

**Philosophy 2200: Ethics**  
**Fall 2014**

**Time and Place:** MW, 2:55-4:35, Whitby 204B

**Instructor:** Susan Hawthorne

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**Office Hours:** M, 1:30-2:30; Th 4:30-5:30, and by appointment

**Course Description**

People have debated ethics for thousands of years. Perhaps principles or laws should guide our choices? Or is happiness our guide, or easing others' suffering? Some people wonder whether such questions even have answers—maybe all the answers are relative to one's society, or there is no such thing as morality. By reading great historical works and putting them in the context of modern issues and theories, we will puzzle out answers to these and other questions for ourselves. Writing well is essential to this task. We will focus on the intrinsic connection between excellent writing and clear, cogent, and creative ethical thinking.

**Course Goals**

By taking this course, students will increase their ability to:

1. Demonstrate familiarity with major positions philosophers have taken on a range of ethical issues.
2. Articulate connections between philosophical reasoning/ethical theories and real-world issues that arise in our society and in individual students' lives.
3. Use philosophical methods to illuminate (clarify, expand on, recognize complexity in, etc.) real-world ethical issues.
4. Accurately and charitably characterize the positions and arguments presented by others in philosophical texts and in real-world contexts.
5. Develop critiques of the arguments of philosophers and others, including critiques of individual students' own arguments.
6. Develop arguments that offer support for positions of one's own, orally and in writing.
7. Write clearly in technical and persuasive modes, including demonstration of 1-6.

**Readings**

Weston, Anthony. *A 21st Century Ethical Toolbox*, ed. 3. New York, Oxford University Press, 2013.

Hacker, Diana; Nancy Sommers: *The Bedford Handbook*, ed. 9 (or 8). Boston, Bedford/St. Martin's, 2013 (or 2010) ["Bedford" in schedule]

Supplementary readings, which will be posted on the course D2L site ("D2L" on reading schedule).

### Assignments and Evaluation

Grades will be based on a standard scale:

A = 100-93; A- = 92.9-90; B+ = 89.9-87; B = 86.9-83; B- = 82.9-80; C+ = 79.9-77; C = 76.9-73; C- = 72.9-70; D+ = 69.9-67; D = 66.9-63; F = 62.9 or less. I may decrease the number of points needed to earn a grade, but will not increase the number of points needed.

Assignment	Separately graded aspects of assignment	Points
<b>Civic engagement project</b>	Writing: Proposal	20
	Writing: Progress Report	10
	Presentation	20
	Writing: Project Analysis	75
	Overall project	25
	<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	150
	Extra credit: 1-minute video	10
<b>Participation</b>	In-class writing, pop quizzes, small groups, team meetings	100
	Full group discussions	30
<b>Reflections</b>		70 (10 each)
<b>Analytic essay</b>	Draft	125
	Final	125
	<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	450
	<b>TOTAL</b>	600
<b>Attendance</b>	Missed classes	Subtractions (see below)

**IMPORTANT POLICY REGARDING LATE ASSIGNMENTS:** Writing on deadline is an important real-world skill. Think ahead so you can balance your workload. I will not accept Reflections late, and in-class assignments (pop quizzes, in-class writing, small groups) cannot be made up. I will accept other writing assignments **up to two weeks late**. However, late papers lose points. Papers worth 75 points or more lose at the rate of 5 points per day (starting after the beginning of class on the due date), up to losing 1/2 the

value of the assignment. Papers worth 20 points or fewer lose points at the rate of 1 point per day late, up to losing 1/2 the value of the assignment.

### **Attendance**

Attendance in class is important, because hearing different views about the issues/readings helps you develop and defend a deeper understanding of the material. For this reason, missing more than two classes decreases your grade. The third and fourth missed classes subtract 12 points EACH from your total.\* The fifth through seventh missed classes subtract 24 points each. Missing eight or more classes is grounds for failing the course.

