Online Course Syllabus
PHI 540 F2L1
Moral Philosophy
Fall 2019 – Term 2 – Oct 14-Dec 13

Contact Information

Instructor Name: Dr. Scott Shiffer
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Instructor Phone: 214-818-1316
Instructor Office Hours: 8:30 AM – 3:30 PM – M-F

Course Description and Prerequisites

An examination of the views of prominent philosophers regarding the moral life and the nature of morality. Emphasis is placed on what it means for humans to be moral beings, both as individuals and in community, covering aspects of political philosophy, and on the proper grounds and ultimate end of the moral life.

Course Objectives

1. To familiarize the student with the general history of moral thought.
2. To familiarize the student with the most prominent philosophers and ideas in western moral thought.
3. To strengthen the student's own critical thinking and evaluative skills.
4. To provide an academic setting for discussion and reflection on philosophical thoughts and ideas.
5. To demonstrate how such discussion and reflection is relevant to the student, the surrounding culture, and the student's engagement with that culture.

Required Textbooks

Mark Timmons, *Moral Theory: An Introduction*, 2nd New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2013. ISBN-13: 978-0742564923.

Recommended Reading

- Shafer-Landau, Russ, *The Fundamentals of Ethics*, 3rd New York: Oxford University Publishing, 2013. ISBN-13: 978-0199997237.
- Denise, Theodore, Nicholas White, and Sheldon Peterfreund, *Great Traditions in Ethics*, 12th Boston: Wadsworth-Cengage Publishing, 2007. ISBN-13: 978-0495094982.

Course Requirements and Assignments

1. **Reading Summary**: a one page to two page single spaced 12 point Times New Roman font reading summary will be due for each reading assignment. Students will be expected to read the scheduled assignment prior to the class for which it is due. The eight reading assignments are worth **18.75 points apiece, 150 points total (15% of the final score)**. Philosophy is a reading intensive discipline; as such, failure to stay current in the readings will impair your ability to understand lectures, participate in discussions, and complete other assignments.

2. **Weekly Quiz**: there will be a quiz at the end of each week over the material discussed in the readings and PowerPoints. The eight quizzes are **6.25 points apiece, 50 points total (5% of the final score).**

3. **Discussion Posts**: there will be a discussion post each week over the material discussed in the readings and PowerPoints. Students must post their own response to the question as well as one response to a post not their own. The eight discussion posts are **6.25 points apiece, 50 points total (5% of the final score).**

4. **Cultural Reviews**: students will watch the assigned movies and analyze those movies according to the questions presented below by using the material discussed in the readings and other learning materials. Students will write a three to five page double spaced 12 point Times New Roman font paper stating their opinion regarding the questions listed for each movie. Students will cite dialogue and events from the movie to support their argument. The three assignments are worth **50 points apiece, 150 points total (15% of the final score)**.

- *The Dark Knight*: analyze the importance of the concept of moral relativism in this movie; how does this theory apply itself in and effect the characters and events in the movie? Is relativism presented positively or negatively?
- *Ender's Game*: analyze how the theory of utilitarianism is presented in this film; how is utilitarianism utilized by the characters and events in this movie and how does it affect them? Is utilitarianism presented positively or negatively?
- *The Emperor's Club*: analyze the importance of the concept of virtue in this movie; how does virtue or the lack thereof influence the characters and the events of the movie? Is virtue presented as positive or negative and in what ways?

5. There will be two non-cumulative exams given over the course of the semester. Each exam may consist of true/false, matching, short answer, fill in the blank, and essay questions. Each exam will be worth **300 points apiece (30% of the final score)**. Altogether, the exams are **600 points (60%) of the final score**. In the event that a student is unable to be in class for an exam a make-up exam may be taken. The student must have a **good, valid, and provable reason** for not being in class to take the exam. Make-up exams should be scheduled within one week of the original test date. It is the student's responsibility to schedule and take make-up exams in the given time frame. The make-up exam will be all essay questions. There will be no opportunity to make-up the final exam.

