100-21 Ethics as an Introduction to Philosophy

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INSTRUCTOR/LECTURER:
Stephen A. Wilson

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The easiest and quickest way to contact me is via e-mail. Please put “PHIL-100.21”, or “Intro Philosophy” in the Subject area.

Phone: No phone.

In-box: TBD

Office Hours: TBD

TEXT:

COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES:
As long as there have been human beings, justice has been a question—its nature, its forms, and its very possibility. By studying classic works of philosophy, especially Plato’s Republic, you will examine different views on justice and human goodness, tracing them back to the principles on which they depend, and reflect critically on these principles. You will also develop your ability to identify, understand and critique a variety of ethical issues. Finally, you will be introduced to other basic human questions and philosophical ways of thinking about them.

The course is part of the Ethics/Religion and Society sequence. Consistent with the mission of Xavier University as a Jesuit, Catholic university rooted in the liberal arts tradition, the Ethics/Religion and Society (E/RS) sequence of courses provides a basis for you to become intellectually, morally and spiritually educated individuals capable of critical reflection on ethical and religious questions of social significance from the perspective of multiple disciplines with unique methods. Through the E/RS elective, you will develop a more proficient and durable ability to reflect critically on ethical and/or religious questions of social significance.

This course is part of the Xavier Core Curriculum, which aims to develop people of learning and reflection, integrity and achievement, in solidarity for and with others. The course addresses the following core learning objectives at the introductory level:
1a: Students recognize and cogently discuss significant questions in the humanities, arts, and the natural and social sciences.

2a: Students identify and critically assess multiple dimensions of an ethical issue in an attempt to reach a conclusion.

3a: Students find and express their own position on a few philosophical questions/problems – that is, to do philosophy, not merely have a philosophy. The goal being to move beyond just having an opinion, and toward making a logical argument – to critically think.

**GRADING:**
There will be seven components to each student’s grade:

1. Course portfolio.
2. 1st draft position paper for course project.
3. Presentation and oral defense of course project.
4. Introduction to simple deductive arguments (Syllogistic arguments)
5. Participation
6. Final exam.
7. “Solution” to the Gettier Problem.

Breakdown:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course portfolio</td>
<td>100 pts.</td>
<td>(~11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position paper for course project</td>
<td>150 pts.</td>
<td>(~17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation and defense of course project</td>
<td>150 pts.</td>
<td>(~17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syllogistic Logic</td>
<td>150 pts.</td>
<td>(~17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position Paper (“solution”) on the Gettier Argument</td>
<td>100 pts.</td>
<td>(~11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>50 pts.</td>
<td>(~5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>200 pts.</td>
<td>(22%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Points</strong></td>
<td>900 pts.</td>
<td>(100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A 100% - 93% 900 pts. – 837 pts.
A- 92% - 90% 836 pts. – 810 pts.
B+ 89% - 87% 809 pts. – 783 pts.
B 86% - 83% 782 pts. – 765 pts.
B- 82% - 80% 764 pts. – 720 pts.
C+ 79% - 77% 719 pts. – 693 pts.
C 76% - 73% 692 pts. – 675 pts.
C- 72% - 70% 674 pts. – 630 pts.
D+ 69% - 67 % 629 pts. – 603 pts.
D 66% - 63 % 602 pts. – 585 pts.
D- 62% - 55 % 584 pts. – 540 pts.
F 54% - 0% 439 pts. – 0 pts.
**Brief Description of Assignments:**

1. **Course portfolio.**
   - For each scheduled P.R. reading in the Syllabus the student will produce at least one question and at least one observation for that reading. The portfolio will be a collection of each question/observation. Each entry will be have a heading of: Day of Week, Day of Month, Month, Book #, and pages. Each student will upload their portfolio to Canvas prior to each scheduled reading. 10 points will be deducted for each missed addition to the portfolio for a schedule reading of P.R..

2. **1st draft position paper for course project.**
   - A four to five page position page paper on one of the issues analyzed in the *Republic*. The student must select from a predetermined list of issues. (See detailed instruction posted in Canvas.)