*\*If individual circumstances require you to miss class, we will discuss whether granting you an exception is fair to those who attend class regularly. If you expect to have trouble attending all class periods due to circumstances beyond your control, please discuss your circumstances with me before you miss your first class.*

### **Participation**

Throughout the semester, you can earn points for in-class writing, pop quizzes, and small group activities (+20 points total). *No make-ups for in-class participation points.*

For full participation in group activities, you will need your reading materials. *Please bring the assigned readings—book and/or printout—to class each day.*

### **More about Full-Class Discussion**

Your participation grade takes two general criteria into account:

- 1) Quality – Participation does not just mean raising a hand and speaking. The quality makes a big difference, and the goal is to ensure that you are absorbing and ready and able to discuss and analyze the principles raised in readings and class.
- 2) Quantity and consistency – Usually, the more actively you participate, the better, as long as the quality is there and you participate consistently throughout the course, *and as long as your participation does not block or diminish participation opportunities for others.*

In addition, I will consider the following factors:

- Preparedness (was it clear you had studied the day's assignments?)
- Engagement (did you engage with the materials and other students, or did you remain at the periphery of the class discussion or raise off-topic issues?)
- Small group contribution (did you contribute meaningfully, sensitively, and appropriately in small group discussions?)
- Non-dominance/non-monopolization of conversation (did you allow others to

Speak/contribute?)

- Respect (did you show respect for all individuals in the class, e.g., not interrupt or talk over others?)

- Voluntariness of participation (did you volunteer or did I have to ask you to participate?)

- Sensitivity (did you show sensitivity to others in the class, e.g., use non-sexist, non-racist, non-ageist, non-homophobic language?)

Thus, the grading for large group discussion will be based on presence/absence/degree of the following:

1. Consistent contributions
2. Preparedness
3. Quality moves discussion forward
4. Contributions voluntary
5. No negatives, like lack of respect, dominating discussion, insensitivity

30 points: #s 1-5 consistently meet the standards above.

25-29 points: #s 1-5 mostly present. For example: #4 often missing, but remainder met.

20-24 points: Two criteria missing, but other good qualities. OR multiple instances of negatives.

1-19 points: Various combinations of low #2-#4 OR high negatives or low #1.

### **Our Time in Class**

Call me a Luddite, if you will, but it's my observation that students who are using laptops, tablets, cell phones, etc., in class are not also attending to what is happening in class. This wastes that student's class time and—even more importantly—distracts and disrespects classmates and me. Snacking during class has similar effects, unless you bring enough for everyone to share (beverages seem to be OK!). So: *Turn off the electronics for the time you are in class.\* And fortify yourself before class starts, unless you're bringing treats for all.*

\*If there is some reason you must use electronics, please let me know why, in writing. Include your plan for avoiding distractions to you and other students.

### **Writing, general instructions**

This is a writing intensive course, so you'll have a variety of writing assignments. For each, the following hold:

**Audience:** General. Assume the reader has not read the text you are discussing, and/or is not familiar with the specific issue you raise. Be sure to give the information the reader needs to understand your point.

**Citation style:** *You do not need to include a bibliography for your Reflection entries.* For all other papers, include proper citations and a bibliography—even for the readings in your course texts. Cite page numbers with any quote. You may choose any bibliographic style (Chicago, MLA, APA, etc.), but be consistent. Failure to include the proper citations and bibliography will result in an automatic deduction of one half grade.

**Minimize quoting:** Instead, almost always put material in your own words. At some points, you will summarize or paraphrase another author's words: learn these arts.

**Logistics:** Hand in all assignments as attachments to the D2L Dropbox. Be aware that you cannot upload to D2L from an iPad! So I can comment directly on your document, upload in a word processing format, NOT a pdf. (Thank you!)

### **More about the reflections**

Your reflections are a learning tool for you. Each will be your response to a question about the readings. I will post the question on D2L the week before it is due. Upload your responses to D2L before the start of class; this will help you prepare for discussion. Entries should be at least 300 words long (about one full double-spaced page). They should *demonstrate that you have (1) read and (2) thought about the readings.* Reflection grades are based on clarity and completeness, as well as on demonstrating #1 and #2. While the writing need not be formal, do follow standard rules for grammar, sentence structure, and paragraph form. Consult "The Bedford Handbook" as needed.

### **Writing, specific assignments**

Detailed assignments for the papers associated with your civic engagement project (the \$20 challenge) are included in the \$20 challenge instruction document. I will provide specific instructions for other writing assignments closer to the due dates.

### **O'Neill Center for Academic Development**

The Writing/Reading Center offers free one-on-one assistance with your papers. Trained peer tutors are available during drop-in hours throughout the semester, and they can help you in any stage of the writing process, from brainstorming to writing the final draft. Workshops, handouts, and resources on a variety of topics, such as MLA and APA style, thesis construction, and grammar/punctuation rules are also available for you. The Writing/Reading Center is located in the O'Neill Center for Academic Development in the lower level of the CdC. Drop in hours and more information can be found at: <http://minerva.stkate.edu/offices/academic/oneill.nsf> or by calling the O'Neill Center at 651-690-6563.

