

**School for New Learning
DePaul University
Syllabus: FA 383 Contemporary Ethics (DRAFT)
December Term, 2009**

1. General Information

Faculty: Rev. Dr. William J. Wassner
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South Bend, Indiana 46614
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1.574.232.1500 (Work)

Location: Oak Forest, Illinois

Dates/Time: Saturdays December 5 and 12 from 9:00 to 4:00 CST

Credit Hours: 2

2. Course Description and Faculty Biographical Sketch

Contemporary Ethics is a course of two week's duration, which is designed to familiarize students with some of the ethical theories, which will then be applied to contemporary problems. Topics discussed include abortion, bioethics, capital punishment, end of life decisions, war, etc.

Bill Wassner is the pastor of St. Peter's UCC in South Bend, Indiana and the Executive Director of the United Religious Community in St. Joseph County. He has worked as an Addictions Counselor and continues to serve as a volunteer chaplain with the Indiana State Police assigned to the Indiana Toll Road. He has taught at the School for New Learning since 2001 conducting the courses, *The Divine Dialogue*, *Critical Thinking*, *Ethics*, *Crime and Violence: Law Enforcement in America*, and *Research Seminar*. He has also served as faculty for Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis, Indiana. He holds masters and doctoral degrees from the University of Chicago Divinity School, Christian Theological Seminary, and Capella University.

3. Competencies Offered: Register for only ONE.

A-1-X: Interpreting the Arts - Can interpret the theory and applications of ethical theories to one's own experience

Students demonstrate this competence by negotiation with the professor on an agreed upon paper topic, which meets all criteria stated below.

A-3-X: Reflection and Meaning - Can interpret the particular theory of one thinker with integrity

Students demonstrate this competence by negotiation with the professor on an agreed upon paper topic, which meets all criteria, stated below.

A-4: Ethics in a Contemporary World - Can analyze a social, institutional or educational problem using two different ethical systems

Students demonstrate this competence by applying two ethical systems to a particular issue or problem that permits substantial ethical examination (for example, business practices, uses of technology, reproductive rights, class structures, institutional racism, sexual behavior, educational approaches, etc.). Students may choose any ethical system that is associated with particular thinkers. Students may consider the choices these thinkers identify, and the standards or measures by which these choices are made to obtain desired outcomes.

FX: Can explain how ethical ideas and principles influence behavior and policies in the workplace.

Students demonstrate this competence by identifying and applying at least two ethical principles and/or ideas and then relate them to policies and procedures in the workplace. Concrete illustrations and direct relevancies must be clearly delineated.

4. Learning Experience

Life involves making choices everyday. Our values inform and shape us as humans as we choose the paths and directions in response to challenges and opportunities alike. Ethics may be understood as the art of reflecting on those values as they influence those choices. Ethical endeavors may be understood as either *meta-ethics* (what is truly ethical?), *normative ethics* (what should we do?), and *applied ethics* (how can we ethically respond in a particular situation?). This course is centered on applied ethics. Students will attend two all-day class sessions, interact with lectures and discussions, read and reflect critically upon assigned readings, and case studies (both individually and in groups). While we are encouraged to share and challenge one another, all opinions and values are to be respected at all times!

5. Required Readings

Although there will be no required texts to purchase, there will be a number of readings and handouts (including case studies) distributed in class. Some resources have been placed on Blackboard as well. Additional resources (websites) have been included in this syllabus for your convenience and research purposes.

6. Attendance

DePaul University anticipates that all students will attend all classes:

Attendance and participation are essential. In the event of an absence it is imperative that you (1) let me know ahead of time, and (2) contact a classmate ahead of time to be your "tutor" for the missed session.

As you can imagine, absences are especially detrimental to one's grade.

7. Individual Papers

Assignment to demonstrate one's competency based on the area enrolled will be completed and ready to share at the beginning of the second class. Specific requirements with reference to one's area:

A-1-X:

Five page paper applying an ethical theory to a person in the news, literature, or TV.

