

ETHICS

Phil. 154, Spalding University
Adult Accelerated Program (AAP)
School of Liberal Studies
Session 6, 2013-2014
Monday, May 12—Friday, June 20, 2014
Online course

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COMMUNICATION POLICY/OFFICE HOURS

If the student has questions concerning the course, please do not hesitate to contact the instructor by phone, email, or text message. The instructor will make every effort to respond to all student messages within 24 hours.

REQUIRED SOURCE MATERIAL

Ethics: Theory and Contemporary Issues, Seventh Edition, Barbara MacKinnon, Cengage Learning, 2012, ISBN: 978-0-538-45283-0.

Also, you will be required to view the movie **High Noon**, 1952, starring Gary Cooper and Grace Kelly. This movie can be rented for 24 hours for instant viewing as a download from www.amazon.com for 2.99, or can be borrowed from the Louisville Free Public Library.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

If you are able to log into www.my.spalding.edu but cannot access your Moodle class or for other technical issues related to Moodle or your portal, contact the 24/7 helpdesk at 866/604-5605.

COURSE CONTENT

What is good and bad about the world and the people in it? We will think about this question in light of the great ethical theories from western philosophy, theories of right and wrong, of good and evil, and of virtue and vice. How can these theories—really nothing more than abstract ideas—help make people any better?

We will begin by exploring the general nature of ethical judgments, and consider some major challenges to ethical thinking, including the challenges of ethical relativism and ethical egoism. We will then study two highly influential theories of ethics, namely utilitarianism and Kantianism. We will then consider attempts to ground morality in human nature, and examine how this approach has been used to develop theories of natural law and of moral virtues.

Throughout the course, there will be various illustrations of how the theoretical concepts can be applied to contemporary moral issues, including economic justice, euthanasia, legal punishment, and environmental ethics.

UNIVERSITY STUDIES COMPETENCIES

To graduate with either an associate or bachelor degree, Spalding University requires undergraduate students to fulfill a specific

number of semester hours in the humanities, natural sciences and mathematics, social sciences, religious studies, and communication. These general education requirements comprise the University Studies component of all undergraduate degree programs.

In keeping with Spalding University’s long tradition, rigorous study across and within the academic disciplines fosters a commitment to life-long learning, service, and the promotion of peace and justice among students and faculty. University Studies courses are designed to give students opportunities to practice habits of mind and heart that emphasize the joy of discovery, animate the creative intellect, and promote the development of personal and intellectual competencies needed for success in any chosen profession.

Students will demonstrate knowledge of and competency in the following:

- Critical Thinking
- Effective Communication
- Diverse Perspectives on Social and Cultural Issues
- Scientific and Mathematical Skills
- Understanding Values and Religious Beliefs of Self and Others

The left hand column lists the specific University Studies Competencies that will be developed in this course; the right hand column lists Student Learning Outcomes for developing those Competencies.	
COMPETENCIES:	STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:
Critical Thinking	Students will demonstrate the abilities to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● describe critical, creative, and abstract philosophical theories about the nature and basis of morality ● analyze philosophical texts ● apply these different moral theories to current social issues and issues of personal values.
Communicate Effectively	Students will demonstrate the abilities to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● present their beliefs to others. ● describe fairly the positions of those with whom they may be in disagreement ● re-state their own position in a way that respectfully recognizes that others may think differently
Diverse Perspectives on Social and Cultural Issues	Students will demonstrate the abilities to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● describe contemporary debates over ethical values and issues of social

	<p>justice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explain how different positions in these debates reflect different underlying philosophic concepts • describe how the philosophical concepts of virtues and rights were fashioned under specific social and cultural conditions that continue to give shape and meaning to our own social and cultural situation
<p>Understanding Values and Religious Beliefs of Self and Others</p>	<p>Students will demonstrate the abilities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe in general terms their own values or religious beliefs • identify philosophical theories, or basic concepts from those theories, that are supportive of their values and religious beliefs • identify philosophical theories, or basic concepts from those theories, that are not supportive, or even contradictory of, their own values and beliefs, and explain them in a way that makes sense in their own terms • present their own beliefs to someone who agrees with one or more of theories that disagrees with one's own, and give reasons to support one's own position.

