



**UNIVERSITY OF  
NORTHWESTERN**  
ST. PAUL

OFFICE OF DUAL ENROLLMENT

# **PHI2016 Ethics**

**FALL 2021**

**SYLLABUS**

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# PHI2016 Ethics

University of Northwestern – St. Paul

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

A comparative introduction to normative social theory. An examination and critique of alternative grounds for claiming that an action, attitude, social rule, or social institution is morally right or wrong.

**Credits: 4**

**Prerequisites:** None

## INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Please see “Contacting the Instructor” on the course site.

## COURSE OUTCOMES

At the end of this course, a successful student will be able to

- CO-1. Identify the key terms and people associated with the various theoretical approaches to ethics
- CO-2. Assess the strengths and weaknesses of leading ethical theories
- CO-3. Relate moral principles to underlying metaphysical and epistemological considerations
- CO-4. Explain how applied ethical decisions connect to underlying moral principles
- CO-5. Construct a biblically-informed response to a contemporary ethical topic

## MATERIALS

### Required Textbooks and Materials

McBrayer, Justin and Peter Markie. *Introducing Ethics: A Critical Thinking Approach with Readings*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. 2014.

### Provided by Student

For this course, students will need access to Microsoft Office (available at no cost to students through the University of Northwestern-St. Paul), a PDF reader, and a standard internet browser. Please refer to the Tech Requirements found in the Technology Help section at the top of the course site for the full requirements.

## GRADING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### Course Grade Explanation

Assignments	Grade Weight
Weekly Quizzes	15
Online Discussions (2 types most weeks)	10
Unit Tests (3 x 10% each)	30
Summary Papers (3)	15
Research Papers (2)	20

### Grading Scale Percentages

A	≥ 93	B	≥ 83	C	≥ 73	D	≥ 63
A-	≥ 90	B-	≥ 80	C-	≥ 70	D-	≥ 60
B+	≥ 87	C+	≥ 77	D+	≥ 67	F	< 60

### Late Work

All assignments are due as described in the course syllabus and the course site. Students are responsible for meeting assignment deadlines. Late assignments will be automatically deducted one letter grade. The assignments will drop an additional grade per day it is late, up to a 50% deduction in grade; late assignments will not be accepted for a grade beyond one week past the original deadline. Forum discussion activities must be completed on time to earn points. Late forum posts will earn zero points. Students should contact the instructor via e-mail if an extenuating circumstance exists.

### Feedback Expectations

Students should expect feedback for their submitted assignments within 5 days of the assignment due date or the time of their submission, whichever is later.

## INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES AND SERVICES

### Guidelines and Information

Students are responsible for all content of the DE Student Handbook. The most recent version of the DE Student Handbook is located on [confluence.unwsp.edu](http://confluence.unwsp.edu) and includes the following policies and procedures:

- Deadlines for Dropping or Withdrawing
- Student/instructor Communication
- Appeals, Exceptions, Disciplinary Process, & Grievances
- Assignments (late work and plagiarism)
- Examinations
- Grading System

Instructors may have course-related expectations that further detail the policies and procedures outlined in the DE Student Handbook. Any such expectations must be provided to students in writing (e.g., handout, course site posting) prior to or at the beginning of the class.

Traditional undergraduate students enrolled in DE courses are subject to the traditional undergraduate student handbook for all non-course-specific policies and procedures.

### Academic Integrity

Plagiarism is theft—steal of someone else's words or ideas. It is claiming another's work as one's own. This would also include the following:

- Using the words or work of a former or current student in this class
- Recycling previously submitted assignments from a previous course attempt

- Using outside literature support sites such as, but not limited to, SparkNotes, Enotes or Schmoop that provide literary analysis of the texts we read throughout the semester

Students found plagiarizing are subject to discipline. The standard response ranges from loss of credit for the plagiarized assignment to earning an immediate “F” for the course to being placed on disciplinary probation. We should be committed to conducting ourselves with integrity in all things. Please refer to the DE Student Handbook for more detailed information about UNW’s honesty and integrity policies.

