



PHIL 360: General Ethics COURSE SYLLABUS: Summer I - 2016

Instructor: Mr. James Berquist (Ph.D. Candidate)

Office Location: Online (On eCollege)

University Email Address: James.Berquist@tamuc.edu

Preferred Form of Communication: Email

Communication Response Time: You will receive a response within 24 hrs, except perhaps on weekends and holidays.

COURSE INFORMATION

Required texts:

- 1) Primary text: *Ethics: The Classic Readings* by David Cooper (ISBN-13: 978-0631206330)

All other required texts will be provided via eCollege.

Course Description:

Ethics is the study of *correct* or *right* human action, and the *principles* thereof in particular. In this course we will be considering the basic and most influential theories of correct human action that have been proposed over the centuries with special emphasis on the foundations for those theories. The goal is twofold. First, we seek to understand the key theories that have been proposed and what they are based upon (hence, indirectly, also what *all* moral theories are based upon). Secondly, we seek to be able to bring that knowledge to bear on our lives.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Over the course of our study, the student will learn:

1. the key moral/ethical theories that have been argued for over the centuries.
2. the central reasoning *behind* those theories (i.e. what are the principles of moral reasoning).
3. the natural implications implicit in moral theories.
4. the history of the grand *debate* concerning moral/ethical action.
5. how to apply his/her newfound knowledge to present day moral issues.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The basic requirements for the course will be as follows:

1. Listen to the **lectures** each week. Details below.
2. One **Issue Essay due 7/02**. Details below.
3. 1 **test**. Details below.
4. **Journal Entries** each week (250-500 words). Details below.

Also: **note that there will be an *optional* discussion board each week**. Details below

This course is **web based** and will require you to work on eCollege an online course program. You will be required to connect multiple times a week and participate in class discussions. The technology requirements are outline below that section.

1. Lectures

The Lectures will be on the readings for the week. I send them out on each Sunday night (in a PowerPoint presentation), barring some particular problem. These lectures are essential to the course, since they stand in place of classroom teaching. I upload the lectures to Youtube in a Private Listing, and send out the link to the class. Get in touch with me immediately if you can't get one to download or load properly.

2. Issue Essay

This course is largely focused upon the theories that have been offered and upon the *principles* of the moral theories in question. The *issue essay* is here so that you can apply one or more of the theories to a present day moral issue. You will be required to take a present day moral issues of discussion (such as Abortion, Homosexuality, the Death Penalty, or Immigration, etc.) and explain the moral rightness or wrongness of the issue based upon the ethical principles you have been studying (I will also provide **academic essays** from multiple perspectives for each of the main issues in question when the time comes so that you have some help in formulating arguments should you wish for it). The word limit for the essay will be 500 words (up to 750 will not be a problem should you wish it). There will be more details on eCollege when the time comes. **Note:** Your essay will not be graded based upon what I think of the issue you choose to write upon,

but rather upon the quality of your argument, and how well you integrated course material.

3. The Test

The test (Which will be in the final week) will cover all the material in the course. However, it will be ordered to *reading comprehension* – i.e. it will not be a forum to express your own notions (*that* is what the Issue Essay is for along with the weekly Journal Entry). Rather, the test is your place to demonstrate that you have read the readings carefully over the course of our class.

4. Weekly Journal Entry:

This is the central part of the course insofar as it is your way to demonstrate that you are thinking deeply about the material and the central topics. The journals are for the sake of **letting the student express his thoughts on the theories and issues that we are reading about.** This is important, because we see what we understand (and what we don't understand) in our attempts to express what we know.

So, students are **required** to make an active and personal effort to keep up a journal on the readings. The entries – one due each week except those weeks with tests or the week with Issue Essay – are **not** to exceed 500 words each (**or the student may submit two entries in a week which together should not exceed 500 words**). In the lecture(s) for the week there will be suggested topics for those who wish them, however students should not feel bound to use the suggestions if there is another point they wish to reflect on in their journal. The journal entries should adhere to the following guidelines.