AAP MISSION STATEMENT Spalding University's Adult Accelerated Program (AAP), the oldest program for adult learners in Kentucky, is a delivery system of quality undergraduate hybrid and online classes and degrees dedicated to meeting the needs of diverse adult learners by offering rigorous liberal and professional studies courses that emphasize significant student and instructor engagement and reflect Spalding University's focus on compassion, spiritual values, and service in formats and schedules convenient for working adults.

AAP PROGRAM AND COURSE ATTENDANCE POLICY Class participation is **extremely** important. Adult students bring to this course varied backgrounds in business settings. Class participation is necessary to share these background experiences.

Please refer to the official policy on Class Attendance found in the Spalding University On-Line Catalog in the section on Undergraduate Academic Policies <http://www2.spalding.edu/catalog/>.

Online Class Attendance A student registered for an online class must log-in to an online class by 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday of the first week of class to be counted as present for the first class. A student may drop a class until 11:59 p.m. on Friday of the first week of the session. Online classes require the submission of weekly assignments. Any student who has missed (as defined by Spalding University's online standards) the equivalent of 25 percent of an online class should withdraw from the class or receive the grade of *F* for the class. A student may not withdraw from an online class after 11:59 p.m. on the 4th Friday of the session. A student who withdraws from an online class will be responsible for the tuition accrued for the chronological time that has elapsed in the class, not for the amount of work that student has completed.

Student Responsibilities Prior to enrolling in classes, students in all University programs should anticipate the number of class meeting absences that may result from family obligations, work-related responsibilities, and such other University-sponsored activities as Debate Team and athletic events. Once a class has begun, a student who anticipates that he or she will not meet the attendance requirements to earn a passing grade should withdraw from the class. According to University policy, a student must follow official procedures for withdrawing from a class in order to receive a tuition refund. Any student who stops attending a class without having officially withdrawn from that class will receive the grade of *F* and must assume any remaining financial obligations for the class. Please see the [Withdrawal Policy](#) for additional information. Please see the Undergraduate Attendance Policy in the Spalding University Catalog for further details.

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION Students will be assigned readings from the textbook, and the instructor will provide, through Moodle, Power Point presentations on these readings, including audio of the instructor's explanations. The instructor's Power Points will direct students to think about the essay questions that will constitute the weekly essay exams. These essay questions will be modeled closely upon the Review Exercises that are provided at the end of each major chapter of the textbook. It would be a good idea if before you begin reading each chapter or set of Power Points, you first read the questions from these Review Exercises, and then refer to them periodically as you make your way through the chapters and Power Points.

Also, the instructor will initiate discussion forums in Moodle, and will participate himself in these discussions by asking follow-up questions to help keep the discussions philosophically on track and moving forward. Some of the instructor's questions in these discussions boards will seem to suggest that the view found in the reading material is true, while other questions will seem to suggest that the view is not true. In other words, the instructor will aim to make different sides of an issue seem plausible, and will for the most part avoid favoring any one side over the others. The goal of these questions for discussion is to help the students to examine their own beliefs by comparing those beliefs with other seemingly reasonable beliefs.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS The requirements for this course are:

- Introduce yourself to the teacher and classmates through a discussion forum
- Score 100% on a ten question quiz on the syllabus
- Write a short, ungraded written statement of your values and religious beliefs, and how you understand your values and religious beliefs in comparison to those of others
- Five weekly essay exams, starting on Tuesday of week two

- Participate at least twice a week in Moodle discussion forums
- A final three page paper that discusses how the ideas and theories studied in the course help you to understand your values and religious beliefs, and to understand how your values and religious beliefs compare to those of others (refer to your short ungraded statement from week one)

Each of these requirements is described below:

Introduce yourself in Moodle: There are two purposes of requiring students to introduce themselves in Moodle during the first week of the class. First, it will establish early in the course that everyone knows how to use Moodle to participate in a discussion forum. Second, it will help us to begin to interact with one another and to form a shared experience.