In every course, students are required to view the Understanding Plagiarism video and complete the Understanding Plagiarism Quiz prior to completing any of the course content. These items are part of the course orientation.

## Academic Achievement

UNW students requesting academic accommodations in association with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) are directed to notify [Disability Services](#) to begin the application process. Academic Achievement also provides the following: [Writing and Subject Tutoring](#), advocating, transitional skill building, [Academic Coaching](#) (organization, time management, test taking, etc.).

Contact Academic Achievement for more information: [AcademicAchievement@unwsp.edu](mailto:AcademicAchievement@unwsp.edu) • 651-628-3316 • N4012 (Revised 06/20)

## Support Services

Links to support services are available found in the Student Services section at the top of the course site.

## COURSE POLICIES AND INFORMATION

### Email and Announcements

Students are responsible to regularly check their Northwestern student email and the announcements in the course site in order to receive updates and information.

### Attendance

Students are expected to participate in all course activities. Students must contact the faculty member in advance or as soon as possible if unable to participate in all or part of the course activities for a given week because of a medical (which includes having to quarantine or isolate due to COVID-19 exposure or confirmed illness), family, or work-related emergency. Students should refer to their course syllabus and/or faculty member for specific requirements. Students who do not participate in course activities and fail to withdraw from the course will receive a failing “F” grade.

### Submission Standards

All written assignments should adhere to the following DE guidelines. Documents should be in the following format **unless directed differently by the syllabus or course instructor**:

- Submitted on the course site in Microsoft Word document format (.doc or .docx)
- Set in a traditional typeface 12-point font
- Double-spaced (unless the syllabus instructs otherwise)
- Set with one-inch margins
- Formatted in APA style for in-text citations and reference page (LIT1100 may ask for MLA documentation style)

- Labeled and submitted with the following information (APA papers require this information on a cover sheet, as detailed in A Pocket Style Manual): Student Name, Course Code and Title, Instructor Name, and Date.

## Critical Response to Alternate Viewpoints

When students are reading or viewing course materials, they may encounter viewpoints, words, or images that their instructors would not use or endorse. Students should know that materials are chosen for their value in learning to read, write, and view critically, not because the materials are necessarily Christian.

## ASSIGNMENTS

See the course site for complete details on the assignments.

### Reading

You are required to complete weekly reading assignments from your texts and other resources. The purpose of the reading is to introduce you to the philosophical discipline of ethics. The readings also form the basis of core concepts and terminology that are vital for successful participation in the online discussions, and other assignments. Your comprehension of the reading will be assessed in your weekly forum posts and larger writing assignments.

If you have not previously taken a philosophy course, you will most likely find some of the reading assignments challenging. You are, therefore, encouraged to read slowly and carefully, take good notes, highlight important information, and make use of your online community to post and discuss any questions or difficulties that arise while engaging the reading, videos, or other sources of ideas.

### Online Discussions

**Purpose:** Online discussions are a way to process your learning along with a community of learners. By creating your own comments and observations you will dig deeper into the materials and sharpen your own views. You will also learn from the perspectives of others as they do the same.

**Instructions:** There are two varieties of discussion posts related to two varieties of forums.

1. For “original discussion” forums, compose and share a **100-word** comment with your classmates. The original discussions need to provide an analysis and feedback on the reading material, raising questions, concerns, or original observations. Analysis of the content of the week is the central purpose of these forums.
  - a. Each week (except when there is a unit test) you will submit an original discussion post. Original discussion posts are due by **Wednesday** at 11:59 p.m. CT. Use the rest of the week to read and respond to the posts of your classmates.
2. For “reading discussion” forums, in a single post, summarize three of the lesson’s readings. Use **one to two sentences** for each a brief summary of the main point of the reading; these do not require analysis, but only summarization. Make a concerted effort to fairly represent the nuances and assumptions of the author’s arguments and positions. Three such posts are expected per week, and they must each address a different reading.
  - a. Each week (**including** when there is a unit test) you will submit three reading discussion posts by Friday at 11:59 p.m. CT.

