

# Problems and Issues in Contemporary Ethics

## Course Syllabus

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## Course Information

### Course Description

**“If a man's good for nothing else, he can at least teach philosophy.”**

– William James

An introduction to moral philosophy with emphasis on the conflict between "moral relativism" (or "subjective" ethics) on the one hand and "moral realism" (or "objective" ethics) on the other. During the course you will be introduced to classic theories and leading figures in the history of ethics, from Plato and Aristotle to Kant and Nietzsche. Course content will focus on issues (e.g., poverty, drug use, capital punishment, sexual behavior, euthanasia, biomedical research, animal rights, political violence) at the center of contemporary ethical debate in the United States and throughout the world.

### Course Learning Goals

After completing this course, you will be able to:

- Define and apply basic critical concepts and vocabulary terms relating to philosophy and ethical theory.
- Identify and compare key figures and ideas in the history of moral philosophy.
- Identify and describe at least four major ethical theories or moral principles and apply them to contemporary issues.
- Apply insights and theories from moral philosophy to personal ethical decisions.
- Apply concepts and theories from moral philosophy to analyze issues and resolve disputes in the contemporary workplace.

### Course Competencies

In this course, you will develop the following competencies:

Competence	Competence Statement and Criteria
A3C	Can examine a social issue from an ethical perspective

A3E	Can compare substantially different theological or philosophical systems
A4	Can analyze a problem using two different ethical systems
FX	Can analyze an ethical issue in business or the contemporary workplace

### How the Competences will be Demonstrated in this Course

**Note to Liberal Studies students:** Instead of receiving credit for a particular School of New Learning competency (or competencies), you will be taking the course for standard undergraduate credit. For all course modules you should complete the assignments designated for A4.

- A3C: Can examine a social issue from an ethical perspective.

To demonstrate this competency, you will complete a series of short exercises and exam questions requiring you to apply one or more ethical theories or moral traditions (including virtue theory, Kantian ethics, utilitarianism, social contract theory, feminist ethics, religious ethics, etc.) to a range of contemporary social issues (e.g., personal privacy, pornography and obscenity, animal rights, preferential treatment, etc.).

- A3E: Can compare substantially different theological or philosophical systems.

To demonstrate this competency, you will complete a series of short exercises or exam questions requiring you to compare or contrast the views of two or more philosophers (e.g., Kant vs. Bentham), religious traditions (e.g., Buddhism, Roman Catholicism) or philosophical systems (e.g., Marxism-Leninism vs. Libertarianism) as they apply to a range of contemporary moral issues.

- A4: Can analyze a problem using two different ethical systems.

To demonstrate this competency you will complete a series of short exercises or exam essays comparing the insights of two different philosophers or ethical theories (e.g., egoism vs. Utilitarianism) in relation to a contemporary social problem or moral issue (e.g., reproductive rights, racism, poverty, inequality, etc.).

- FX: Can analyze an ethical issue in business or the contemporary workplace.

To demonstrate this competency, you will complete a series of short exercises or exam questions requiring you to apply insights or theories from moral philosophy to a selection of ethical issues pertaining to business or the contemporary workplace (e.g., truth in advertising, employee rights, preferential treatment, etc.).

### Course Resources

To buy your books, go to <http://www.mbsdirect.net> .

Hint: type DePaul for name of the school.

[Click here for help buying your books](#)

### Required Reading:

Rachels, James and Stuart Rachels (ed.). *The Elements of Moral Philosophy*. 6th Edition. Hightstown, NJ: McGraw Hill, 2009.

**Recommended reading (not required):**

Rachels, James and Stuart Rachels (eds.). *The Right Thing to Do: Basic Readings in Moral Philosophy*. 4th Edition. Hightstown, NJ: McGraw Hill, 2007.

Singer, Peter, ed. *Ethics* (Oxford Readers). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1994.

Timmons, Mark. *Moral Theory*. Rowman and Littlefield, 2002.

**Support Materials: Encyclopedia and Dictionary**

Linked in the course material.

**Dictionaries and Encyclopedias**

Audi, Robert, ed. *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*. 2nd ed. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Blackburn, Simon, ed. *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.

Turkel, Susan Neiberg, ed. *Encyclopedia of Ethics*. New York: Facts on file, 1999.

**Additional resources**

Aristotle. *Nicomachean Ethics*. New York: Penguin, 1976.

