



REID STATE TECHNICAL COLLEGE

PHL 206
ETHICS AND SOCIETY
3 SEMESTER CREDIT HOURS

COURSE SYLLABUS FALL 2017

Instructor: Dr. Arthur G. Ogden

Term: FALL 2017

Office location: N/A

Class Meeting Days: On Line

Phone: 334-654-2248*

Class Meeting Hours: On Line

***LATEST TIME TO CALL 8:00 PM**

E-mail: agogden14@gmail.com

Class Location: N/A

Office Hours: N/A

Lab Location: N/A

Person to contact if instructor is not available:

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I. Welcome

Welcome to Ethics and Society!

Everyday each of us makes moral decisions. Throughout our lives we are faced with situations in which the morally correct thing to do is not always apparent.

Ethics or moral theory is not only a field of philosophy and the subject of this class; it is a large part of the human experience.

How do we determine what is right and wrong? To what sort of authority do we look for ethical or moral guidelines? Is there such a thing as an absolute moral standard? These are all questions we will explore and seek to answer in this class.

*All academic study requires an **active engagement** with the material. This is even more important in this online philosophy course. I **strongly** urge each of you to read, meditate on, and engage the questions posed in each Chapter/Unit. Put time and effort into your writings on the subjects we will share in the threaded discussions. This will not only promote success in the course, but it will also provide a more thoughtful and informed position from which to make moral decisions in your own lives.*

NOTE: I PLACE A GREAT DEAL OF EMPHASIS ON THE DISCUSSION THREADS.

*You may ask, "What does he expect of me in the threaded discussion submissions?" It is really quite simple – I WANT TO SEE **HOW YOU THINK IN THE WAY YOU WRITE!!!***

*You see, **WRITING IS THINKING!!** Do NOT fear if you will get something "right" or "wrong"...just **SHOW ME** how you have reached the conclusions you present.*

*AND, for goodness sakes, **DO NOT COPY INFORMATION DIRECTLY FROM THE TEXT** or from some **OTHER** source without giving proper credit to the source!*

I have been teaching philosophy and ethics longer than some of your parents have been alive! There is little I have not already read or been exposed to in the material in this course.

*SO, take a deep breath, **READ** the material, **THINK** about it, **ANALYZE** it, and **RELATE** it to what you believe and what you see in the world.*

*Respond honestly and clearly to the questions I have attached to each Chapter/Unit. It is **THERE** that I discover how you **THINK!***

***IN SHORT, I WANT YOU TO BECOME CRITICAL THINKERS,** who can express their ideas clearly in their writings.*

And that's all there is to it...

A.G. Ogden, Ph.D., Ed. D.

II. Course Description

This course involves the study of ethical issues which confront individuals in the course of their daily lives. The focus is on the fundamental questions of right and wrong, of human rights, and of conflicting obligations. The student should be able to understand and be prepared to make decisions in life regarding ethical issues.

III. Course Outcomes

At the completion of this course students should be able to:

Intended Outcome 1: *Articulate value-oriented positions in practical environments using clear language which indicates a well-reasoned process for decision making.*

Intended Outcome 2: *Exhibit a basic knowledge of classical ethical theories by discussing the relative merits of the theories to which the student is exposed during the term of this course.*

Intended Outcome 3: *Articulate a basic understanding of the grounds for responsibility through discussion of the views presented on ethical values and free will.*

Intended Outcome 4: *Exhibit a basic understanding of argumentation by analyzing then refuting or supporting the arguments presents by various philosophers and ethical theorists.*

Intended Outcome 5: *Articulate a basic understanding of the process of formulating an individual moral belief system by arguing for a rudimentary rationale of one's ethical choices.*

IV. General Education Competencies

1. Students will communicate effectively through writing;
2. Students will demonstrate reasoning skills to observe and analyze information or data;
3. Students will demonstrate knowledge of economic, historical, or social-cultural factors that influence behavioral change in individuals or cultures; and.
4. Students will demonstrate basic computer skills.

V. Required Texts and Materials

Vaughn, Lewis. *Doing Ethics: Moral Reasoning and Contemporary Issues. Fourth Edition.* New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2013. ISBN: 978-0-393-26541-5 (pbk.)