**Criteria for Grading:** Grades are based on the following considerations and meeting the minimum length requirement. Failure to meet the minimum requirements will result in proportional loss of credit.

- 10** The submission communicates unique insight. The student demonstrates a strong understanding of the concepts being discussed. The submission inspires ongoing conversation and/or contributes new ideas related to the topic. No mechanical (e.g., grammar, syntax, spelling) errors.
- 8-9** The submission communicates strong understanding of concepts, but does not contribute new ideas. Has the potential to inspire further dialogue. No more than one mechanical error.
- 6-7** The submission communicates basic understanding, demonstrates some thought about the content. Fulfilled minimal requirements. Contained no more than two mechanical errors.
- 4-5** Not unique or thorough. The submission communicates little understanding or thought about content. Contained no more than three mechanical errors.
- 1-3** Little or no understanding; no effort was made in contribution. Didn't post original comments or contained no more than four mechanical errors.
- 0** Five or more mechanical errors constitute automatic failure of the post.

## Quizzes

**Purpose:** The quizzes serve as weekly checks on comprehension of the material and provide preparation for the unit tests.

**Instructions:** Quizzes need to be completed on the course site by 11:59 p.m. CT on Friday. Quizzes consist of 10 multiple-choice questions. Quizzes are open book but have a 15-minute time limit. You may attempt each quiz up to five times, but your overall score for each quiz will be the average for all attempts. Attempts after the first are optional, not required. On each new attempt, including the first, ten questions are randomly selected from a much larger pool of possible questions, so be aware that you will see many new questions on subsequent attempts. Therefore, you are strongly encouraged to become familiar and confident with the lesson's concepts and ideas before your first attempt.

**Criteria for Grading:** Each correct answer receives one point. There are 10 points possible on each quiz.

## Unit Tests

**Purpose:** The unit tests provide an opportunity for you to demonstrate your mastery of the material by answering a series of 30 multiple choice questions and one essay question.

**Instructions:** As with the quizzes, exams need to be completed on the course site by 11:59 p.m. CT on Friday. Unlike quizzes, only one attempt is permitted per test. Tests are open-book, but must be completed within a 60-minute time limit.

**Criteria for Grading:** The essay question is worth ten points and each multiple-choice question is worth one point. Full credit for the essay question is based on the following: Student demonstrates mastery of the material, using specific ideas, citing specific authors, connecting ideas beyond the readings, using proper grammar and punctuation, and in general showing that they have fully understood and processed the content being addressed. Grade will be reduced in proportion to not fully meeting these criteria.

## Summary Papers

**Purpose:** The purpose of the summary papers is to challenge you to connect and integrate the content throughout the units and lessons of the course. This requires synthesizing the ideas from many different authors and identifying and elaborating deep connections between different topics within one overarching theme.

**Instructions:** The two-page Summary Papers challenge you to integrate the readings and topics of each unit. The idea is not simply to list the readings and provide individual summaries of them (as in the reading discussion posts), but rather to build a comprehensive overview of the unit that holistically connects the ideas of each reading. It is also not argumentative – this is not the place to critique or analyze, but only to review, connect, and highlight major themes.

Each Summary Paper is to be **2 full pages** in length, double-spaced with 1" margins and 12 point Times New Roman font. For these Summary Papers, no direct quotations are allowed, and no sources need to be cited. These papers should be an overview of the entire unit, not a specific summary of any article. Nevertheless, each of the topics covered in the unit should be integrated into the summary.

**Criteria for Grading:** Full credit will be received from providing a complete and accurate summary of the unit that covers all the major themes addressed, and connects them together into a whole.

- 9-10** The submission communicates mastery of the material of the unit. The student demonstrates a strong understanding of the concepts being discussed. The submission successfully connects all the major ideas of the unit into a cohesive summary. Contains no mechanical (e.g., grammar, syntax, spelling) errors.
- 7-8** The submission communicates good understanding of concepts, but does not show mastery. Includes most of the major ideas of the unit. Contains no more than one mechanical error.
- 5-6** The submission communicates basic understanding, demonstrates some thought about the content. Fulfilled minimal requirements. Contains no more than two mechanical errors.
- 3-4** Insufficiently thorough. The submission communicates little understanding or thought about content. Contains no more than three mechanical errors.
- 1-2** Little or no understanding; no significant effort was made in paper. May include more than three mechanical errors.