6. A copy of all assignments shall be submitted by the beginning of class. Emailed assignments will be accepted at the professor's discretion. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of all assignments and their due dates.

7. The student shall proceed in the following order with all assignments:
    1. Read the assigned chapter.
    2. View the PowerPoint and videos for each module.
    3. Submit the reading summary.
    4. Post on the discussion board topic.
    5. Take the quiz.
    6. Submit the cultural review if applicable.
    7. Take the exam if applicable.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Course/Classroom Policies and Information

The Canvas classroom connected with this class may be used for course information and/or resources relevant to course material. The course syllabus, assignments, grades, videos, website links, and all PowerPoint lectures will be posted on the Canvas classroom for your convenience.

Attendance

Students are responsible for enrolling in courses for which they anticipate being able to participate weekly during the weeks appearing on course schedules, and then making every effort to do so. Such participation may include the following: completing quizzes or exams; emailing faculty or class members as part of an assignment; discussion board posting or response; turning in an assignment; or other communication reflecting ongoing learning in the course. When unavoidable situations result in non-participation, students are responsible for acquiring any information missed. Professors are not obliged to allow students to make up missed work. Per their independent discretion, individual professors may determine how participation affects students' ability to meet course learning objectives and whether participation affects course grades..

Grading Scale

A	93-100	4.0 grade points per semester hour
A-	90-92	3.7 grade points per semester hour
B+	87-89	3.3 grade points per semester hour
B	83-86	3.0 grade points per semester hour
B-	80-82	2.7 grade points per semester hour
C+	77-79	2.3 grade points per semester hour
C	73-76	2.0 grade points per semester hour
C-	70-72	1.7 grade points per semester hour
D+	67-69	1.3 grade points per semester hour
D	63-66	1.0 grade point per semester hour
D-	60-62	0.7 grade points per semester hour
F	0-59	0.0 grade points per semester hour

Points based system: you will be earning points across the semester. Each assignment is worth a certain amount of points adding up to 1000 points (reading reports: 18.75 points apiece; quizzes: 6.25 points apiece; discussion posts: 6.25 points apiece; cultural reviews: 50 points apiece; exams: 300 points apiece). Exam grades can be ascertained by dividing the number of points received by three.

Components of Course Grade:

- Weekly Quizzes: 15%
- Discussion Posts: 15%
- Reading Reports: 15%
- Cultural Review: 15%
- Exam 1: 20%
- Exam 2: 20%
- *Total:* 100%

Incomplete Grades

Students requesting a grade of Incomplete (I) must understand that incomplete grades may be given only upon approval of the faculty member involved. An "I" may be assigned only when a student is currently passing a course and in situations involving extended illness, serious injury, death in the family, or employment or government reassignment, not student neglect.

Students are responsible for contacting their professors prior to the end of the semester, plus filing the appropriate completed and approved academic request form with the Registrar's Office. The "I" must be removed (by completing the remaining course requirements) no later than 60 calendar days after the grade was assigned, or the "I" will become an "F."

Academic Honesty

Absolute truth is an essential belief and basis of behavior for those who believe in a God who cannot lie and forbids falsehood. Academic honesty is the application of the principle of truth in the classroom setting. Academic honesty includes the basic premise that all work submitted by students must be their own and any ideas derived or copied from elsewhere must be carefully documented.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- cheating of any kind,
- submitting, without proper approval, work originally prepared by the student for another course,
- plagiarism, which is the submitting of work prepared by someone else as if it were his own, and
- failing to credit sources properly in written work.

Institutional Email Policy

All official college email communications to students enrolled in this course will be sent exclusively to students' institutional email accounts. Students are expected to check their student email accounts regularly and to

respond in an appropriate and timely manner to all communications from faculty and administrative departments.

Students are permitted to setup automatic forwarding of emails from their student email accounts to one or more personal email accounts. The student is responsible to setup and maintain email forwarding without assistance from college staff. If a student chooses to use this forwarding option, he/she will continue to be responsible for responding appropriately to all communications from faculty and administrative departments of the college. Criswell College bears no responsibility for the use of emails that have been forwarded from student email accounts to other email accounts.