3. **Presentation and oral defense of course project.**
   - Based on the 1st draft position paper, and feedback on that paper, the student will prepare a presentation of their position. The student will explain and defend their position. **Students must attend 2 days of oral defense in addition to their own oral defense.** (See detailed instruction posted in Canvas.)

4. **Introduction to Syllogistic Logic.**
   - One of the core tools in the *Republic* the use of arguments (quasi formal) to support claims made by Socrates. These arguments are the objects of discourse used in the dialectic (a method of discovery used in the *Republic*). But the student cannot fully appreciate the significance of this “tool” without some *basic* competence with, and comprehension of validity v. invalidity of deductive arguments.

5. **Participation.**
   - We will follow the Socratic Method for this course. The student should be prepared to respond to requests for their question or observation for the scheduled assigned readings from the Republic. In addition, the student should be prepared to respond to other student’s questions or observation.

6. **Position on the Gettier Problem.**
   - We will read the Gettier Problem. I will take a few days to explain what Justified True Belief (JTB) is and the argument Gettier is making. The student is asked to answer the question - Can JTB be “rescued”? - in a short one – two page paper. (See detailed instruction posted in Canvas.)
7. Final Exam.
   - The student will be asked to demonstrate basic knowledge and comprehension of major concepts in the Republic.

MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES:

- I will make every effort to respond to your e-mail within twenty-four hours.
- An assignment will be graded and returned within one week of the assignment due date (barring unforeseen circumstances).
- Late homework will NOT be accepted. Homework will be turned in on hard-copy in class on the due date.
- All students will be held to the standards listed in the University’s code of Conduct (http://www.xavier.edu/dean-of-students/). Cheating on any assignment, or exam, will result in an “Academic Action” of zero for that specific assignment, or exam. A second occurrence of cheating will result in failure of the course.
- Homework is marked in red, bold font and is due on the day it is listed.
- Class attendance is strongly encouraged; it is in your benefit to do so.
- In the event that the University closes due to an emergency for a scheduled class, any assignment due on that day will be due on the next scheduled class after the University reopens. I will post an announcement on Bb that the class is cancelled as soon as I know that the University has officially closed.
- All lecture notes will be posted on Canvas under “Files.” Within the directory, Course Documents, a directory will be created for each week of the class (Week# _i, where i = {1-15}).
- Please turn off or mute your electronic devices during class.
- If the student’s total point score is within one point of the next highest letter grade, per the grading scale, then the student’s letter grade will “rounded up” to the next highest letter grade. For example, student Z’s total point score is greater than or equal to 719.00 but less than 720, thus student Z’s letter grade will be “rounded up” from a C+ to a B-.
- The last withdraw date for fall-semester-2016 is Monday, 21 November.
- The instructor reserves the right to alter class Syllabus/schedule as needed.
WEEKLY CLASS SCHEDULE:

Week #1

**Monday, 22 August.**
- Introductions & Orientation
- Review the Syllabus

**Wednesday, 24 August.**
- Syllogistic Logic –
  - Introduction to Categorical Propositions
    - Translation of English sentences into *standard form* CPs.
    - Venn diagramming
    - Property of *distribution*

**Friday, 26 August.**
- Syllogistic Logic –
  - Introduction to Categorical Propositions (cont.)
  - Introduction to the Square of the Opposition (under the Boolean interpretation)
**Week #2**

**Monday, 29 August.**
- Syllogistic Logic –
  - Introduction to the Square of the Opposition (cont.)
  - Introduction to the Syllogistic Argument.
    - Minor Term
    - Major Term
    - Middle Term
    - Standard Form
    - Translate English “arguments” into a standard form arguments

**Wednesday, 31 September.**
- Syllogistic Logic –
  - Using the Venn diagram to assess validity and invalidity

**Homework #1 Due**

**Friday, 2 September.**
- Syllogistic Logic –
  - Introduction to the Syllogistic Argument
    - Using the Venn diagram to assess validity and invalidity. (cont.)
  - Valid arguments
    - Sound Arguments
    - Unsound Arguments
Week #3  Monday, 5 September.