## Research Papers

**Purpose:** The purpose of the research papers is to pursue a question much further than it was covered in the course materials, with the aid of outside research.

**Instructions:** For each paper, select a topic of interest to you from the related unit, and frame a question for yourself that you will seek to answer in your paper. Then, in a **three-page essay**, write your response to the question by referring to and expounding on the readings and by consulting outside scholarly materials.

For each Research Paper, you should include (and properly cite using the prescribed methods) **at least 2 outside sources** in addition to the textbook, and the outside sources should be from academic peer-reviewed journals or books (use the Philosopher's Index on the library website to locate acceptable sources).

In answering the question you select, be sure to state and argue for your position. Do not simply cover some of the answers other people have given; you must argue for your own position as well. In addition to proper citation using the prescribed methods, grammar, spelling, punctuation and other mechanics are part of the grade, so proofread carefully.

Each paper should consist of four parts:

1. The question you intend to answer
2. A statement of and argument for the position you adopt
3. Consideration of what you take to be the best objection to your position
4. A response to that objection.

**Criteria for Grading:** An excellent (A-range) paper will

1. **Thoroughly address** the key aspects of the question
2. **Make thoughtful reference** to other research in support of the position.
3. Be **devoid of spelling and grammatical errors**
4. Be written in a **clear, concise, structured** manner.

Full credit will be based on depth of analysis, care in presenting organized arguments, quality of research materials used, and demonstrated mastery of the course concepts and material.

## Reflection Journal

**Purpose:** The journal is a way for students to reflect on what they are studying and connect it to their own everyday lives, experiences, and interests.

**Instructions:** Each week, choose one “Discussion Question” from the end of one of the readings assigned for that week (your choice). In a Word document, thoughtfully answer the question and connect it to your own life, and your own ethical decision making. Try to reflect on how the topic connects to the things you do or issues you face in your authentic lived experience. The entries should all be kept in one single file with each week’s entry dated.

Entries should be around **100–150 words each**. Collect these journals each week. You will submit them to the course site in groups of five journals at three separate times in the course. Combine all five journals in a single file for uploading.

**Criteria for Grading:** Full credit will be received for completing an entry each week and meeting length requirements.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

### Format

Everything needed to successfully complete this course in fifteen weeks is explained on the course site. Each assignment has been designed to work together during each week. When studying, be sure to follow the suggested format explained for each lesson.

For this course, students will receive access to each week’s work as the semester progresses. There will be due dates during the week, but most weekly assignments will be due by 11:59 p.m. on Friday. Please refer to the schedule for the due dates of assignments.

Generally, for college-level work, students should expect to have an average of 9.5 hours of homework per week.

The last official class day in Week 15 varies from semester to semester. Please refer to the Semester Calendar found in the Academic Information section at the top of the course site for the actual last day of class. All course work must be completed and submitted by that day.



## Due Dates

All written assignments (outlined below) are to be submitted on the course site by 11:59 p.m. CT on Fridays at the end of each week in which they are assigned, unless otherwise noted.

For any questions regarding these assignments, contact the instructor.

## Orientation

- Read the Getting Started Page
- Participate in the Introductions Forum
- View and Complete Understanding Plagiarism Presentation and Quiz
- Complete Student Responsibilities Exercise

## INTRODUCTION: PHILOSOPHICAL METHODOLOGY

### Week 1—What is Philosophy?

- Read *Introducing Ethics (IE)*, Chapters 1–5
- View presentation
- Participate in Week 1 Discussions (Original Discussion due by Wednesday at 11:59 p.m. CT)
- Complete Week 1 Quiz
- Complete Reflection Journal 1