A-3-X:

Five page paper illustrating a summary of one primary philosopher's ethical theory and proposing an ethical theory of one's own.

A-4:

Five page paper centered on a current controversy in the news and analysis according to ethical principles discussed in class.

FX:

Five page paper centered on presentation and analysis of one's current workplace according to ethical principles discussed in class.

NOTE:

The instructor will abide by the University's guidelines on academic integrity (see policy in addenda below)

The student is required to have a minimum of five references for each paper. At least one must be a peer-reviewed journal article. Care must be taken to cite all sources correctly according to MLA style. The DePaul Writing Center is a good resource.

Please note the following specific statement focusing on plagiarism:

The DePaul Student Handbook defines plagiarism as follows: "Plagiarism includes but is not limited to the following: (a) The direct copying of any source, such as written and verbal material, computer files, audio disks, video programs or musical scores, whether published or unpublished, in whole or in part, without proper acknowledgement that it is someone else's. (b) Copying of any source in whole or in part with only minor changes in wording or syntax even with acknowledgement. (c) Submitting as one's own work a report, examination paper, computer file, lab report or other assignment, which has been prepared by someone else. This includes research papers purchased from any other person or agency. (d) The paraphrasing of another's work or ideas without proper acknowledgement." Plagiarism will result in a failure of the assignment or possibly of the course. If you are unsure of how to cite a source, ask!

Please consult with the DePaul University Writing Center for Assistance (see page 6):

[Writing Guide for SNL Students at http://snl.depaul.edu/writing/index.html](http://snl.depaul.edu/writing/index.html). For on-campus and online tutoring, see the [DePaul University Writing Centers at http://condor.depaul.edu/~writing/](http://condor.depaul.edu/~writing/).

8. Assessment of Student Performance

Student will demonstrate individual competency in the following ways:

- attendance
- classroom participation (both individually and in groups)
- clearly evident grasp of key components of ethical theories and application
- five-page paper in one's competency area and presentation in class

9. Grading

Students always have the option of taking the course Pass/Fail. If you intend to do so, you must inform me at the beginning of the first session. Once committed to taking a course Pass/Fail, you cannot switch back to a letter grade.

Incomplete grades are NOT an option in this course.

10. Class Schedule

December 5:

- Introduction to Philosophy and Ethics
- Overview of Ethical Theories
- Survey of Student Values and Assessment of Current Positions
- Examples of Ethical Dilemmas
- Case Studies as Group Exercises

December 12:

- Discussion of Assigned Blackboard Readings
- More Case Studies
- Individual Presentations on Papers and Responses

Addenda

DePaul University Academic Integrity Policy

DePaul University is a learning community that fosters the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas within a context that emphasizes a sense of responsibility for oneself, for others and for society at large. Violations of academic integrity, in any of their forms, are, therefore, detrimental to the values of DePaul, to the students' own development as responsible members of society, and to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Violations include but are not limited to the following categories: cheating; plagiarism; fabrication; falsification or sabotage of research data; destruction or misuse of the university's academic resources; alteration or falsification of academic records; and academic misconduct. Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could result in additional disciplinary actions by other university officials and possible civil or criminal prosecution. Please refer to your Student Handbook or visit <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/homehandbook.html> for further details.

