

Prerequisite (s): Placement into ENGL 111 English Composition I with ENGL 070 English Composition I Workshop, or higher

This course serves as an introduction to the branch of philosophy known as “ethics,” which deals with fundamental questions concerning the nature of morality. In this class, students will study ethics from both a theoretical and practical perspective – learning about canonical ethical systems as well as their potential applications. Topics include: meta-ethics, normative ethics, and applied ethics; virtue, deontology, and consequentialism; the issue of relativism; justice; individual vs. collective rights; basic logical argumentation.

III. Statement of Course Need

- A. This course provides a general introduction to philosophical ethics. Each ethical system discussed provides (i) a lens through which events can be understood and (ii) a set of tools that can be applied in order to solve problems and make decisions more broadly, regardless of context or discipline.

Given that the content of philosophical ethics is often delivered in the form of argument, “doing ethics” well requires us to “do argumentation” well. Thus, students will learn how to identify arguments in texts, evaluate the quality of those arguments, and ultimately create their own arguments in accordance with basic logical principles.

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

This course is a staple within philosophy programs at most universities and colleges; many Liberal Arts schools require students to take a course in meta, normative, and/or applied ethics.

This course meets the New Jersey General Education Requirements.

As a result of the previous two points, this class is generally transferable.

- B. No Lab

- C. This course generally transfers as a(n):

1. Required course in Philosophy.
2. General education course in Humanities/Philosophy and Religion
3. Elective course in Humanities.
4. Free elective.

IV. Place of Course in College Curriculum

This course serves as a:

- A. Free Elective

- B. General Education course in Humanities/Philosophy and Religion
- C. Elective course in Humanities/Philosophy and Religion
- D. To see course transferability: a) for New Jersey schools, go to the NJ Transfer website, www.njtransfer.org; b) for all other colleges and universities, go to the individual websites.
- E. This course meets a program requirement for Medical Laboratory Technology (AAS), Interface Design & Web Development (AS), and the Veterinary Technology, An Articulated Agreement leading to the (AS) Degree in Veterinary Technology from St. Petersburg College (Florida)
- F. This course meets a program option for Social Sciences (AA), Health Science (AS), and Criminal Justice (AS)

V. Outline of Course Content

1. Introduction:
 - a. What is Philosophy?
 - i. Defining Things Clearly
 - ii. Logic 101: Identifying and Evaluating Arguments
 - b. What is Ethics?
 - i. Meta, Normative, and Applied Ethics
 - ii. The Issue of Relativism
2. History of Ethical Theory:
 - a. Virtue Ethics
 - i. Plato, Aristotle, and/or Stoics
 - b. Deontology
 - i. Kant
 - c. Consequentialism
 - i. Utilitarianism
 - ii. Non-Utilitarian Theories
 - d. Critiques of Traditional Theories
 - i. Nietzsche, Critical Theory, and/or Postmodernism
 - e. Contemporary Ethics
 - i. Anscombe, Wolf, and/or Others
3. Applications of Ethical Theory
 - a. Social-Political, Animal, Medical, Research, and/or Business Ethics

VI. A. Course Learning Outcomes

Successful completion of the course requires that students can:

1. identify fundamental elements, principles, and ethical arguments w/in philosophical texts (GE 6, ER)
2. demonstrate a holistic understanding of these elements, principles, and ethical arguments both verbally and in writing. (GE 1, 6, ER)

3. explain ethical content cross-textually w/in larger cultural and historical contexts both verbally and in writing (GE 1, 6, 7, 8, ER)
4. analyze and evaluate arguments for/against different ethical perspectives both verbally and in writing by means of independent research and logical reasoning (GE 1, 6, ER, IL, *)
5. construct original arguments in response to those arising in the history of philosophical ethics (GE 1, 6, ER, *)

* Embedded Critical Thinking

B. Assessment Instruments

Possible methods of assessment include:

1. Reading Comprehension Quizzes
2. Written Exams
3. Oral Exams
4. Essays
5. Presentations

VII. Grade Determinants

Possible grade determinants include:

1. Informal Assignments
 - a. Individual-based reflections
 - b. Group-based activities
2. Reading Comprehension Quizzes
3. Written Exams
4. Oral Exams
5. Essays
6. Presentations
7. Class Participation

Possible formats, modes, and methods for teaching/learning:

1. Lecture
2. Group/Class Discussion
3. Guided Reading
4. Informal Assignments
 - a. Individual-based reflections
 - b. Group-based activities
5. Online Videos
6. Independent Research

VIII. Texts and Materials

Suggested primary texts include:

1. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*
2. Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*
3. John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*

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.

IX. Resources

X. Check One: Honors Course Honors Options N/A

Students in the honors course will ultimately focus more on the application of ethical theories to particular issues via extra assignments, modified exams (both written and oral), and/or presentations. This process may involve adding extra texts/material.