## UNIT 1: FOUNDATIONS OF ETHICS

### Week 2—Moral Facts

- Read *IE*, Chapter 6
- View presentation
- Participate in Week 2 Discussions (Original Discussion due by Wednesday at 11:59 p.m. CT)
- Complete Week 2 Quiz
- Complete Reflection Journal 2

### Week 3—Religion and Morality

- Read *IE*, Chapter 7
- View presentations
- Participate in Week 3 Discussions (Original Discussion due by Wednesday at 11:59 p.m. CT)
- Complete Week 3 Quiz
- Complete Reflection Journal 3

### Week 4—Freedom and Morality

- Read *IE*, Chapter 8
- View presentation
- Participate in Week 4 Discussions (Original Discussion due by Wednesday at 11:59 p.m. CT)
- Complete Week 4 Quiz
- Submit Summary Paper 1
- Complete Reflection Journal 4

### Week 5—Why Be Moral?

- Read *IE*, Chapter 9

- Participate in Week 5 Reading Discussion (no Original Discussion this week)
- Complete Unit 1 Test
- Complete Reflection Journal 5
- Submit Reflection Journals 1–5 (Compiled as a single file)

## **UNIT 2: NORMATIVE ETHICS**

### **Week 6—Value and the Good Life**

- Read *IE*, Chapter 10
- View presentation
- Participate in Week 6 Discussions (Original Discussion due by Wednesday at 11:59 p.m. CT)
- Complete Week 6 Quiz
- Complete Reflection Journal 6

### **Week 7—Consequentialism**

- Read *IE*, Chapter 11
- View presentation
- Participate in Week 7 Discussions (Original Discussion due by Wednesday at 11:59 p.m. CT)
- Complete Week 7 Quiz
- Submit Summary Paper 2
- Complete Reflection Journal 7

### **Week 8—Nonconsequentialism**

- Read *IE*, Chapter 12
- View presentation
- Participate in Week 8 Discussions (Original Discussion due by Wednesday at 11:59 p.m. CT)
- Complete Week 8 Quiz
- Complete Reflection Journal 8

### **Week 9—Virtue and Care Ethics**

- Read *IE*, Chapter 13
- View presentation
- Participate in Week 9 Discussions (Original Discussion due by Wednesday at 11:59 p.m. CT)
- Complete Week 9 Quiz
- Submit Research Paper 1
- Complete Reflection Journal 9

### **Week 10—The Moral Community**

- Read *IE*, Chapter 14
- Participate in Week 10 Reading Discussion (no Original Discussion this week)
- Complete Unit 2 Test
- Complete Reflection Journal 10
- Submit Reflection Journals 6–10

## **UNIT 3: ETHICS AND SOCIAL ISSUES**

### **Week 11—Abortion**

- Read *IE*, Chapter 15

- View presentation
- Participate in Week 11 Discussions (Original Discussion due by Wednesday at 11:59 p.m. CT)
- Complete Week 11 Quiz
- Complete Reflection Journal 11

## **Week 12—The Environment and Sustainability**

- Read *IE*, Chapter 16
- View presentation
- Participate in Week 12 Discussions (Original Discussion due by Wednesday at 11:59 p.m. CT)
- Complete Week 12 Quiz
- Submit Summary Paper 3
- Complete Reflection Journal 12

## **Week 13—Terrorism**

- Read *IE*, Chapter 18
- View presentation
- Participate in Week 13 Discussions (Original Discussion due by Wednesday at 11:59 p.m. CT)
- Complete Week 13 Quiz
- Complete Reflection Journal 13

## **Week 14—Euthanasia**

- Read *IE*, Chapter 20
- View presentation
- Participate in Week 14 Reading Discussion (no Original Discussion this week)
- Complete Unit 3 Test
- Complete Reflection Journal 14

## **Week 15—Capital Punishment and Course Wrap-up**

*The final week varies in length based on the semester. Please refer to the Semester Calendars found in the Academic Information section at the top of the course site for details.*

- Read *IE*, Chapter 21
- View presentation
- Submit Research Paper 2
- Complete Reflection Journal 15
- Submit Reflection Journals 11–15
- Participate in Week 15 Discussion: Self-Assessment and Reflection