

Critical Thinking and Ethics- BLENDED

PHI 2604

Miami Dade College, Wolfson Campus

3 Credits

Spring 2011 (2010-2)

607228 (Tuesday 8:25 AM- 9:40 AM, Room 3222)

607231 (Tuesday 12:40 PM- 1:55 PM, Room 3328)

607229 (Thursday 8:25 AM- 9:40 AM, Room 3222)

607230 (Thursday 12:40 PM- 1:55 PM, Room 3223)

Instructor: Kristin Borgwald, M.A.
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Angel Learning: <http://mycourses.mdc.edu>
Office Hours: Monday 12:00PM-2:10PM
Tuesday and Thursday 7:55AM-8:25AM, 11:15AM-12:40PM
Wednesday 12:00PM-4:00PM

This is BLENDED course, meaning that we meet one day per week in lecture, and one day per week online. As a result, you will need to spend approximately 3-6 hours weekly on the course in Angel Learning to complete required weekly assignments, in addition to regular course readings and assignments. You may use computers for free through the campus library and computer courtyards. Please note that lack of access to a computer, the internet, etc. will not constitute an excuse for failure to complete required work by deadlines.

Text:

The texts for this class are:

Curtler, Hugh Mercer. Ethical Argument, Second Edition. Oxford University Press, 2004.

May, Larry, Shari Collins-Chobanian and Kai Wong, eds. Applied Ethics: A Multicultural Approach, Fourth Edition. Prentice-Hall, 2006.

Supplementary materials will be available on the MDC Angel Learning site.
<https://mycourses.mdc.edu>

Course Description:

This is a foundation course in philosophy. Students will learn critical thinking skills and will study major theories of ethics. Students will use methods of effective reasoning to reflect critically upon their values, ethical standards, and the ethical permissibility of

topics such as hunger and poverty, overpopulation, reproductive rights, racism, environmental ethics, family values, and euthanasia.

Prerequisites: ENC 1101

3 Credits

Course Competencies:

Competency 1: The student will demonstrate an understanding of the principles of critical thinking by:

1. Defining key vocabulary terms relating to critical thinking.
2. Identifying the structure of arguments.
3. Applying various logical techniques to evaluate ethical issues such as those found in professional ethics, medical ethics, or environmental ethics.
4. Identifying various examples of logical fallacies.

Competency 2: The student will demonstrate an understanding of ethics by:

1. Defining key vocabulary terms relating to ethics.
2. Identifying and explaining issues in meta-ethics such as moral realism, relativism or skepticism.
3. Identifying and explaining issues in normative ethics such as Kantianism, utilitarianism, or hedonism.
4. Identifying and explaining issues in applied ethics such as the various positions on such as euthanasia, animal rights, and environmental ethics.
5. Describing different theoretical frameworks for resolving ethical dilemmas.

Competency 3: The student will apply critical thinking to the study of ethics by:

1. Examining and evaluating arguments for and against various ethical issues that arise in society, such as those found in professional ethics, medical ethics, or environmental ethics.
2. Examining and evaluating the arguments for and against the positions and theories discussed.
3. Applying personal values and ethical standards to the issues discussed and defending these views with philosophical arguments.

Learning Outcomes:

Miami Dade College prides itself on its variety of programs and degrees offered, as well as the diversity of its student population. While each student has his/her own specific major and career interests, the College faculty has identified 10 Learning Outcomes that reflect skills and knowledge that allow students not only to succeed in their chosen field, but also to enable them to be lifelong learners.

These skills are attained through course completion and participation in co-curricular learning experiences offered at the College. To learn more about the Learning Outcomes, visit: <http://www.mdc.edu/learningoutcomes/>

Requirements and Grading:

Exam 1:	25%
Exam 2:	25%
Exam 3:	25%
Online Writing Assignments:	25%

The usual grading scale will apply (0-59% F, 60-62% D-, 63-66% D, 67-69% D+, 70-72% C-, 73-76% C, 77-79% C+, 80-82% B-, 83-86% B, 87-89% B+, 90-92% A-, 93-100% A). There will be no curve.

- 1.** By Sunday of week 1 you must complete (online) the course agreement assignment in the Angel Learning Week 1 folder
- 2.** Reading assignments must be completed before coming to class. Class lecture, small and large group discussion, and online writing assignments will always be based on the readings.
- 3.** You will complete 15 online writing assignments throughout the semester, one per week, each worth 10 points. I drop your two lowest scores so that if you miss only two assignments it will not affect your grade.
- 4.** The exams will be taken in-class and will require short essay answers and/or multiple choice questions. There will be opportunity to review in-class and/or online before each exam.
- 5.** I expect active class participation, and this does not mean constant talking. Careful listening and thoughtful responsiveness to the comments of others is an important part of participation. Eye-rolling, name-calling, etc. are not acceptable in this classroom. All challenges to opinions and beliefs must be intellectually grounded and appropriately spoken.