- (a) The journal entries must be in by **Thursday** night (Midnight). If the student needs an extra day, he/she should email me requesting an extension.
- (b) The journal entries (again, not to exceed 500 words each) should briefly lay out the point(s) from the reading or lecture that the student wants to reflect on (this does not need to be an exhaustive summary). Then, the student should reflect on that point. For instance, if the student is reflecting on an argument from one author or another, he could point out a problem he sees in the argument, or he could argue that the point the author is making is important, and explain why. In other words, the student should always do two things in a journal entry. **First**, make clear what from the reading or lecture is being

considered. **Second**, say something *substantive* about the issue/idea/argument under discussion.

- (c) Note: I will assign a point value to each journal entry. Due to the number of students, my notes on each entry will be brief. **Never hesitate** to email me with any questions concerning the points assigned to a particular journal entry.
- (d) Also note: Both with respect to your journal entries and with respect to your other work, you will not have to agree with me in order to get a good grade. Your grade will depend entirely upon the quality of your arguments and upon your understanding of what has been read.

5. **Extra Credit** entries:

There will be **optional** readings each week. If you write an *extra* journal entry of about 250 words based upon those readings and/or the lectures on them, you may gain extra credit points.

6. **Optional** Discussion board:

Each week, there will be a discussion board available for those who wish to discuss the readings for the sake of deeper understanding. I will post topics for discussion, and students may post and respond to each other.

I will monitor it each week, and while there will be no points officially awarded for posting there and discussing the topics, those who post consistently (or repeatedly) and show some thought will receive extra credit in the final analysis (i.e. If a student shows me he or she understands key issues and has spent real time considering the topics at hand, I will bear that in mind and add extra credit points to their final grade).

GRADING

Grade scale:

A = 90%-100% (90-100 pts)

B = 80%-89% (80-89 pts)

C = 70%-79% (70-79 pts)

D = 60%-69% (60-69 pts)

F = 59% or Below (59 pts or less)

Assignment percentages:

(60%) Journal Entries: (3 entries at 20 pts. {or 6 at 10 pts. each}) 60 points in total

(20%) Issue Essay: 20 points

(20%) Comprehensive test: 20 points

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Note: Subject to Change

Week	Reading Assignments	Note:
Intro and Week 1 Required Readings 6/06 – 6/11	Introduction to Ethics: 1. 'What is Ethics? What is Morality?' by James Berquist (Found on eCollege) The view that Pleasure is the principle of the good life. 2. Epicurus' <i>Letter to Menoeceus</i> and <i>Leading Doctrines</i> (pp. 47-58 in main text) The view that Benevolence and Righteousness are the principles of the good life. 3. Mencius' <i>Human Nature is Good</i> and Hsun Tzu's <i>Man's Nature is Evil</i> (pp. 59-76)	Journal Entry #1:
Optional Readings for Week 1	1. John Stuart Mill's <i>Utilitarianism</i> (pp. 194-211 in main text). (To go along with the Epicurus) 2. The <i>Book of Chuang Tzu</i> (pp. 77-92) (Another view of Confucian Ethics) 3. <i>The Bhagavad Gita</i> (pp. 93-109 in main text) (Hindu Ethics)	Extra Credit #1:
Wk. 2 Required Readings 6/13 – 6/18	Virtue Ethics 1. Aristotle's <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> (pp. 29-46 in main text) Morality as Sentiment 2. Hume's <i>A Treatise of Human Nature</i> (pp. 149-165 in the main text) Morality as Unconditional Goodness 3. Kant's <i>Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysic of Morals</i> (pp. 166-180 in the main text) 4. ISSUE ESSAY PREP a. Thomas Aquinas' <i>On Homicide</i>	Journal Entry #2:

	(Provided online at eCollege) b. Anti-Death Penalty (Reading TBD) c. Professor's Commentary on the Issue	
Optional Readings for Week 2	1. Selections from Thomas Aquinas' <i>Summa Theologiae</i> (pp. 125-135 in main text) 2. TBD	Extra Credit #2:
Wk. 3: Required Readings 6/20 – 6/25	Natural Law Theory 1. Thomas Aquinas' <i>Discourse on Law</i> (Found on eCollege) 2. New Natural Law Theory (NNLT) (selection from John Finnis' works provided online at eCollege) 3. Rebuttal of NNLT by James Berquist	Journal Entry #3:
Optional Readings for Week 3	(Loosely) Divine Command Theory and Nihilism 1. Unsophisticated: Plato's <i>Euthyphro</i> (provided online at eCollege) 2. Sophisticated: Kierkegaard's <i>Fear and Trembling</i> (pp. 181-193 in main text) 3. Nietzsche's <i>On the Genealogy of Morals</i> (pp. 212-229 in main text)	Extra Credit #3:
Wk. 4: Required Readings 6/27 – 7/02	Citizenship (Politics) 1. Plato's <i>Crito</i> (Provided online at eCollege) 2. Aristotle's <i>Politics</i> (Provided online at eCollege) 3. Aquinas' <i>Discourse on Law</i> (further selection found online at eCollege) 4. <i>Declaration of Independence</i> (Principles of American Law - provided online at eCollege)	Issue Essay Due: 7/02
Optional Readings for Week 4	Citizenship (Politics): 1. Thomas Hobbes (further <i>Leviathan</i> selection provided via eCollege) 2. TBD	Extra Credit #4:
Week 5 Final	Review for, and take, Final.	Final Due: 7/07

