

Northwest Arkansas Community College
Philosophy Course

PHIL. 2103: INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS

Catalog Description:

An examination of the basic concepts of ethics including moral relativism vs. moral objectivism, moral realism, Kantian ethics, virtue ethics, individual liberty vs. paternalism, and the application of theory to issues such as abortion, capital punishment, euthanasia, etc.

Prerequisite: None.

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Credit hours/Contact hours/ Load hours: 3/3/3

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Target Audience and Transfer:

This course is designed for students seeking an Associate of Arts degree and for students transferring to the University of Arkansas. PHIL 2203 will transfer to the University of Arkansas.

General Course Outcomes:

Students completing this course should

- a. be acquainted with the writings of some of the most influential ethical philosophers in the West,
- b. have a much better idea of what ethics is and what ethical philosophers do, and
- c. be able think more clearly and critically about their ethical and moral beliefs.

Required Text:

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Ethics: Discovering Right and Wrong, 5th ed., by Louis P. Pojman, Wadsworth Publishing Company, (Belmont, Calif.) 2006.

Topics Include Some Or All of the Following:

1. Introduction: What is Ethics?
2. Ethical Relativism: Who's to Judge What's Right and Wrong?
3. The Case for Moral Objectivism
4. Value: The Quest for the Good
5. Egoism, Self-Interest and Altruism
6. Utilitarianism
7. Kantian and Deontological Systems
8. Virtue-Based Ethical Systems
9. Why Should I Be Moral?
10. Religion and Ethics
11. The Fact-Value Problem: Meta-ethics in the Twentieth Century
12. Moral Realism and the Challenge of Skepticism

Required Methods of Instruction:

Individual instructors may design the course in any number of ways, keeping course objectives in mind. These may include lecture, audio-visual materials, guest speakers, field trips, oral presentations, book reviews, and research papers.

Required Forms of Assessment:

Individual instructors have broad latitude in making assessments. Instructors are expected to include some form of essay question on the exam(s).