Ethics Resources on the World Wide Web

1. http://commfaculty.fullerton.edu/lester/ethics/ethics_list.html
School of Communications at California State University in Fullerton, California
2. <http://ethics.acusd.edu/index.asp>. Ethics Updates, University of San Diego
3. <http://www.ethicsweb.ca/resources/>.
The W. Maurice Young Centre for Applied Ethics, the University of British Columbia
4. <http://www.ethics.org/>. Ethics Resource Center
5. <http://www.globalethics.org/>. Institute for Global Ethics
6. <http://bioethics.od.nih.gov/>. National Institutes of Health, Department of Health and Human Services
7. <http://www.georgetown.edu/research/nrcbl/>.
Kennedy Institute of Ethics, Georgetown University
8. <http://www.stanford.edu/dept/EIS> Ethics in Society, Stanford University
9. <http://ezinfo.ucs.indiana.edu/~appe/home.html>
Association for Practical and Professional Ethics, University of Indiana
10. <http://ecampus.bentley.edu/dept/cbe/> Center for Business Ethics, Bentley College
11. <http://www.emory.edu/ETHICS/>
Center for Ethics in Public Policy and the Professions, Emory University
12. <http://www.ethicaledge.com> Ethical Edge, Ethics and Policy Integration Centre
13. <http://www.ethics.harvard.edu/> Harvard University Program in Ethics and the Professions
14. <http://www.depaul.edu/ethics/>
Institute for Business and Professional Ethics at DePaul University
15. <http://www.usoge.gov/> U.S. Office of Government Ethics
16. <http://www.ethicsed.org/> School for Ethical Education
17. <http://www.iit.edu/departments/csep/>
Center for the Study of Ethics in the Professions, Illinois Institute of Technology
18. <http://www.aspeninst.org> The Aspen Institute



What is the Writing Center?

One of the most important resources available at DePaul is the DePaul University Center for Writing-based Learning (UCWbL). The Writing Center, which is part of the UCWbL, is open to all DePaul students who would like to discuss or review their writing. You can use this service to discuss your assignments for any class, as well as non-academic writing projects like resumes and application essays. The Center has two full-time offices, Library Outposts at the Lincoln Park and Loop campuses, and online services that include Quick Questions, Feedback-by-Email, and IM conferencing (with or without a webcam). All writing center services are *free*. Writing Center tutors are specially selected and trained graduate and undergraduate students who can help you at almost any stage of your writing. They will not do your work for you, but they can help you focus and develop your ideas, review your drafts, and polish your writing. They can answer questions about grammar, mechanics, different kinds of writing styles, and documentation formats. They also can answer questions and provide feedback online, through IM/webcam chats and email.

What kinds of help does the Writing Center offer?

You determine the direction of the sessions. Tutors will help you understand your assignment and develop your paper's topics, thesis, and ideas. They can show you how to revise your paper and can teach you basic writing skills such as grammar, mechanics, summarizing, and paraphrasing. A tutor can also help you find, narrow, and support your thesis with prewriting exercises and by talking through your ideas to get started. Although tutors will help you with grammatical difficulties, tutors will not proofread your paper for you or speculate on what grade you might receive on that paper. Obviously, the tutors can't be familiar with every class or subject, but they are able to provide valuable help from the perspective of an interested and careful reader as well as a serious and experienced student-writer.

When should I use this service, and what should I bring?

The best way to use this service is to schedule your appointment with enough time to think about and use the feedback you'll receive. Always bring your assignment sheet, your paper or working draft (if you have one), and any source materials, such as an essay or book to which you are responding. If you have copies or drafts of a paper, bring your flash drive. During the session, expect to answer questions from your tutor about your paper topic, your writing process, or other issues regarding your assignment.

How do I request help?

When possible, the Writing Center accepts walk-in requests, but the best way to line up help is to use the Center's online scheduler, which confirms appointments in real time. You may schedule standing weekly appointments or schedule appointments (30 or 50 minutes) on an as-needed basis, scheduling up to 3 hours worth of appointments per week.

Quick Links and Locations

- To schedule an appointment at the Writing Center's LPC and Loop locations: <http://condor.depaul.edu/~writing/html/sched/WCOnline.html>
- To schedule Real-time conversations with IM and/or webcam: <http://condor.depaul.edu/~writing/html/sched/im.htm>
- To request Feedback-by-Email: <http://condor.depaul.edu/~writing/html/sched/email.html>
- Loop Campus Office: 1620 Lewis Center, 312.362.6726
- Lincoln Park Office: 250 McGaw, 773.325.4272

For more information – as well as online scheduling and writing resources – visit:

<http://www.depaul.edu/writing/>

10/05/2009 WJW