

Introduction to Ethics: Theory and Application

Madison College - Fall 2015

Course number: 10809166, Class number: 30778
Time: Thursdays, 5:30 – 8:30pm in Truax C3452

Instructor: Michael Zenz
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Course Description

We are faced with important moral decisions every day, both great and small. For instance, salespeople are often faced with the decision of whether to deceive or withhold information from their customers with the hopes of making more sales. A salesperson who informs the customer every time a competitor has a lower price or about every fault of the product may not earn as much money as one who doesn't. But some of these practices may be immoral. More serious decisions face family members and doctors of those dying of painful and debilitating medical disorders. Such patients sometimes request help ending their own lives, and many are physically incapable of ending their lives themselves. Many people think that it is immoral (and not just illegal) for doctors or loved ones to kill such patients, but others think that helping patients die on their own terms should be an important part of medicine. In this class we will study how one should think about these and other issues. Students will learn about a number of major moral theories and how they can be applied in a number of concrete situations. They will also learn how to formulate moral arguments and critically assess those provided by others.

Prerequisite

Academic Reading 5 & 6 (77858752) with a grade of C or better; or College Reading Strategies (10808101); or ACT Reading 14-36 or COMPASS Reading 65-99.

Requirements

25% - Biweekly Discussion Writing Approximately 200 word **typed** responses to biweekly discussion questions posted to Blackboard. Responses must be handed in at the start of class (no exceptions). See schedule for due dates. The lowest score will be dropped.

10% - Attendance and Participation Students are expected to attend class every week.

20% - Midterm Exam Taken in class on *October 29th*.

20% - Paper Topics and detailed instructions will be distributed in October. *Due in class December 3rd*.

25% - Final Exam December 17th, 5:30-7:20pm in normal classroom.

Readings

All required readings will be posted on Blackboard.

Late Work

All late work will be marked down a full letter grade, and then a 1/3 letter grade for each additional day late.

Students with Disabilities

Madison College complies with all provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act and makes reasonable accommodations upon request. Please contact Disability Resources Services at (608) 246-6716, room D1618 at Truax, or email drs@madisoncollege.edu. If you have an accommodation card from their office indicating that you have a disability which requires academic accommodations, please present it to me so we can discuss the accommodations. It is best to request accommodations at the beginning or before class so there is ample time to make the accommodations.

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism, cheating and collusion are prohibited at Madison College. Plagiarism is defined as passing of another persons work as your own. Students who fail to observe these standards are subject to disciplinary action. Madison College has a strong published policy on [Academic Misconduct](#).

Tentative Schedule

This schedule is subject to change. Readings for the last weeks of class will be posted to the online syllabus during the first few weeks of class.

Date	Topic	Reading
9/3	Introduction	
9/10	Foreign Aid	Short writing assignment due. Singer, "Famine, Affluence, & Morality" Arthur, "World Hunger and Moral Obligation"
9/17	Redistribution of Wealth	Excerpt from Nozick, <i>Anarchy, State, and Utopia</i> Rachels, "What People Deserve"
9/24	Drugs	Short writing assignment due. Boaz, "A Drug Free America — Or a Free America?" Goodin, "The Ethics of Smoking."
10/1	Capital Punishment	Van den Haag, "The Ultimate Punishment: A Defense." Nathanson, "Should we Execute those Who Deserve to Die?"
10/8	Euthanasia	Short writing assignment due. Gay-Williams, "The Wrongfulness of Euthanasia." Brock, "Voluntary Active Euthanasia."
10/15	The Right to Life	Noonan, "Abortion is Morally Wrong." Tooley, "In Defense of Abortion and Infanticide."
10/22	Abortion	Marquis, "Why Abortion is Immoral." Thompson, "A Defense of Abortion."
10/29	Midterm Exam	
11/5	Deception	Optional Short writing assignment due. Carson, "Deception and Information Disclosure in Business..."
11/12	Privacy	Short writing assignment due. Spinello, "Information Privacy."
11/19	Intellectual Property	De George, "Intellectual Property Rights."
11/26	No Class	
12/3	Paper Due	
12/3	Work and Life	Yeoman, "Conceptualising Meaningful Work..."
12/10	Summary and Review	Short writing assignment due.
12/17	Final Exam	5:30-7:20pm in normal classroom.