Fourth Edition ISBN -- ISBN-10: 0393265412; ISBN-13: 978-0393265415

VI. Grading Criteria

1. There will be two examinations (**8 short essay questions from which students will select 5 to write on**), one mid-term and one final.
 - Exams will be based on assigned readings from the text and online discussion topics.
 - The **mid-term examination will account for 20%** of your final grade.
 - The **final examination will account for 20%** of the final grade.
2. The remaining **60% will be based on online discussion** (clarity of writing, knowledge of theories/issues being discussed). **Each discussion will be assessed using a Rubric included in the Course Shell along with the grade awarded**
3. Examinations will be posted on Moodle and should be completed within the timeframes that will be announced. There will be **no make-up times** for exams or discussion since the class is online and you will be able to access it with a relative amount of temporal freedom. A generous time frame will be provided for online examinations.
4. ***NOTE REGARDING THREADED DISCUSSIONS:***
 - *Threaded discussions MUST be submitted into the course shell by the LAST DAY of each designated week.*
 - *This is crucial for ATTENDANCE VERIFICATION at the beginning of the Term.*
 - *ALL threaded discussions MUST be submitted BEFORE the PUBLISHED DATE OF THE FINAL EXAM.*
 - *Failure to follow this Course Policy could jeopardize your progress in this course and reflect negatively on your grade.*

VII. Grading Scale

90-100	Average = A
80-89	Average = B
70-79	Average = C
60-69	Average = D
≤ 60	Average = F

NOTE:

I believe students should know what the specific criteria are used to render a grade for the work which they submit.

As such, I have devised a RUBRIC which I use to determine a grade for the work students submit. That RUBRIC is on the following page.

DISCUSSION RUBRIC
PHL 206
100 Points Possible

CRITERION	COMMENTS	POINT RANGE
GENERAL CONTENT		
Exceeds Standards	The response exhibits an understanding and appreciation of the discussion issues; information is accurate; discussion topic is examined; conclusions follow logically from the narrative.	25-21
Above Average Standards	The response refers to the issues and is concise; information is accurate; logical conclusion or opinion is offered.	20-16
Meets Standards	Response addresses discussion issues, but adds nothing to enhance them; information generally accurate but little insight offered; inaccuracies in the conclusion and/or opinions.	15-11
Standards Minimally Met	Response does not address discussion issues; information limited or unclear; opinions expressed are off-task and illogical; conclusions are presented but do not follow logically.	10-5
Standards Not Met	Response presents no clear understanding of the discussion issues; response is repetitive, confusing, and difficult to read; no conclusion is offered.	5-0
Points Earned: General Content		25-0
WRITING STYLE/FORMAT		
Exceeds Standards	Fluent and clear response; no errors of grammar or punctuation; conclusions follow logically in the narrative.	25-21
Above Average Standards	Fluent and interesting; a few errors of grammar or punctuation; addresses discussion issues.	20-16
Meets Standards	Lacks fluency; obvious errors of grammar or punctuation; discussion issues alluded to but not connected to the narrative.	15-11
Standards Minimally Met	Language of the response is faltering or insufficient; many errors of grammar and punctuation; narrative is difficult to follow.	10-5
Standards Not Met	Poor sentence structure and grammar; many repeated errors of grammar or punctuation; conclusions are disconnected from the issues of the discussion.	5-0
Points Earned: Writing Style/Format		25-0
ANALYTICAL EFFECTIVENESS		
Exceeds Standards	Response directly addresses the discussion issues; conclusions and/or opinions logical and complete; response expresses an analysis of discussion issues and states a critical position; response exhibits a broad understanding of the issues.	25-21
Above Average Standards	Response is complete and satisfactory; concepts of value in the discussion are mentioned but not emphasized; displays knowledge of broader applications.	20-16
Meets Standards	Response presents satisfactory, but incomplete, broad applications of the discussion issues; grasps concepts of the discussion issues.	15-11
Standards Minimally Met	Response is incomplete and unsatisfactory; no expression of a clear understanding of broad applications of the discussion issues; concepts of the issues of the discussion are not clear.	10-5
Standards Not Met	Response is unfinished and insufficient; no expressed understanding of broad applications or implications of the discussion issues.	5-0
Points Earned: Analytical Effectiveness		25-0
SUPPORT OF POSITION		
Exceeds Standards	Positions are supported by appropriate references; support of positions is clear and relevant to the discussion issues; conclusions and opinions are logical and complete.	25-21
Above Average Standards	Positions are supported with some references; support of positions is relevant to the discussion issues; conclusions are complete.	20-16
Meets Standards	Positions are supported and exhibit relevance; few, if any references are alluded to in support of positions; conclusions are implied, but not clearly stated.	15-11
Standards Minimally Met	Positions are stated and supported but without reference; conclusions are alluded to but not supported.	10-5
Standards Not Met	No support of positions is presented; argument relies solely on opinion without any support.	5-0
Points Earned: Support of Position		25-0
TOTAL POINTS EARNED		100-0