<http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/nicomachaen.html>

Attfeld, Adam. *Environmental Ethics: An Overview for the Twenty-First Century*. Cambridge, UK: Blackwell Publishing, 2003.

Beccaria, Cesare. *An Essay on Crimes and Punishments*. Boston: International Pocket Library, 1983.

Bentham, Jeremy. *Benthamiana, or, select extracts from the works of Jeremy Bentham: with an outline of his opinions on the principal subjects discussed in his works*. Edited by John Hill Burton. Holmes Beach, FL.: Gaunt, 1998.

Binmore, K.G. *Game Theory and the Social Contract: Playing Fair*. MIT Press, 1994.

Camus, Albert. *The Myth of Sisyphus*. New York: Vintage, 1955.

----. *The Rebel*. New York: Vintage Books, 1956.

Cicero. *On the Good Life*. New York: Penguin, 1971.

Cooper, David E., ed. *Ethics: The Classic Readings*. Blackwell Publishing.

Dewey, John and James Hayden Tufts. *Ethics*. New York: Holt and Company, 1909.

Donaldson, Thomas and Patricia Werhane. *Ethical Issues in Business: A Philosophical Approach*. (8th edition). Prentice Hall, 2007.

Epictetus. *Enchiridion*. Prometheus Press, 1955.

Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York: Vintage Books, 1995.

Gautier, David. *Morals by Agreement*. Oxford, UK: The Clarendon Press, 1986.

Gill, Robin, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Ethics*. Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Gilligan, Carol. *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982.

Habermas, Jurgen. *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001.

Harman, Gilbert, et. al., ed. *Moral Relativism and Moral Objectivity*. Blackwell, 1996.

Held, Virginia. *Justice and Care: Essential Readings in Feminist Ethics*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1995.

Hobbes, Thomas. *Human Nature/De Corpore Politico*. New York: Oxford Press, 1999.

Jaggar, Alison M. and Iris Young, eds. *A Companion to Feminist Philosophy*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1998.

James, William. *Pragmatism*. <http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/5116>

Kant. *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*. Cambridge Univ. Press, 1988.

Kierkegaard, Soren. *Fear and Trembling*. New York: Penguin, 1986.

-----. *Either/Or*. New York: Penguin, 1992.

Levinas, Emmanuel. *Basic Philosophical Writings*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1996.

Lucretius. *On the Nature of the Universe*. New York: Penguin, 1994.

Marcus Aurelius. *Meditations*. New York: Penguin, 1987.

Marx, Karl. *The Marx-Engels Reader*. Robert C. Tucker, ed. W.W. Norton, 1978.

Mill, John Stuart. *Utilitarianism. On Liberty. Considerations on Representative Government*. New York: Everyman, 1913.

Montaigne, Michel de. *Complete Essays*. Donald Frame, tr. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1971.

Moore, G.E. *Principia Ethica*. Prometheus Books, 1988.

Moser, Paul, K. (ed.) *Moral Relativism: A Reader*. New York, Oxford University Press, 2000.

Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Beyond Good and Evil*. Walter Kaufmann, tr. New York: Vintage Books, 1966.

-----. *On the Genealogy of Morals*. Walter Kaufmann and P.J. Hollingdale, tr. New York: Vintage Books, 1969.

Plato. *The Last Days of Socrates : Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Phaedo*. New York: Penguin.

-----. *Protagoras and Meno*. Penguin. New York: Penguin, 1974.

Putnam, Hilary. *Ethics without Ontology*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004.

Rawls, John. *Lectures on the History of Moral Philosophy*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000.

- . *Justice as Fairness*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001.
- Rorty, Richard. *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth*. Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *The Essential Rousseau*. Lowell Blair, ed. New American Library, 1991.
- Sade, Marquis de. *Justine, Philosophy in the Bedroom, and Other Writings*. New York: Grove Press, 1990.
- Sartre, Jean-Paul. *Notebook for an Ethics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992.
- . *Literary and Philosophical Essays*. New York: Collier, 1955.
- Schopenhauer, Arthur. *Essays and Aphorisms*. New York: Penguin, 1973.
- Scruton, Roger. *Kant*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982.
- . *A Short History of Modern Philosophy*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 1995.
- Singer, Peter. *Animal Liberation*. Rev. ed. Avon/Hearst, 1991.
- . *Practical Ethics*. Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- . *One World: The Ethics of Globalization*. 2nd Ed. New Haven, CN: Yale University, 2004.
- Thoreau, Henry David. *Civil Disobedience. Solitude. Life without Principle*. Prometheus Books, 1998.
- Tronto, Joan. *Moral Boundaries: A Political Argument for an Ethics of Care*. New York: Routledge, 1994.
- Voltaire. *Candide*. New York: Penguin, 1975.