Quiz on the syllabus: The purpose of the quiz on the syllabus is to make sure everyone reads and understands what is in the syllabus, particularly as regards the schedule of activities for the class. You must score 100% on the quiz to fulfill this requirement. Your score will not be factored into the final grade, unless you do not complete the requirement. You may re-take the quiz with no penalty as many times as is necessary to score 100%. Students must complete the quiz by Thursday of Week One.

Short, ungraded statement of how you understand your values and religious beliefs and how you understand your values and religious beliefs in comparison with those of others: This assignment is to prepare the students for the final three page graded paper that is due at the end of the class. I will not grade these papers, but will read them and make suggestions about how certain parts of the course may help you to better understand and to think about your values and religious beliefs.

Five weekly essay exams: Students will be required starting week two to submit one written exam per week. From the time the student first accesses that exam, the student will have 24 hours to complete and electronically submit the exam. In other words, students will be timed, with a 24 hour limit. Moodle will let the instructor know the exact time when a document (set of exam questions) was first accessed by an individual student, and will let the instructor know the exact time when a student electronically submits a document to the teacher for grading. So, students would be well advised not to access or open the exam unless they know they will have sufficient free time within the next 24 hours to complete it and electronically submit it.

Suggestion: while working on an exam, it is a good idea to save your work every 10 minutes or so, in case of a power failure or loss of internet service.

The first exam will be made available at the end of week one, and will be due on Tuesday of week two. Starting with week three, the remaining four exams will be made available by Monday of the week and will be due by Thursday at the latest of the same week. For each student the exams will be due 24 hours after the student has first accessed the exam; for example, if a student accesses the exam on Tuesday, then it is due for that student on Wednesday. Study material for the exam, including the Power Point lectures will be made available at the beginning of the week at the latest. The weekly reading assignments, including the Review Exercises from which the exam questions will be taken, are included in the syllabus.

Participation in weekly Moodle discussion forums: Students will be expected to participate in Moodle discussion forums at a minimum twice a week, and several times a week to earn a participation grade of A, provided those additional participations are philosophically helpful for the discussion, and do not demonstrate disrespect towards other participants. Please note: A very good participation is one that takes into account and responds appropriately to the contributions from other participants. In other words, participation should involve true discussion. Moodle discussion forums for each weekly set of assignments and topics will begin near the beginning of the week, Monday and Tuesday, and the instructor will check the discussion forums daily, and will participate with follow up questions at least four times a week.

Final three page paper on how the ideas and theories studied in the class helped you better understand your values and religious beliefs, and helped you understand as well the values and religious beliefs of others in comparison with your own This assignment addresses one of the five main University Studies Competencies, namely, to understand the values and religious beliefs of self and others. Spalding is committed to helping you grow in your understanding of your own values and religious beliefs, and to helping our world to become more respectful in discussing disagreements over values and religious beliefs.

In the event of a personal emergency that would prevent you from keeping pace with the course, please contact the instructor by phone (502/572-8255) or email (jwilcox@spalding.edu) as soon as possible.

EVALUATION The five exams will be evaluated on two main counts. The first is how well they demonstrate an accurate and comprehensive understanding of the source material from the textbook, the class lectures, and material provided through Moodle and the Premium Web Site associated with the textbook. The second is how well the exams present a thoughtful engagement with, or critical reaction to, the philosophical issues the material in those sources bring into question.

The final three page paper will be graded according to a four point rubric that the instructor will provide the class during week two.

Each of the five weekly exams is worth 15% of the final grade; the final three page paper is worth 15%; and participation in the Moodle discussion forums is worth 10%.