Email Policy:

When you email me, you **MUST** email me from your MIAMI DADE COLLEGE email account. To protect student privacy and prevent fraud, I do not respond to emails from hotmail, yahoo, gmail, etc. Each email should include: a detailed and proper subject in the email, your full name (as registered in the course), the reference number for the class you are in (this is really important), a detailed and coherent explanation of the problem you are having (use proper and professional English).

Attendance:

Attendance is extremely important in this course and you are expected to attend every class. Arrive to class on time. Excessive absences may result in being dropped from the course, and even minimal absences are likely to be reflected in your grade. **If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed. If you want to discuss your absence and missed lecture notes, make an appointment or see me during office hours. Do not send me an email asking, “did we do anything important?”**

Late Assignments:

You must be present in class in order to complete both in-class writing assignments and all exams. Missed in-class assignments cannot be made-up. Missed exams can only be taken within one week of the exam when an official, documented excuse of unpredictable or protracted conditions of duress is presented. You must provide me with documentation of the absence as a **HARD COPY**. That means you must bring me a copy, that I can keep and file, of the documentation (i.e., doctor’s note, etc.) with your full name and reference number for your section written on the copy. A photocopy of the original is completely acceptable, as is the original itself. If possible, email me to let me know what’s going on, but that **WILL NOT** count as documentation.

Incompletes:

Incompletes are only granted in **extreme** cases, when documentation of protracted conditions of duress is provided.

Academic Integrity:

Lying, cheating, plagiarism, or any form of academic dishonesty in anything related to this course (attendance, writing assignments, exams) will be grounds for institutional punishment in accordance with the Student Rights and Responsibilities Manual.

Access:

Students requiring special services to aid them in this course need to self-identify to the Access office, and have the Access office send me the requisite paperwork within the first three weeks of the semester. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Access office will make all arrangements necessary, but you **must** self-identify and specifically request that the Access department contact me. For more information, see the Student Rights and Responsibilities manual.

EA/EO:

MDC is an Equal Access/Equal Opportunity campus. As explained in the Student Rights and Responsibilities manual, MDC does not discriminate on the basis of gender, religion, race, ethnicity, disability, or national origin.

Mobile Devices: All mobile devices MUST BE TURNED OFF during class. If you use your mobile phone, iPod, etc. in class, be aware that you may be subjecting the entire class to additional in-class writing assignments for the week.

SCHEDULE:

This schedule is tentative and subject to change. **Readings must be completed prior to the lecture. Be prepared with comments, specific questions, and requests for clarification.**

- Week 1** Introduction
- Week 2** Curtler, "Introduction to the Student," and pp. 1-27
Rachels, "Morality is not Relative" (online)
- Week 3** Curtler, pp. 60-80
Curtler, pp. 81-89
- Week 4** Curtler, pp. 89-98
- Week 5** Curtler, pp. 98-113
Review for Exam
- Week 6** **Exam 1**
Mill, "Utilitarianism," pp. 46-54
- Week 7** O'Neill, "A Simplified Account of Kant's Ethics," pp.45-50
Hursthouse, "On Virtue Ethics," pp. 51-58
Gilligan, "Images of a Relationship," pp. 66-75
- Week 8** Hardin, "Carrying Capacity as an Ethical Concept," pp. 232-239
Singer, "Famine, Affluence, and Morality," pp. 254-262
Battin, "Sex & Consequences: World Population Growth vs. Reproductive Rights," pp. 240-253
- Week 9** Blankenhorn, "The Unnecessary Father," pp. 380-388
Anderson, "Is Equality Tearing Families Apart?" pp. 389-398
Review for Exam
- Week 10** **Exam 2**
- Week 11** Leopold, "The Land Ethic," pp. 165-175
Baxter, "A 'Good' Environment: Just One of the Set of Human Objectives," pp. 186-190
Collins-Chobanian, "Environmental Racism, American Indians, and Monitored Retrievable Storage Sites for Radioactive Waste," pp. 208-215

- Week 12** McIntosh, "White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences Through Work in Women's Studies," pp. 449-457
Cuadraz, "Stories of Access and 'Luck': Chicana/os, Higher Education, and the Politics of Incorporation," pp. 473-484
Film, "The Color of Fear"
- Week 13** Noonan, Jr., "An Almost Absolute Value in History," pp. 510-515
Marquis, "Why Abortion is Immoral," pp. 525-531
Steinbock, "Why Most Abortions Are Not Wrong" (online)
- Week 14** LaFleur, "Contestation and Consensus: The Morality of Abortion in Japan," pp. 560-567
Film, "A Death of One's Own," Bill Moyers
- Week 15** Film (con't)
Potts, "Objections to the Institutionalization of Euthanasia," pp. 587-591
Battin, "Euthanasia: The Way We Do It, the Way they Do It," pp. 592-607
- Week 16** **Exam 3**