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

- To fully participate in online courses you will need to use a current Flash enabled browser. For PC users, the suggested browser is Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox. For Mac users, the most current update of Firefox is suggested.
- You will need regular access to a computer with a broadband Internet connection. The minimum computer requirements are:
 - 512 MB of RAM, 1 GB or more preferred
 - Broadband connection required courses are heavily video intensive
 - Video display capable of high-color 16-bit display 1024 x 768 or higher resolution
- You must have a:
 - Sound card, which is usually integrated into your desktop or laptop computer
 - Speakers or headphones.
 - ***For courses utilizing video-conferencing tools and/or an online proctoring solution, a webcam and microphone are required.**
- **Both versions of Java (32 bit and 64 bit) must be installed and up to date on your machine. At a minimum Java 7, update 51, is required to support the learning management system. The most current version of Java can be downloaded at: [JAVA web site](http://www.java.com/en/download/manual.jsp)**
<http://www.java.com/en/download/manual.jsp>
- Current anti-virus software must be installed and kept up to date.
- Run a browser check through the Pearson LearningStudio Technical Requirements website. [Browser Check](http://help.college.com/LS_Tech_Req_WebHelp/en-us/#LS_Technical_Requirements.htm#Browset)
http://help.college.com/LS_Tech_Req_WebHelp/en-us/#LS_Technical_Requirements.htm#Browset

Running the browser check will ensure your internet browser is supported.

Pop-ups are allowed.

JavaScript is enabled.
Cookies are enabled.

- You will need some additional free software (plug-ins) for enhanced web browsing. Ensure that you download the free versions of the following software:
 - [Adobe Reader](https://get.adobe.com/reader/) <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
 - [Adobe Flash Player](https://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/) (version 17 or later) <https://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/>
 - [Adobe Shockwave Player](https://get.adobe.com/shockwave/) <https://get.adobe.com/shockwave/>
 - [Apple Quick Time](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/) <http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/>
- **At a minimum, you must have Microsoft Office 2013, 2010, 2007 or Open Office.** Microsoft Office is the standard office productivity software utilized by faculty, students, and staff. Microsoft Word is the standard word processing software, Microsoft Excel is the standard spreadsheet software, and Microsoft PowerPoint is the standard presentation software. Copying and pasting, along with attaching/uploading documents for assignment submission, will also be required. If you do not have Microsoft Office, you can check with the bookstore to see if they have any student copies.
- For additional information about system requirements, please see: [System Requirements for LearningStudio](https://secure.ecollege.com/tamuc/index.learn?action=technical) <https://secure.ecollege.com/tamuc/index.learn?action=technical>

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

Pearson LearningStudio (eCollege) Access and Log in Information

This course will be facilitated using Pearson LearningStudio, the learning management system used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to [myLeo](http://www.tamuc.edu/myleo.aspx).
<http://www.tamuc.edu/myleo.aspx>

You will need your CWID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

It is strongly recommended you perform a "Browser Test" prior to the start of your course. To launch a browser test, login to Pearson LearningStudio, click on the "My Courses" tab, and then select the "Browser Test" link under Support Services.

Pearson LearningStudio Student Technical Support

Texas A&M University-Commerce provides students technical support in the use of Pearson LearningStudio.

Technical assistance is available 24 hours a day/ 7 days a week.