VIII. Course Semester Schedule

COURSE WORK CALENDAR –SPRING 2017

<u>Week of</u>	<u>Chapter Readings and Threaded Discussions</u>
21-25 AUG	<i>Introduction to the Course and Online Format</i> CH. 1 Ethics and the Examined Life <u>Chapter Readings</u> pp. 3-12 AND “What is the Socratic Method?” pp. 13-15 <u>DISCUSSION:</u> <i>Explain whether you have <u>absorbed</u> or <u>adopted</u> without question your moral beliefs and <u>why</u> you have done so.</i>
28 AUG - 1 SEPT	CH. 2 Subjectivism, Relativism, and Emotivism <u>Chapter Readings</u> pp. 22-33 AND pp. 37-40 “Trying Out one’s New Sword” <u>DISCUSSION:</u> <i>Suppose the majority of the German people approved of Hitler’s murdering 6 million Jews in WWII. Would this collective approval make Hitler’s actions morally justified? Explain the moral outlook you are using to base your opinion.</i>
5-8 SEPT	CH. 3 Evaluating Moral Arguments <u>Chapter Reading</u> pp. 43-62 <u>DISCUSSION:</u> <i>Do you believe that it is immoral to choose to believe a claim if you do not have any evidence for it? Also, what will you accept as evidence for something you choose to believe?</i>
11-15 SEPT	CH. 4 The Power of Moral Theories <u>Chapter Reading</u> pp. 67-76 <u>DISCUSSION:</u> <i>Do you believe your approach to morality is more like consequentialists or more like nonconsequentialists, or is it a combination of both? Explain the reasons you have for adopting this position.</i>
18-22 SEPT	CH. 5 Consequentialist Theories: Maximizing the Good <u>Chapter Reading</u> pp. 78-95 <u>DISCUSSION:</u> <i>You are the parent of 6 children. A terrible disease has overcome the land which affects only children; however, there is a serum which can make children immune from the disease. The problem is that each family is permitted ONLY 3 doses. The serum cannot be diluted and if it is, the serum does not work. How are you going to select the 3 of your children who will receive the serum from you?</i>

25-29 SEPT

CH. 6 Nonconsequentialist Theories: Do Your Duty

Chapter Reading pp. 102-115

DISCUSSION:

Which theory of morality makes more sense to you: natural law or utilitarianism? Explain why.

2-6 OCT

CH. 7 Virtue Ethics: Be a Good Person

Chapter Reading pp. 136-143

DISCUSSION:

Aristotle's concept of the "virtuous life" states that if we live in that moral fashion it helps us **achieve** happiness and it **is** happiness. What does Aristotle mean by this?

9-13 OCT

CH. 8 Abortion

Chapter Reading pp. 163-174

DISCUSSION:

Read Case #1 on page 226 in your text and respond to the following:

Do you believe that abortions based upon the gender preferences parents have for the fetus are acceptable? Provide some reasons to support your position. Could it be argued that in China it is justified on utilitarian grounds since female fetuses would be an economic hardship? Do you believe that this is a good moral argument? Why or why not?

Midterm Examination Covers Chapters 1-7 9-11 October

16-20 OCT

CH. 9 Altering Genes and Cloning Humans

Chapter Reading pp. 229-238

DISCUSSION:

Read Case #2 on page 289 in your text and respond to the following:

Do you believe that "gene doping" is unethical? If the use of performance-enhancing drugs is unethical, should gene doping also be considered unethical? Would the widespread practice of gene doping be morally permissible in that instance? How would it change the way we normally view exceptional athletic performance? Should scientific research into genetic enhancement be banned? Why or why not?

23-27 OCT

CH. 10 Euthanasia and Physician-Assisted Suicide

Chapter Reading pp. 291-302

DISCUSSION:

Read Case #1 on pp. 349-350 in your text and respond to the following:

Suppose doctors at Memorial Hospital did perform active euthanasia on some patients (only suppose it since it has not been proved true). Considering the horrible and separate conditions at the hospital at the time, would the doctors have been justified in doing so? What about patients who were expected to die? What about patients with a "DNR" order ("Do Not Resuscitate")? Give reasons for your position.

**30 OCT -
3 NOV**

CH. 11 Capital Punishment
Chapter Reading pp. 353-363

DISCUSSION:

Read Case #1 on page 407 in your text and respond to the following:

Given the destructive violence of Williams' murderous crimes, do you believe that it is possible that he had a true change of heart? If a convicted murderer has truly mended his ways, should this have an impact on his punishment? Do you believe that mercy (giving someone a break) is compatible with justice (giving someone what he deserves)? Why?