GRADING CRITERIA Undergraduate Grades as described in the Spalding University catalog:

Please note that "plus and minus" grades (e.g., A-, B+) have no effect on GPA.

A (4 quality points) indicates work of excellent quality: a superior grasp of the content of the course, initiative in doing work considerably beyond ordinary assignments, originality in attacking problems, and ability to relate the knowledge of the course to other knowledge.

B (3 quality points) indicates work of high quality: a very good grasp of content, initiative in doing some work beyond the ordinary assignments, and above-average ability to apply principles intelligently.

C (2 quality points) indicates work of acceptable quality: a grasp of the essentials of the course, the satisfactory completion of work assigned, and an average ability to see relationships and to make applications.

D (1 quality point) indicates grasp of only the minimum essentials of a course: passing, but indicates work that is not satisfactory at the college level.

F (0 quality points) indicates failure to master the minimum essentials of the course or failure to follow official procedure for withdrawal from class.

COURSE SCHEDULE Each week of the course will have a separate set of topics, reading assignments, Power Point lecture notes with audio accompaniment, discussion forums in Moodle, and an exam.

The reading assignments below are from our main textbook, **Ethics: Theory and Contemporary Issues**, Seventh Edition, Barbara MacKinnon. Hereafter I will refer to this book simply as “MacKinnon.” The weekly schedule of reading assignments, topics and exams is as follows:

Week One:

Chapter 1, Ethics and Ethical Reasoning, pages 1-15, Review Exercises on page 19.

Note: pages 1-12 are written by MacKinnon herself, and the Reading on pages 12-15 is a selection written by the ancient Greek philosopher Plato. You may skip the second Reading on pages 15-19 on “The Emotive Meaning of Ethical Terms, written by Stevenson.

HINT: Read the Review Exercises first, and refer to them from time to time as you read the other pages, because these Review Exercises will help form the exam questions I will give you. This hint applies to all the Review Exercises below.

Chapter 2, Ethical Relativism, pages 20-27, Review Exercises on page 32.

Note: all the reading here from the textbook is authored by MacKinnon.

Week Two:

First exam due on Tuesday at 9:00 pm

After completing the first exam, begin these readings for the second exam:

Chapter 3, Egoism, pages 33-45, Review Exercises on page 51.

Note: pages 33-39 are written by MacKinnon. Pages 40-45 are written by Plato, and are taken from his major work called the **Republic**.

Chapter 14, Economic Justice, pages 279-291, the Review Exercises on page 310.

Note: these textbook pages all are written by MacKinnon. Also, this chapter is from the second part of the book. It applies some of the theoretical concepts from the first part of the book to a contemporary issue. If egoism is true (Chapter 3), why should anyone care about economic justice?

Week Three:

Continue readings and source material from Chapters 3 and 14.

Second exam is due on Thursday.

Week Four:

Chapter 4, Utilitarianism, pages 52-72, and Review Exercises on page 72.

Note: pages 52-62 are written by MacKinnon. Pages 62-67 are written by the British philosopher Jeremy Bentham, and pages 67-72 are written by John Stuart Mill, also British, and a follower of Bentham. Utilitarianism is a very influential moral theory. Many people today believe in it, and it guides much of our public policy.

Chapter 10, Euthanasia, pages 162-178, and the Review Exercises on page 194.

Note: these pages all are written by MacKinnon. In reading this chapter, we will try to see how the general theory of utilitarianism applies to a pressing moral issue. If utilitarianism is true (Chapter 4), would euthanasia be justified?

Week Five:

Chapter 5, Kant's Moral Theory, pages 74-94, and the Review Exercises on page 95

Note: pages 74-84 are written by MacKinnon. Pages 84-94 are written by the German philosopher Immanuel Kant. Kant's moral theory, like utilitarianism, is also very influential, and attempts to clarify ordinary moral intuitions about moral duty and human dignity. However, Kant sharply disagrees with all utilitarian thinking.