### Web resources

- Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy. <http://www.iep.utm.edu/>
- Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. <http://plato.stanford.edu/>
- Wikipedia. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main\\_Page](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page)
- Columbia Encyclopedia Online. <http://www.bartleby.com/65/>

### Course Grading Scale

A = 131 – 145
B = 116 – 130
C = 101 – 115
D = 87 – 100
F = 0 – 86

Please note: Grades lower than a C- do not earn credit or competence in the School for

## **Course Structure**

This course consists of a series of ten modules (many of which are sub-divided into smaller sections called units). It is organized into two main parts. The first part (modules 1-6) is mostly introductory. Its purpose is to provide the basic resources, knowledge, and technical information – including historical background and critical terminology – that you'll need to know in order to demonstrate a reasonable degree of philosophical literacy. Obviously, this doesn't mean that after completing the first five modules you'll be able to hire yourself out as an expert in moral philosophy or write learned treatises in metaphysics and theology. What it does mean is that (even if you once suffered from philosophy-anxiety or experienced acute phobic reactions at the mere mention of the P-word) you'll be able to analyze and explain several key philosophical theories and principles and apply them to some of today's more controversial and vexing social problems and ethical issues.

So the first part of the course is mainly introductory and preparatory – a training or preamble for the second part, which is mostly about practical application and demonstration. The second part (that is to say, modules 7-10), is mainly concerned with applying the theories, principles, arguments, and philosophical insights introduced in modules 1-6 to a range of contemporary social and political issues – from euthanasia and cloning to affirmative action and drug abuse.

It is assumed that no student in the course will have had much, if any, previous experience studying philosophy. Which means that many of you may find the first five course modules – where you will be introduced to strange words like deontology and epistemology and to potentially brain-cramping concepts like existentialism, neo-pragmatism and social constructionism – slow-going and perhaps even a little intimidating. Unfortunately, this is largely unavoidable, since even introductory philosophy involves material that is rugged and difficult. Nevertheless, the hope here is that the modules will present this material in a way that you will find lively, stimulating, and relatively painless.

Hopefully, you will find the second part of the course (modules 7-10) less technical and less of a grind. It should help that the emphasis in these modules shifts from theory to practice – that is, from acquiring a base of abstract knowledge and technical information to applying that knowledge to real-life moral issues. Presumably, you already have your own views on many of these issues (e.g., capital punishment, suicide) and, armed with new philosophical insights, should enjoy presenting those views in written form and debating them with fellow class members.

## **Course Modules**

Module One: Introduction to Moral Philosophy. Basic Concepts and Definitions.

Module Two: Moral Relativism and Moral Realism.

Module Three: Consequentialism. Egoism, Utilitarianism, and Pragmatism.

Module Four: Kant and Deontology.

Module Five: Virtue Ethics and Ethics of Care.

Module Six: Libertarianism and Contractarianism.

Module Seven: Capital Punishment; Drug Use and Sexual Behavior.

Module Eight: Euthanasia and Suicide.

Module Nine: Environmentalism and Animal Rights.

Module Ten: World Poverty; Business and Professional Ethics.

## Course Map

The following table provides a rough estimate of the time it will probably take you to complete each of the required learning activities, assignments, or forum posts. Obviously, it may take you a little less time if you're a fast worker; a bit longer if you tend to read or write at a slower pace. Overall, the total time you're likely to need to devote to your coursework is somewhere between 65 and 90 hours.