### **For Students with Disabilities:**

Saint Catherine University values diversity and inclusion. The University recognizes that disability is an aspect of diversity. Our goal is to create learning environments that are usable, equitable, inclusive and welcoming. If there is an aspect of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your inclusion or to accurate assessment or

achievement related to your disability, please notify me as soon as possible. Students are also welcome to contact Lisa King or Patty Wallway in Resources for Disabilities in the O'Neill Center, # 651-690-6563 for further information about academic adjustments or accommodations.

### **Academic Integrity**

St. Catherine University is committed to Academic Integrity and asks all students, faculty and staff to live out integrity's core values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility (taken from the International Center for Academic Integrity fundamental values project). These values lie at the heart of academic and professional excellence. Following a common standard of ethical behavior is critical to creating a rigorous educational environment and fulfilling the mission of the University. Academic dishonesty consists of any deliberate attempt to falsify, fabricate or otherwise tamper with data, information, records, or any other material that is relevant to participation in any course, laboratory, or other academic exercise or function. Your *Bedford Handbook* has some excellent guidelines regarding plagiarism. For more detail on what constitutes a transgression of academic integrity, and for what the consequences might be, see [http://minerva.stkate.edu/internal/instructional\\_technologies.nsf/files/acad\\_integ\\_policy2013/\\$file/academic\\_integrity\\_policy\\_oct2013.pdf](http://minerva.stkate.edu/internal/instructional_technologies.nsf/files/acad_integ_policy2013/$file/academic_integrity_policy_oct2013.pdf). Any transgression compromises the worth of a St. Catherine degree.

**Abbreviations on Course Schedule:**

D2L = Course web site

AE = Argumentative essay

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Other assignments</b>
Sept 3	Intro	--	--
Sept 8	Re-introducing ethics	Chap 1 (3-27)	Reflection
Sept 10	Ethics-avoidance disorders	Chap 2, (28-44)	--
Sept 15	“Using Your Tools”	UTY (45-58); Bedford 199-250	Small group
Sept 17	Making a difference; <i>\$20 challenge team meeting</i>	Chap 17	Reflection
Sept 22	Moral vision	Chap 15	<i>Team meetings; You will share &amp; work on your plan with a small group.</i>
Sept 24	Critical thinking	Chap 9 (233-255); Bedford 141-167	Small group; <i>Team meeting; share, get feedback</i>
Sept 29	Dialogue	Chap 11 (279-311)	<b>Formal writing:</b> \$20 challenge grant proposal
Oct 1	Taking values seriously	Chap 4 (85-105)	Small group
Oct 6	Ethics of the person	Chap 5, 112-130	--
Oct 8	“	Chap 5, 130-142	Reflection
Oct 13	Ethics of happiness	Chap 6, pp. 143-155, 160-167	--
Oct 15	Poverty	UTY, pp. 168-172 (read this first!); Singer, D2L	Small group; <b>Formal writing:</b> \$20 challenge progress report
Oct 20	Ethics of virtue	Chap 7, pp. 173-200	Reflection
Oct 22	Hursthouse	D2L, pp. 233-244	Small group
Oct 27	Ethics of relationship	Chap 8, pp 201-213	--
Oct 29	Ethics of relationship	Chap 8, pp. 213-226	Small group
Nov 3	<i>\$20 challenge presentations</i>	None	\$20 challenge team presentation
Nov 5	Review, argumentative essay writing	Bedford, Review: 141-167; Bedford,	<b>Formal writing:</b> \$20 challenge analysis

		563-582	
Nov 10	Ethics and religion	Chap 4	Reflection
Nov 12	Natural law	Aquinas, D2L	--
Nov 17	Pragmatism	Jane Addams	Small group
Nov 19	When Values Clash	Chap 12; Gaza op-ed	Small group
Nov 21			<b>Formal writing:</b> AE 1st draft
Nov 24	Individual meetings with me	Bedford, 49-67	Find, upload "cases" for Dec 1 and 3.
Nov 26	"	Bedford, 49-67	None
Dec 1	Creative problem solving	Chap 13, pp. 342-360	Reflection
Dec 3	Reframing problems	Chap 14, pp. 361-386	<b>Formal writing:</b> AE 2nd draft (optional/ungraded)
Dec 8	The future of ethics	Chap 18	Reflection
Dec 10	Conclusion	Chap 17 review	--
<b>Dec 18 5 PM</b>	<i>Last day of finals</i>		<b>Formal writing:</b> AE final draft (REQUIRED); \$20 challenge analysis second draft (optional)