

**RARITAN VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
ACADEMIC COURSE OUTLINE**

PHIL 114 H-ETHICS HONORS

I. Basic Course Information

- A. Course Number and Title: PHI 114H- ETHICS HONORS
- B. New or Modified Course: Modified
- C. Date of Proposal: Semester: Spring Year: 2012
- D. Sponsoring Department: Humanities/Social Science/Education
- E. Semester Credit Hours: 3
- F. Weekly Contact Hours: 3 Lecture: 3
 Laboratory: 0
- G. Prerequisites/Corequisites: None
- H. Laboratory Fees: None
- I. Name and Telephone Number or E-Mail Address of Department Chair:
 Karen Gutshall Kgutshal@raritanval.edu

II. Catalog Description

This course is an introductory study of the theories, methods, and problems of ethics. Topics will include the study of the moral theories of Aristotle, Hobbes, Kant, Mill, and Rawls; deontological and consequentialist theories; the nature and meaning of moral terms; moral absolutism and relativism; the nature of moral arguments and reasoning; conceptions of the good life; free will, determinism, and moral responsibility.

III. Statement of Course Need

This course provides a basic introduction to ethical theory, which can be applied to all disciplines and aspects of life.

This course provides students with the tools for analyzing ethical arguments and judgments, as well synthesizing their own ethical judgments within the framework of classical ethical principles and theories.

The study of ethics, moral responsibility, and the good life has traditionally been at the heart of a broad Liberal Arts education in the Western tradition.

Most colleges and universities offer this course as a staple of Philosophy offerings, and many Liberal Arts schools require such a course in normative and/or applied ethics.

This course may serve as a more general, yet comprehensive theoretical background in regards to the nature, history, and evolution of classical Western ethics as opposed to an applied ethics course, such as Current Moral & Social Issues.

This course is specially modified for students enrolled in the Honors College. This course however does meet the New Jersey General Education Requirements.

As a staple course offering in the discipline of Philosophy, as well as meeting the New Jersey General Education requirements, this course is highly transferable.

IV. Place of Course in College Curriculum

- A. Free Elective
- B. This course serves as a General Education Philosophy course.
- C. This course serves as a General Education Humanities course.
- D. This course meets a program requirement for the RVCC Honors College.
- E. To see course transferability: a) for New Jersey schools, go to the NJ Transfer website, www.njtransfer.org; for all other colleges and universities, go to the individual website.

V. Outline of Course Content

- A. Ethics and the Examined Life
 - 1. What is Ethics?
 - 2. Types of Ethics
 - a. MetaEthics
 - b. Normative Ethics
 - c. Applied Ethics
- B. Subjectivism, Relativism, and Emotivism
- C. Evaluating Moral Arguments and Logical Fallacies

1. Structure of Ethical Reasoning
2. Logical Arguments
 - a. Deductive vs. Inductive Arguments
 - b. Argumentative Essays
 - c. Common Fallacies
- D. Evaluating Moral Theories and Moral Responsibility
 1. Critical Assessment of Moral Theories
 - a. Theoretical Criticisms
 - b. Operational Criticisms
 2. Application in society: professional, personal, business, medicine, and healthcare
- E. Consequentialist Theories
 1. Ethical Egoism
 2. Utilitarianism
 3. Criticisms of Consequentialism
- F. Deontological (Nonconsequentialist) Theories
 1. Kantian Ethics
 2. Natural Law Theories
 3. Social Contract Theory
 4. Criticisms of Nonconsequentialism
- G. Virtue Ethics
 1. Aristotelian Ethics
 2. Ethics of Care
 3. Feminist Ethics
 3. Criticisms of Virtue Ethics
- H. Other Ethical/Social Theories
 1. Divine Command Theories
 - a. Judaism
 - b. Christianity
 - c. Islam
 2. Ancient Greek & Roman Ethics
 - a. Platonic
 - b. Stoic
 - c. Epicurean Ethics
 3. Hobbes
 4. Marx
 5. Pragmatism
 6. Existentialism
 7. Rawls
 8. Non-Western Ethics
 9. Criticisms of These Theories

VI. Educational Goals and Learning Outcomes

A. Educational Goals

Students will:

1. research, analyze and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of different ethical perspectives (GE-NJ 1, GE-NJ ER, GE-NJ IL)
2. be able to apply critical thinking to problem solving and decision making, particularly when making value decisions (GE-NJ 5)
3. be able to communicate ethical judgments and arguments effectively in both speech and writing (GE-NJ 1)
4. appreciate importance of a global perspective, culturally diverse peoples, and responsible citizenship in a pluralistic society. (GE-NJ 8)
5. be able to identify fundamental concepts, principles, and theories of Ethics (GE-NJ ER)

B. Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to:

1. demonstrate a working knowledge of the fundamental concepts and theories of ethics in both speech and writing.(Goal-1)
2. analyze, synthesize, and articulate sound ethical arguments in both speech and writing (Goal-1)
3. articulate competing visions of moral values, ethical judgments, and the good life (Goal-2)
4. critically assess and evaluate the consequences and outcomes of decision making, particularly value decisions (Goal-2 & 3)
5. articulate, assess, and critically evaluate diverse viewpoints and perspectives in regards to classical issues of ethics (Goal-4)
6. critically assess and evaluate primary sources in the area of ethics independently (Goal-1,2,4, & 5)

VII. Modes of Teaching and Learning

- A. lecture/discussion
- B. small-group work
- C. assigned reading
- D. student oral presentations
- E. Structured debates/dialogues
- F. Instructional films, websites, and electronic media
- G. Guest speakers & presenters (when available)

VIII. Papers, Examinations, and other Assessment Instruments

- A. Examinations- including tests & quizzes (LO-1)
- B. Reflections/Short Essays (LO- 2,3,4,& 5)

- C. Research papers (LO- 2,4,&5)
- D. Oral Presentations (LO- 4)
- E. Journals (LO-1,2,3,4, & 5)

IX. Grade Determinants

- A. Reflections/Short Essays
- B. Examinations (Including tests and quizzes)
- C. Presentations
- D. Research Papers
- E. Class Projects

X. Texts and Materials

- A. Suggested textbook:
 - 1. Ethics, Theory & Contemporary Issues. 7th ed. Barbra Mackinnon
 - 2. A Rulebook for Arguments, 4th Ed. Anthony Weston
- B. Primary sources: The Republic, Plato. Nichomacean Ethics, Aristotle.
- C. Suggested Films: I Am (the Documentary, Tom Shadyac)

(Please Note: The course outline is intended only as a guide to course content and resources. Do not purchase textbooks based on this outline. The RVCC Bookstore is the sole resource for the most up-to-date information about textbooks.)

XI. Resources

None