As you review the table and begin planning your own work schedule, please note the following schedule requirements and grading policies:

- As the table indicates, the total workload for the course is not evenly distributed over the ten modules. For example, it is estimated that you will need 11 hours to complete Module 3, only 4 or 5 hours to complete Modules 8 and 9. (Generally speaking, this imbalance occurs because the earlier modules introduce more difficult and demanding technical material and have longer reading assignments than do the later modules.)
- Despite the imbalance, you are expected to complete one module per week and to keep pace with the activities and assignments as arranged in the "Schedule" (see Column 1 below).
- If for some reason you find yourself falling behind or unable to complete an assignment on schedule you should **immediately** notify the instructor.
- Assignments that are one week late will receive partial credit.
- *Assignments that are more than two weeks late will receive a grade of zero.*

Schedule(hrs)	Module, Unit, Assignmen #, or Forum #	Estimated Completion Time
Week 1	Module 1	3 hours
(4-5 hours)	Assignment 1.1 (6 points)	1 hour
	Fourm Discussion 1.2 (2 points)	30 minutes
Week 2	Module 2, Unit 1	2 hours
(6 hours)	Assignment 2.1 (9 points)	2 hours
	Module 2, Unit 2	2 hours
	Assignment 2.2 (6 points)	2 hours
	Forum Discussion 2.3 (2 points)	1 hour
Week 3	Module 3, Unit 1	2 hours
(11 hours)	Assignment 3.1 (8 points)	1 hours
	Module 3, Unit 2	2 hours
	Assignment 3.2 (6 points)	1 hour
	Module 3, Unit 3	2 hours
	Assignment 3.3 (8 points)	2 hours
	Forum Discussion 3.4 (2 points)	30 minutes
Week 4	Module 4	2 hours
(5 hours)	Assignment 4.1 (8 points)	2 hours
	Forum Discussion 4.2 (2 points)	1 hour
Week 5	Module 5, Unit 1	2 hours

(7 hours)	Assignment 5.1 (6 points)	1 hour
	Module 5, Unit 2	2 hours
	Assignment 5.2 (6 points)	1 hour
	Forum Discussion 5.3 (2 points)	1 hour
Week 6	Module 6, Unit 1	2 hours
(8 hours)	Assignment 6.1 (6 points)	1 hour
	Module 6, Unit 2	2 hours
	Assignment 6.2 (5 points)	2 hours
	Forum Discussion 6.3 (2 points)	1 hour
Week 7	Module 7, Unit 1	2 hours
(8 hours)	Assignment 7.1 (10 points)	2 hours
	Module 7, Unit 2	1 hour
	Assignment 7.2 (10 points)	2 hours
	Forum Discussion 7.3 (2 points)	1 hour
Week 8	Module 8	2 hours
(4-5 hours)	Assignment 8.1 (10 points)	2 hours
	Forum Discussion 8.2 (2 points)	30 minutes
Week 9	Module 9	2 hours
(4-5 hours)	Assignment 9.1 (10 points)	2 hours
	Forum Discussion 9.2 (2 points)	30 minutes
Week 10	Module 10, Unit 1	2 hours
(6 hours)	Assignment 10.1 (10 Points)	2 hours
	Module 10, Unit 2	1 hour
	Forum 10.2 (3 points)	1 hour
		<b>Total: 65-90 hours</b>

To see course due dates, click on the Checklist link on the top navigation bar. This page contains module-specific checklists and due dates for the work due in the course.

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## Assessment

### Course Grading Criteria

Assignments will be graded mostly on content – which is to say, primarily on accuracy of information and depth and persuasiveness of argument. Please try to keep your answers clear and concise and, where appropriate, provide illustrative examples.

In addition to these criteria, assignments will also be evaluated on the basis of overall correctness (including spelling, punctuation, and grammar), clarity, succinctness, and force of expression, and grace and readability of style.

Note: Forum discussions 1 – 9 are worth 2 points each. Forum discussion 10.2 is worth 3 points.

Also: Please feel free to use the forum to raise your own questions and issues. You can earn up to 5 bonus points in the course by initiating or contributing to an original discussion thread or by contributing posts of exceptional quality.

## **Grading Policies and Practices**

To complete the course, you must complete each of the assignments as described in the course and submit them to your instructor by the assigned deadline. In addition, you must participate in the course discussion forum by responding to all instructor requests and by interacting with fellow classmates as necessary.

Points are deducted for late work.

## **General Assessment Criteria for All Writing Assignments**

All writing assignments are expected to conform to basic college-level standards of mechanics and presentation.

Consider visiting the Writing Center to discuss your assignments for this course or any others. You may schedule appointments (30 or 50 minutes) on an as-needed or weekly basis, scheduling up to 3 hours worth of appointments per week. Online services include 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.

Obviously, the tutors won't necessarily 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.

Schedule your appointments with enough time to think about and use the feedback you'll receive. To schedule a Face-to-Face, Written Feedback by Email, or Online Appointment, visit [www.depaul.edu/writing](http://www.depaul.edu/writing).

