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Office IA29 Office hours: M 2-3; T 11-12:30; W 2-3:30; Th 2-3:30

Philosophy 20: Ethics
Section 3396 Thursday 3:30-6:40 INST 1002

Course Description

Philosophy 20 is an introductory course in ethics. Students will confront fundamental moral questions such as: What is good? What is right? What are moral obligations or duties? How is virtue acquired? Are values relative? Is morality subjective or objective? What is the relation between religion and morality? The course will also address issues in applied ethics including abortion, violence, animal rights, sex, drugs, and censorship.

Course Objectives

Students who successfully complete the course will be prepared to participate in contemporary discourses about the nature of morality and the contemporary ethical controversies our community faces. An understanding of foundational ethical issues, problems, and approaches will equip students to think carefully and critically about the ethical dilemmas they confront in their personal, professional, and public lives.

Student Learning Outcomes

- 1. Demonstrate knowledge of the views of some historically significant moral philosophers.
- 2. Explain predominant ethical theories and concepts.
- 3. Integrate these theories and concepts into analysis of case studies and contemporary moral and social issues.

Required Text

McGinn, Colin. Moral Literacy or How to do the Right Thing

Course Requirements

Completion of assigned readings (evidence will be the students ability to participate in class discussions); issues debates (small group debates on contemporary moral issues); midterm exam; final exam; critical essay (5-7 page paper on an issue covered in the course).

Evaluation

10%
15%
25%
25%
25%

Surely knowledge of this good is also of great importance for the conduct of our lives, and if, like archers, we have a target to aim at, we are more likely to hit the right mark. If so, we should try to grasp, in outline at any rate, what the good is. Aristotle

Schedule

- 2/7 Course Introduction. Moral theory and moral controversy.
- 2/14 Religion and ethics: Ancient religious approaches to morality
- 2/21 Plato's Euthyphro
- 2/28 Virtue ethics in Plato, Aristotle, and McGinn. Read chapter 8
- 3/7 Kantian and utilitarian approaches to ethical theory. Read pp. 9-17.
- 3/14 Ethics and animals. Read chapter 1.
- 3/21 Abortion Read chapter 3. **Midterm Exam.** No class 3/28 and 4/4: Happy Spring Break!
- 4/11 Abortion (2) If These Walls Could Talk; Citizen Ruth
- 4/18 Violence. Read chapter 4.
- 4/25 Sex Read chapter 5
- 5/2 Drugs Read chapter 6
- 5/9 Censorship Read chapter 7 Essay Due!
- 5/16 Group presentations
- 5/23 Group presentations
- 5/30 Final Exam 5:30-7:30 PM