No Class – Labor Day Holiday

Wednesday, 7 September.
□ Syllogistic Logic –

□ Introduction to the Syllogistic Argument (cont.)
  o Using the Venn diagram to assess validity and invalidity.
□ Valid arguments (cont.)
  o Sound Arguments.
  o Unsound Arguments

Homework #2 Due

Friday, 9 September.
□ If needed – more review of Syllogistic deduction.
□ P.R. Book 1 pgs. 1-15

Week #4  Monday, 12 September.
□ P.R. Book 1 pgs. 16-35

Wednesday, 14 September.
□ P.R. Book 2 pgs. 36-50

Homework #3 Due

Friday, 16 September.
□ P.R. Book 2 pgs. 51-65

Week #5  Monday, 19 September.
□ P.R. Book 2 pgs. 51-65

Wednesday, 21 September.
□ P.R. Book 4 pgs. 103-115

Homework #4 Due

Friday, 23 September.
□ P.R. Book 4 pgs. 116-135
□ Review Study Guide for Exam.
Week #6

**Monday, 26 September.**
- P.R. Book 5 pgs. 136-156

**Wednesday, 28 September.**

EXAM –
Syllogistic Logic
(Will be proctored)

**Friday, 30 September.**

No Class – Instructor traveling out of town.

Week #7

**Monday, 3 October.**
- P.R. Book 5 pgs. 157-175

**Wednesday, 5 October.**
- P.R. Book 6 pgs. 176-191

**Friday, 7 October.**

No Class – Fall Holiday

Week #8

**Monday, 10 October.**
- P.R. Book 6 pgs. 192-207

**Wednesday, 12 October.**
- P.R. Book 6 pgs. 192-207

**Friday, 14 October.**
- P.R. Book 7 pgs. 208-223

1st Draft Project Position Paper (Upload to Canvas)

Week #9

**Monday, 17 October.**
- P.R. Book 7 pgs. 224-237

**Wednesday, 19 October.**
- P.R. Book 7 pgs. 224-237

**Friday, 21 October.**
- P.R. Book 8 pgs. 238-253
Week #10  Monday, 24 October.
- P.R. Book 8 pgs. 238-253

Wednesday, 26 October.
- P.R. Book 8 pgs. 254-269

Friday, 28 October.
- P.R. Book 9 pgs. 270-285

Week #11  Monday, 31 October.
- P.R. Book 9 pgs. 270-285

Wednesday, 2 November.
- P.R. Book 9 pgs. 286-296

Friday, 4 November.
- P.R. Book 9 pgs. 286-296

Week #12  Monday, 7 November.
- JTB “deep read” – The Gettier Problem

Wednesday, 9 November.
- JTB “deep read” – The Gettier Problem

Friday, 11 November.
- JTB “deep read” – The Gettier Problem

Week #13  Monday, 14 November.
- Project Presentations (see presentation schedule in Canvas)

Wednesday, 16 November.
- Project Presentations (see presentation schedule in Canvas)

Friday, 18 November.
- Project Presentations (see presentation schedule in Canvas)

Gettier “solution” due.
(Upload to Canvas)
Week #14  Monday, 21 November

☐ Project Presentations (see presentation schedule in Canvas)

Wednesday, 23 November.
No Class – Thanksgiving Holiday

Friday, 25 November.
No Class – Thanksgiving Holiday

Week #15  Monday, 28 November.

☐ Project Presentations (see presentation schedule in Canvas)

Wednesday, 30 December.

☐ Project Presentations (see presentation schedule in Canvas)

Friday, 2 December

☐ Project Presentations (see presentation schedule in Canvas)

Week #16  Monday, 5 December.

☐ Project Presentations (see presentation schedule in Canvas)

Wednesday, 7 December.

☐ Project Presentations (see presentation schedule in Canvas)

Friday, 9 December

☐ Project Presentations (see presentation schedule in Canvas)

Final Exam – 10:00AM – 11:50AM, Wednesday, 14 December, Room 007 Alter Hall