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## **Discussion Forums**

Discussion Forums are an important component of your online experience. This course contains discussion forums related to the topics you are studying each week. For requirements on your participation in the Discussion Forums, please see "Course Expectations" in the syllabus.

A Course Q & A discussion forum has also been established to manage necessary, ongoing social and administrative activities. This is where the management and administrative tasks of the course are conducted, and where you can ask 'process' questions and receive answers throughout the course. Please feel free to answer any question if you feel you know the answer; this sharing of information is valuable to other students.

## **Assessment Criteria for Online Discussion Participation**

Your participation in online discussions is a course requirement and an integral part of your online learning experience. However, to reduce performance pressure and to promote an active, yet comfortable discussion environment, your posts will not be assessed with the same rigor and in the same way as your weekly assignments. Instead, you will earn two points for each weekly conference to which you make a substantive contribution. In addition, you can earn bonus points (up to five points for the

term) for introducing or contributing to new, unassigned topics or by furnishing posts that are judged to be of particularly high quality. In general, exemplary posts will accomplish at least one of the following:

1. Provide new ideas or links to useful resources.
2. Raise challenging or pertinent questions.
3. Provide supporting arguments or explanations for a view.
4. Reflect on and re-evaluate an important idea relating to the discussion topic or course module.
5. Offer a polite critique, challenging, dissenting from, or expanding on the ideas of others.
6. Provide helpful interpretations, definitions, and meanings.
7. Succinctly summarize previous contributions and offer a new insight or raise a new question.

### **Online Participation Guidelines**

A significant part of your online learning experience involves learning *with* and *from* your classmates and the facilitator in the online discussions and group assignments.

Active participation means sharing information and resources, posting your own ideas, and critiquing or expanding on the ideas of others in a civil and collegial fashion. This discussion is informal in the sense that it is meant to encourage lively and interesting discussion. You are expected to follow accepted standards of English spelling, grammar and usage, although you will not be assessed for these particular characteristics when you are participating in web discussions.

These discussions are for you to exchange your reflections with your classmates and facilitator about what you are learning. The discussions will be organized into forums around the particular topic you are studying each week.

For each Discussion Forum, you are required to make at least one original contribution to each assigned topic.

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## **Policies**

### **Academic Integrity**

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://sr.depaul.edu/catalog/catalogfiles/Current/Undergraduate%20Student%20Handbook/index.html> for further details.

## Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is a major form of academic dishonesty involving the presentation of the work of another as one's own. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to the following:

- 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 part, without proper acknowledgement that it is someone else's.
- Copying of any source in whole or part with only minor changes in wording or syntax, even with acknowledgement.
- Submitting as one's own work a report, examination paper, computer file, lab report or other assignment that has been prepared by someone else. This includes research papers purchased from any other person or agency.
- Resubmitting one's own previous work from a different course or college, without permission from the current instructor.
- The paraphrasing of another's work or ideas without proper acknowledgement.

Plagiarism, like other forms of academic dishonesty, is always a serious matter. If a instructor finds that a student has plagiarized, the appropriate penalty is at the instructor's discretion.

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## For Students Who Need Accommodations Based on the Impact of a Disability

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussion will remain confidential. To ensure that you receive the most reasonable accommodation based on your needs, contact your instructor as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first week or two of the course). Please be sure to contact the following office for support and additional services:

Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD)  
#370, Student Center, LPC, 773.325.1677

## Description of Pass/Fail Grading Options

Students have the option of taking all SNL undergraduate courses as Pass/Fail even if a class is initially structured for a letter grade assessment. In these cases a Pass is awarded when competence is demonstrated at a level that would otherwise earn a grade of C- or higher.

In deciding to select Pass/Fail grading students should be aware that competencies assessed in a course as Pass will earn credit hours toward degree completion but *will not* be included in computing grade point averages. Attempted competence demonstration assessed within a class as Fail will not only be recorded as credit hours attempted but *will* also be included in computing a student's grade point average.

For SNL students, competencies awarded for Independent Learning Pursuits and in the Lifelong Learning Domain do not count toward the university's specification that only twenty credit hours may be earned through the Pass/Fail assessment option.