Chapter 15, Legal Punishment, pages 312-325, and the Review Exercises on page 338.

Note: these pages all are written by MacKinnon. In reading this chapter, we will attempt to apply utilitarian and Kantian theories of morality to the question of how to justify legal punishment, including the ultimate form of punishment, the death penalty.

Week Six:

Movie: "High Noon," 1952, starring Gary Cooper and Grace Kelly.

Chapter 7, Morality and Human Nature, pages 108-117, and the Review Exercises on page 123.

Note: pages 108-115 are written by MacKinnon, pages 115-117 are written by the thirteenth century philosopher-theologian St. Thomas Aquinas. This chapter is concerned with an attempt to find a foundation for moral laws in reality, or, in other words, in the structure of nature. Does nature create human beings for a purpose?

COURSE WITHDRAWAL DATES AND FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION

The last date to drop this class is Friday May 16 and the last date to withdraw is Friday June 6. You may drop or withdraw from courses through Webadvisor on the www.my.spalding.edu portal, where you may also find a link with information about Registration. Please be sure to contact your University financial aid counselor before dropping or withdrawing from any class, as this may impact your financial aid status. You may access financial aid information through Webadvisor on the www.my.spalding.edu portal, or you may call 502/873-4328.

ADA STATEMENT Any student who, because of a disability, may require special arrangements in order to meet course requirements, should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make such accommodations as may be necessary. Students should provide written verification of the need for such accommodations from the Academic Resource Center. Contact Kelly Cogar kcogar@spalding.edu 502-873-4161.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY Please refer to the section on Professional and Academic Integrity Policies in the Spalding University On-Line Catalog at <http://www.spalding.edu/catalog/>. According to that policy, any student caught cheating on an exam will receive a lowered or failing grade for the course. As this is an online course, the main issue for students is to not plagiarize. No work should be handed in as one's own work that was simply copied from another source. Also, although many of the exam questions are about the information presented in the textbook, I am not asking you to copy word-for-word from the textbook whole sentences or even long phrases within single sentences.

Consistent with the general University-wide policy on Academic Integrity, the School of Liberal Studies has officially adopted the following policy:

First violation: A failing grade of "0" for the particular assignment in question; notification of Chair in student's major

Second violation: A failing grade for the course; notification of Chair in student's major

Third violation: Expulsion from the School of Liberal Studies, if a major, or contact with the Chair in the student's major and the Athletic Director, if applicable

In cases of academic dishonesty, faculty access the official student record for indications of any previous events to determine the action to take.

The Chair shall ensure the official student record indicates violations that occur in the School.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS Because the Discussion Forums in Moodle will sometimes involve controversial ethical issues, it is very important that students demonstrate respect for their classmates and the instructor. Please be careful how you phrase your criticisms of ideas that have been put forth by your classmates. While it is permitted and even expected that students will criticize each other's *ideas*, no criticisms is to be directed at any *person*.

The instructor reserves the right to delete inappropriate postings.

Copyright issue: Some materials in this course may be subject to copyright protection. These materials should not be distributed beyond the scope of this course.

SCHOOL OF LIBERAL STUDIES POLICY FOR VIOLATIONS OF BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

First incident: Verbal warning to student; notify Chair in writing of potential issue.

Second incident: Notify student in writing she/he is not to attend classes until a meeting with the instructor and Chair is arranged and completed. Chair notifies Dean of Students, in writing, of meeting outcome.

Third incident: Notify Chair and Dean of Students student can no longer attend the course. Chair will refer the case to the Honor Board for possible University Sanctions, as outlined in the "Violation of Student Responsibilities" section of the University catalog.

APPEALS PROCESS: The section of the Spalding University catalog on "Professional and Academic Decisions: Student Appeal Procedure" outlines the procedure for students to appeal faculty decisions regarding grading, academic integrity, and behavior.