Identity Verification

Students enrolled in Distance Education courses are required to present a photo ID to verify their participation in each course at the beginning of the term. Confirmation will occur through live-streamed meetings, video assignments, scheduled video conference calls, and/or another online video medium the professor assigns.

Disabilities

Criswell College recognizes and supports the standards set forth in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and similar state laws, which are designed to eliminate discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities. Criswell College is committed to making reasonable accommodations for qualifying students, faculty, and employees with disabilities as required by applicable laws. For more information, please contact the Student Services Office.

Intellectual Property Rights

Unless otherwise specifically instructed in writing by the professor, students must neither materially nor digitally reproduce materials from any course offered by Criswell College for or with the significant possibility of distribution.

Resources and Support

Canvas and SONIS: Criswell College uses Canvas as its web-based learning tool and SONIS for student data. Students needing assistance with Canvas should contact the Canvas Help Support line at (844) 358-6140. Tech support is available at this number, twenty-four hours a day. Students needing help with SONIS should contact the Campus Software Manager at studenttechsupport@criswell.edu.

Student Services: The Student Services Office exists to foster and encourage success in all areas of life—physical, intellectual, spiritual, social, and emotional. Students are encouraged to reach out for assistance by contacting the office at 214.818.1332 or studentservices@criswell.edu. Pastoral and certified counseling services are also available to Criswell students. Appointments are scheduled through the Dean of Students, at deanofstudents@criswell.edu.

Wallace Library: Students can access academic resources and obtain research assistance by visiting the Wallace Library, which is located on campus. For more information, go to the library website, or email the Wallace Library at library@criswell.edu.

Writing Center: Students are encouraged to consult with writing tutors to improve and enhance their skills and confidence by practicing techniques of clear and effective writing. To consult with a tutor, students can visit the Writing Center located on the first floor near the Computer Lab, or they can schedule an appointment by emailing writingcenter@criswell.edu or calling 214.818.1373.

Distance Education

Students participating in courses through Distance Education, with or without live interaction, must complete the academic requirements for those courses with the integrity and commitment necessary to participate in and benefit from all of the exercises provided by the professor for learning the subject matter of the course. Therefore, credit for Distance Education courses is the same as credit for courses taken on campus.

Distance education students can access information about Criswell College's Wallace Library at http://www.criswell.edu/current_students/library/. The Wallace Library manual is available at http://www.criswell.edu/current_students/library/library_handbook/.

Course Outline/Calendar

Meeting	Content	Assignments	Due Dates
Oct 14	Pre-Class Reading: Timmons Chapter 1 Week 1: Divine Command Theory, Timmons Chapter 2	Reading Summary 1 Discussion 1 Quiz 1	Oct 20
Oct 21	Week 2: Moral Relativism, Timmons Chapter 3	Reading Summary 2 Discussion 2 Quiz 2	Oct 27
Oct 28	Week 3: Natural Law Theory, Timmons Chapter 4, **Dark Knight Review Due**	Reading Summary 3 Discussion 3 Quiz 3 Cultural Review 1	Nov 3
Nov 4	Week 4: Consequentialism, Timmons Chapter 5 and 6, **Exam 1**	Reading Summary 4 Discussion 4 Quiz 4 Exam 1	Nov 10
Nov 11	Week 5: Ethical Egoism, Timmons Chapter 7	Reading Summary 5 Discussion 5 Quiz 5	Nov 24
Nov 25	Week 6: Kantianism, Timmons Chapter 8, **Ender's Game Review Due**	Reading Summary 6 Discussion 6 Quiz 6 Cultural Review 2	Dec 1

Dec 2	Week 7: Virtue Ethics, Timmons Chapter 10	Reading Summary 7 Discussion 7 Quiz 7	Dec 8
Dec 9	Week 8: Political Theory, *US Declaration of Independence-Constitution, Communist Manifesto*; **Emperor's Club Review Due; Exam 2**	Reading Summary 8 Discussion 8 Quiz 8 Cultural Review 3 Exam 2	Dec 13