If you experience LearningStudio (eCollege) technical problems, contact the LearningStudio helpdesk at 1-866-656-5511 (toll free) or visit [Pearson 24/7 Customer Support Site](http://247support.custhelp.com/)
<http://247support.custhelp.com/>

The student help desk may be reached by the following means 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

- **Chat Support:** Click on '*Live Support*' on the tool bar within your course to chat with a Pearson LearningStudio Representative.
- **Phone:** 1-866-656-5511 (Toll Free) to speak with Pearson LearningStudio Technical Support Representative.

Accessing Help from within Your Course: Click on the '*Tech Support*' icon on the upper left side of the screen inside the course. You then will be able to get assistance via online chat, email or by phone.

Note: Personal computer problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, an Internet cafe, or a bookstore, such as Barnes & Noble, etc.

Policy for Reporting Problems with Pearson LearningStudio

Should students encounter Pearson LearningStudio based problems while submitting assignments/discussions/comments/exams, the following procedure **MUST** be followed:

1. Students must report the problem to the help desk. You may reach the helpdesk at 1-866-656-5511.
2. Students **MUST** file their problem with the helpdesk and obtain a helpdesk ticket number
3. Once a helpdesk ticket number is in your possession, students should email me to advise me of the problem and to provide me with the helpdesk ticket number
4. At that time, I will call the helpdesk to confirm your problem and follow up with you

PLEASE NOTE: Your personal computer/access problems are not a legitimate excuse for filing a ticket with the Pearson LearningStudio Help Desk. You are strongly encouraged to check for compatibility of your browser **BEFORE** the course begins and to take the Pearson LearningStudio tutorial offered for students who may require some extra assistance in navigating the Pearson LearningStudio platform. **ONLY** Pearson LearningStudio based problems are legitimate.

myLeo Support

Your myLeo email address is required to send and receive all student correspondence. Please email helpdesk@tamuc.edu or call us at 903-468-6000 with any questions about setting up your myLeo email account. You may also access information at [myLeo](#).

<https://leo.tamuc.edu>

Learner Support

Go to the following link [One Stop Shop](#)- created to serve you by attempting to provide as many resources as possible in one location.

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/onestopshop/>


Go to the following link [Academic Success Center](#)- focused on providing academic resources to help you achieve academic success.

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/academicSuccessCenter/>

FREE MOBILE APPS

The Courses apps for phones have been adapted to support the tasks students can easily complete on a smaller device. Due to the smaller screen size course content is not presented.

The Courses app is free of charge. The mobile Courses Apps are designed and adapted for different devices.

	App Title:	iPhone – Pearson LearningStudio Courses for iPhone Android – LearningStudio Courses - Phone
	Operating System:	iPhone - OS 6 and above Android – Jelly Bean, Kitkat, and Lollipop OS
	iPhone App URL:	https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/pearson-learningstudio-courses/id977280011?mt=8
	Android App URL:	https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.pearson.lsphone

Once downloaded, search for Texas A&M University-Commerce, and it should appear on the list. Then you will need to sign into the myLeo Mobile portal.

The Courses App for Android and iPhone contain the following feature set:

- View titles/code/Instructor of all Courses enrolled in online
- View and respond to all discussions in individual Courses
- View Instructor Announcements in individual Courses
- View Graded items, Grades and comments in individual Courses
- Grade to Date
- View Events (assignments) and Calendar in individual Courses
- View Activity Feed for all courses
- View course filters on activities
- View link to Privacy Policy
- Ability to Sign out
- Send Feedback

LEARNING STUDIO NOTIFICATIONS

Students can be alerted to course activities via text on their mobile phones or up to two email addresses.

Based on their preferences, students can automatically receive a push notification with every new: course announcement, threaded discussion post, grade, and/or assignment without having to login to the course. Enrolled students will automatically receive email notifications for announcements and can opt out of this feature. To receive text notifications, students must opt in.

To begin setting up notifications, go into your course in LearningStudio and click on the bell-shaped Notifications icon on the main menu ribbon.

By default the student's university email address will appear. This cannot be changed in LearningStudio. Additional email addresses may be added by clicking the Add button. After all of the other selections are completed be sure to click the Save and Finish button.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures

Attendance/Lateness, Late Work, Missed Exams and Quizzes and Extra Credit

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See current Student Guidebook).

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: [Netiquette http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html](http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html)

ADA Statement

Students with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library- Room 132

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: Rebecca.Tuerk@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.