**Please note:** *There are four SNL courses within the BA curriculum that are always assessed on a Pass/Fail basis: Learning Assessment Seminar (course number LL 102; competence L-1), Foundations of Adult Learning (course number LL 250; competences*

L-2 and L-3), *Advanced Project* (course number FA 303; competences F-11 and F-12) and *Summit Seminar* (course number LL 390; competence L-12). These classes may not be taken for a letter grade assessment. Therefore, work that might otherwise be assessed at grades A through C- will earn a Pass in these classes.

There are an additional four SNL courses within the Lifelong Learning Area of the BA curriculum for which instructors regularly use a Pass/Fail grading system which may, instead, be taken for a letter grade assessment if this is a student's preference. These classes are: *Academic Writing for Adults* (course number LL 150; competence L-4), *Critical Thinking* (course number LL 155; competence L-5), *Research Seminar* (course number LL 300; competences L-8 and L-9) and *Externship* (course number LL 302; competences L-10 and L-11). In addition, SNL's undergraduate *Writing Workshop* (course number LL 140; competence H-3-J) regularly uses Pass/Fail although students may request a letter grade assessment. In these instances SNL offers undergraduate students the opportunity to request a letter grade assessment from their instructor. Students who need a letter grade for tuition reimbursement may wish to consider this option, as well as those who wish to raise their GPA. Students planning to attend graduate school may also prefer letter grades to Pass/Fail assessments.

If a student wishes to switch the method of assessment, either to or from the Pass/Fail option, this must be requested from the instructor in writing during the first two weeks of the quarter. The assessment style may not be changed after this period, with no exceptions.

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### **Protection of Human Subjects**

For more information see: <http://research.depaul.edu/>

Demonstrating the acquisition of competencies in this course can involve "interactions"—interviewing and or observing other people—discussing those interviews or observations with other class members and writing them up in one or more final report(s). As such, these activities qualify as "research" with "human subjects" and are subject to University and Federal guidelines. Because it takes place in the context of this course, your research is exempt from approval by the School for New Learning's Local Review Board only under the following conditions:

- The information you collect is EXCLUSIVELY for the purpose of classroom discussion and will NOT be used after the term is over. If there is any possibility that you will EVER use it in further research or for publication, you must obtain approval from the Local Review Board before you begin.
- You assess and ensure that no "harm"—physical, mental, or social—does or could result from either your interviews and/or observations or your discussion and/or reports.
- The privacy and confidentiality of those that you interview or observe must be protected. Unless you receive specific permission, in writing, from the person(s) you interview or observe, please change their names, and make sure that their identity cannot be readily ascertained from the information you provide.
- If you want to use real names and relationships, they must sign an "informed consent" document. For information on creating an "informed consent document" see, for example, <http://www.research.umn.edu/consent>

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## **Course Expectations**

### **Time Management and Attendance**

SNL's online courses are not self-paced and require a regular time commitment EACH week throughout the quarter.

You are required to log in to your course at least four times a week so that you can participate in the ongoing course discussions.

Online courses are no less time consuming than "face to face" courses. You will have to dedicate some time every day or at least every second day to your studies. A typical four credit hour "face to face" course at SNL involves three hours of classroom meeting per week, plus at least three to six hours of study and homework per week.

This course will require at least the same time commitment, but your learning activities will be spread out through the week. If you have any problems with your technology, or if you need to improve your reading or writing skills, it may take even longer.

The instructor should be notified if your life events do not allow you to participate in the course and the online discussions for more than one week. This is particularly important when there are group discussions or you are working as part of a team.

If you find yourself getting behind, please contact the instructor immediately.

### **Your Instructor's Role**

Your instructor's role in this course is that of a discussion facilitator and learning advisor. It is not their responsibility to make sure you log in regularly and submit your assignments. As instructor, s/he will read all postings to the general discussion forums on a daily basis but may not choose to respond to each posting. You will receive feedback to assignments.

The instructor may choose to designate "office hours" when s/he will be online and available and will immediately respond to questions. Depending on the instructor, this response may be by e-mail, instant messenger or telephone. Otherwise, you will generally receive a response to emailed or posted queries within 48 hours.

### **Your Role as a Student**

As an online student, you will be taking a proactive approach to your learning. As the course instructor's role is that of a learning guide, your role is that of the leader in your own learning.

You will be managing your own time so that you can complete the readings, activities and assignments for the course, and you will also be expected to take a more active role in peer learning.

### **Credits**

This course was designed and produced by Dr. David Simpson and staff at SNL Online of the School for New Learning of DePaul University.

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