6-10 NOV

CH. 12 Sexual Morality
Chapter Reading pp. 410-415 AND pp. 435-440
"Morality and Human Sexuality"

DISCUSSION:

Read Case #1 on page 448 in your text and respond to the following:

When discussing sex with their children, do you believe parents should avoid the questions of 'right' or 'wrong'? In sex education in schools, do you believe that discussions of ethics should be included? Why or why not? Do you believe that questions of ethics are irrelevant to contemporary sexual behavior?

13-17 NOV

CH. 15 Environmental Ethics
Chapter Reading pp. 487-496 AND
"The Land Ethic" pp.536-540

DISCUSSION:

Read Case #1 on page 492 in your text and respond to the following:

Do you believe that native peoples should be forced to give up their lifestyles, elements of their folk or religious healing practices to save tigers? When there is such a conflict of coexistence, should the tigers or the people be moved? Explain your position.

20-24 NOVEMBER –Thanksgiving Break!

**27 NOV-
1 DEC**

CH. 16 Animal Rights
Chapter Reading pp. 495-504

DISCUSSION:

Read Case #2 on page 536 in your text and respond to the following:

Do you believe the animal rights activists were justified in waging their campaign to 'save the seals' even though it destroyed the Inuit way of life? Did the animal rights activists take the 'high road' to consider all possible solutions? Do you believe that animal rights activists have a moral obligation to consider them?

4-8 DEC

**CH.17 Political Violence: War, Terrorism, and
Torture**

Chapter Reading pp. 539-557

DISCUSSION:

Read Case #3 on page 596 in your text and respond to the following:

The war on terror has caused many Americans to begin to take a look at the use of torture to gain important information in order to prevent any future damage to our country. Using torture, however it is defined, has caused some moral inquiry. Under what circumstances, if any, do you believe torture can be used in fighting terror? How do you believe a utilitarian would view the use of torture?

11-15 DEC

CH. 19 Global Economic Justice

Chapter Reading pp. 637-643

DISCUSSION:

Read Case #2 on page 672 in your text and respond to the following:

Do you believe wealthier nations have a moral obligation to aid the world's poorer nations? Why or why not?

Final Exam Covers Chapters 8-19 14-45 DEC

IX. Course Specific Policies

1. Each week students will be required to post threaded discussions responding to questions posed with each Chapter/Unit. Students are expected to submit critical analyses in the threaded discussions. ***These responses should be no fewer than 300 words. REMEMBER: The threaded discussions are **the** critical element of this course***
2. Any forms of **plagiarism** or cheating will not be tolerated. If any instances of this occur, the matter will be referred to the Dean of Student Development for review. Academic dishonesty will result in a failure of the class.
3. Students are to use the mail function within Moodle as the primary means of communication with the instructor.

X. Academic Calendar –Fall 2017

FFALL SEMESTER 2017: August 21, 2017 – December 15, 2017

Aug 21	Classes Begin
Sept. 4	Labor Day Holiday
Nov 20-24	Thanksgiving Break
Nov 11-15	Final Exams

XI. College Policies

STATEMENT ON DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT

The College and the Alabama Board of Education are committed to providing both employment and educational environments free of harassment or discrimination related to an individual's race, color, gender, religion, national origin, age, or disability. Such harassment is a violation of State Board of Education policy. Any practice or behavior that constitutes harassment is a violation of State Board of Education policy. Any practice or behavior that constitutes harassment or discrimination will not be tolerated.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 state that qualified students with disabilities who meet the essential functions and academic requirements are entitled to reasonable accommodations. It is the student's responsibility to provide appropriate disability documentation to the College. Please contact the ADA representative.

SCHEDULE CHANGE/WITHDRAWAL

Adding/Dropping Classes

Addition of classes is permitted only during the designated drop/add period following registration as published in the semester class schedule and catalog. A student may drop a course prior to the posted midterm date for the semester without penalty. The grade of "W" will appear on the permanent record. Students adding or dropping classes should follow this procedure:

1. Request the withdrawal through the faculty advisor.
2. Add and drop a course via web registration.
3. Go to the cashier to clear any additional charges or complete a request for refund form. Students who discontinue attendance in a class without following this procedure will be unofficially withdrawn from classes.

COMPLETE WITHDRAWALS

A student may withdraw from school prior to the designated midterm date without penalty. A student who withdraws from school after midterm will receive a grade of "W" on his/her permanent record. Grades of "O" will be assigned to a student who discontinues class attendance without following the policy for withdrawal outlined in this catalog. A grade of F cannot be changed to a W. A student who desires to withdraw from college during any semester should use the following procedure:

1. Request the withdrawal through the advisor.
2. See the Financial Aid Office for exit interview.
3. Have an exit interview with the Advisor and Registration Coordinator.

