*

- Read pages 7-17 of Kant's Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals and complete Module 14.
- Read pages 19-23 of Kant's Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals and complete Module 15.
- Read pages 23-30 of Kant's Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals and complete Module 16.
- Take Quiz 6 between 5:00 a.m. on Friday, February 28 and 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, March 2.

*WEEK SEVEN: Monday, March 3 to Sunday, March 9*

- Read pages 30-42 of Kant's Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals and complete Module 17.
- Module 18: Practical Applications of Utilitarian and Deontological Ethics.
- Module 19: Midterm Exam instructions.

*WEEK EIGHT: Monday, March 10 to Sunday, March 16*

- University is closed this week for Spring Break.



*WEEK NINE: Monday, March 17 to Sunday, March 23*

- Revisit Module 19 for Midterm Examination instructions.
- Make sure you have reliable access to all required software and hardware to complete the Midterm Examination requirements.
- Complete both parts of the Midterm Examination.
  - Multiple-Choice portion will go live at 5:00 a.m. on Wednesday, March 19 and is due no later than 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, March 23.
  - Take-Home written portion is due in the D2L dropbox as MS Word or PDF file no later than 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, March 23.

*WEEK TEN: Monday, March 24 to Sunday, March 30*

- Module 20: Ethical Egoism.
- Module 21: Contractarianism.
- Module 22: Libertarianism.
- Take Quiz 7 between 5:00 a.m. on Friday, March 28 and 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, March 30.

*WEEK ELEVEN: Monday, March 31 to Sunday, April 6*

- Module 23: Egalitarianism.
- Module 24: Practical Applications of Egalitarian and Libertarian Ethics.
- Take Quiz 8 between 5:00 a.m. on Friday, April 4 and 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, April 6.

*WEEK TWELVE: Monday, April 7 to Sunday, April 13*

- Module 25: Ethical Consumerism.
- Module 26: Film response discussion board project.
- Complete the discussion board project outlined in Module 26 no later than 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, April 13.

*WEEK THIRTEEN: Monday, April 14 to Sunday, April 20*

- Read Book I of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and complete Module 26.
- University is closed on April 17 and 18 for holiday.

*WEEK FOURTEEN: Monday, April 21 to Sunday, April 27*

- Module 27: Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* book I (continued).
- Read book II of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and complete Module 28.
- Read book III of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and complete Module 29.
- Take Quiz 9 between 5:00 a.m. on Friday, April 25 and 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, April 27.

*WEEK FIFTEEN: Monday, April 28 to Sunday, May 4*

- Read book VIII of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and complete Module 30.
- Take Quiz 10 between 5:00 a.m. on Friday, May 2 and 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, May 4.

*WEEK SIXTEEN: Monday, May 5 to Sunday, May 11*

- Module 31: Final Examination information.
- Make sure you have reliable access to all required software and hardware to complete the Final Examination requirements.

*EXAM WEEK*

- Multiple-Choice portion of the Final Exam will go live at 5:00 a.m. on Friday, May 9 and is due no later than 11:59 p.m. on Tuesday, May 13.
- Take-Home written portion of the Final Exam is due in the D2L dropbox as MS Word or PDF file no later than 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, May 13.