COURSE FORGIVENESS POLICY

If a student repeats a course once, the last grade awarded (excluding a grade of “W”) replaces the previous grade in the computation of the cumulative grade point average. The semester grade point average during the term in which the course was first attempted will not be affected. When a course is repeated more than once, all grades for the course— excluding the first grade — will be employed in computation of the cumulative grade point average. Official records at the institution will list each course in which a student has enrolled. It is the student’s responsibility to request of the Registration Coordinator that the forgiveness policy be implemented.

**REFUND POLICY
INSTUTIONAL REFUND**

Partial Withdrawal

Students who do not completely withdraw from the college but drop a class during the regular drop/add period will be refunded the difference in the tuition paid and the tuition rate applicable to the reduced number of hours, including fees appropriate to the classes dropped. There is no refund due to a student who partially withdraws after the officials drop/add period.

COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL

A student who officially or unofficially withdraws from all classes for which he/she registered before the first day of class will be refunded the total tuition and other refundable institutional charges.

A student who officially or unofficially withdraws completely on or after the first day of class, but prior to the end of the third week of classes will be refunded according to the official or unofficially withdrawal date, as follows:

- Withdrawal during the first week.....75% of net tuition and other refundable institutional charges
- Withdrawal during the second week50% of net tuition and other refundable institutional charges
- Withdrawal during the third week25% of net tuition and other refundable institutional charges
- After the close of the third weekNo Refund

An administrative fee not to exceed 5%of tuition and other refundable institutional charges or \$100, whichever is smaller, shall be assessed for each withdrawal within the period beginning the first day of class and ending at the end of the third week of class. Refunds when due, are made to students without their request. Refunds are made within 60 days of the Student’s last day of attendance. Refunds are computed according to the date the student officially withdraws.

BOOKS/TOOLS/SUPPLIES

A student who withdraws and who has purchased returnable books/tools/supplies from the college and returns the items in new/unused condition by the end of the second week of the semester will be refunded the full purchase price.

Books/tools/supplies returned in used condition by the end of the second week of the semester will be refunded 50% of purchase price. The required books/tools/supplies listing for each department will indicate which items are refundable. Students who purchased books/tools/supplies by cash, must present receipt to receive a refund.

RETURN OF TITLE IV FUNDS

A student who officially withdraws from the college prior to completing 60% of any given term could result in the student having to repay a portion of the Title IV federal financial aid grants he/she received (excluding Federal Work-Study wages). The return of funds calculation shall be based on the midpoint of the term for students who do not officially withdraw. Each student who owes a repayment will be notified in writing. The failure to repay may result in the termination of eligibility for federal financial aid.

The amount to be returned is based on the concept of “earned” and “unearned” federal financial aid. The percentage of enrollment time completed determines the percentage of earned aid. The percentage completed is calculated as days attended in the period (based on the withdrawal date) divided by the total days in the term. If the percentage completed exceeds 60%, the student has earned 100% of his/her Title IV Aid awarded for the term.

INTERNET USE AGREEMENT

Reid State Technical College

Computer use policies safeguard the rights and privileges of all users. In exchange for the use of Reid State Technical College computer systems, either at school or away from school, I understand and agree to the following:

1. It is my responsibility to avoid abusive conduct, which would include, but not be limited to the altering of system software, placing of unlawful information, computer viruses or harmful programs on or through the system in either public or private files or messages.
2. I am accountable for the use of my password. My password will not be revealed to anyone. Any problems, which arise from the misuse of my home directory, are my responsibility.
3. I will not use the school's computer system to obtain, view, download, or otherwise gain access to or transmit materials that are unlawful, obscene, pornographic, abusive, or otherwise objectionable.
4. If I receive any unsolicited on-line contact, I will not respond and will advise my instructor or the System Administrator immediately.
5. I will use only software owned or approved by Reid State Technical College on all workstations and networks.

6. I will use all computer equipment as intended. I will not tamper with terminals, associated equipment or otherwise disable the system or related equipment.
7. I will not change, copy, rename, delete, read, or otherwise access files or software that I did not create, unless I have written permission from the System Administrator.
8. I will not use school computer equipment for anything other than school related work without permission from the System Administrator.
9. I have read and agree to conditions in the Terms and Conditions for Internet Use as described in Reid State Technical College's Internet Acceptable Use Policy.

I understand and will abide by the above Internet Use Agreement. I further understand that any violation of the regulations above is unethical and may constitute a criminal offense. Should I commit any violation, my access privileges may be revoked, school disciplinary action and/or appropriate legal action may be taken.