

ETHICS

Spring 2006

650:142

Office Hours: Tues., Thurs.

12:45-1:30, and by appt.

Email: margaret.holland@uni.edu

(Include the course title in the subject line.)

Professor Margaret Holland

Office: Baker 146

Office Phone: 273-5975

Dept. of Philosophy and

Religion, Baker 135

Dept. Phone: 273-6221

Course Description:

Ethics is concerned with questions about what constitutes a good human life and how one ought to act. This course is intended to familiarize students with some significant works written by moral philosophers, and to expose students to important issues in moral philosophy. We will discuss topics such as the role of character in a good life, the possibility of learning ethical values, and the source of moral value. In addition to becoming acquainted with traditional philosophical approaches to questions about ethics, we will discuss some contemporary issues.

Each student will be required to pursue a research project.

Required Texts:

Shafer-Landau Whatever Happened to Good and Evil?

Aristotle Nicomachean Ethics

Kant Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals

Mill Utilitarianism

All students should bring the books we are reading to each class meeting.

Suggested Text:

Becker & Becker, A History of Western Ethics

You can find helpful links on my web page: <http://fp.uni.edu/holland/>

Requirements:

(1) Students are expected to attend and participate in all class meetings, as well as read all assignments. **If you miss a class meeting, it is your responsibility to contact another student and to get the assignment and class notes. You need to make-up missed work before the next class.**

(2) Each student will pursue a research project in ethics. After selecting a research topic, the student will prepare three written assignments. The assignments are described below. Points

will be deducted for late assignments.

(3) There will be two tests during the term, and a final exam. **There will be no make-up tests unless appropriate documentation of a legitimate reason for missing the test is provided.**

Legitimate reasons for missing a test are limited to things such as: jury duty, accident, illness.

All non-emergency requests for make-up tests must be given to the instructor in writing at least two weeks prior to the test date. Emergency requests for make-up tests must be made (either on the phone or through e-mail) no later than the morning of the test. Relevant documentation of emergency requests must be received by the instructor within five days of the missed test. If these requirements are met, the instructor **may** consider providing a make-up test.

** Please familiarize yourself with UNI's Academic Ethics Policies. These policies are in the student handbook, and they can be found on-line. Search "academic ethics" on UNI's home page and you will be directed to a number of sites that explain your responsibilities on this matter. UNI's policy not only states that cheating and plagiarism are "unacceptable" but that an instructor may take further disciplinary action against any student who violates academic ethics. **In accordance with this policy, students who cheat or plagiarize will receive an automatic grade of "F" for the entire course.**

Test Dates and Grade Percentages:

Feb. 16	16% of grade
March 30	20% of grade
Final Exam Week	30% of grade

Research Report - Feb. 23	10% of grade
Annotated Bibliography – March 21	10% of grade
Paper – April 6	14% of grade

Tests will cover the readings, lectures and class discussions. Tests will consist of essays and will be comprehensive.

On Feb. 2 we will meet in the library.

Research Project Requirements:

(1) Research Report:

The Research Report should be typed, double-spaced, and include your name and the course title.

The first section of your Research Report should include a 200 word description of your topic. The description should include the names of philosophers you will use, and a description of the issues on which you will focus. Also, include information about questions you have concerning your research.

The second section of your Research Report should include the following information: a list of encyclopedias and indexes you have used in your research, a list of the terms you have used in your research, and a report (including volume and page numbers) about what you found

in each source. [For example: *Encyclopedia of Ethics*, Becker, ed.; searched Plato, justice, soul, state; found the following entries which look useful and had good bibliographies... I have put in ILL requests for.... I have copied... I have signed out of the library...] I will be sending you a chart to use for the second section of your report. Hand-in two copies of your Research Report.

Each student must use the following reference works and must include them in the research report. Additional reference works may be used and may be included in the report.

Encyclopedia of Ethics, Lawrence C. Becker, ed., Charlotte B. Becker, co-editor
Ref. BJ63.E45, second edition

A Companion to Ethics, Peter Singer, ed.
Ref. BJ1012.C62 1991

The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Paul Edwards, ed.
Ref. B51.E58

Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Edward Craig, ed.
Ref. B51. R68 1998

Philosopher's Index [electronic resource]

(2) Annotated Bibliography:

The Bibliography must be typed.

It should include no less than four articles or books which were the main sources for your research (other than assigned reading and not including reference works). Web sources should not be among your four main sources. Also, do not include encyclopedias among your four sources. The four main sources must be philosophical.

For each source write two paragraphs containing the following information: describe the source in general (i.e. provide an overview of the source), the specific use you made of it, what it contributed to your research, and which pages you read. Hand-in two copies of your Annotated Bibliography.

For the bibliography format use The University of Chicago Manual of Style or the MLA Style Sheet (see the Reference section of the library).

I have put an Annotated Bibliography from another course on Reserve in the Library for you to consult.

(3) Paper:

The paper must be typed, double-spaced.

The paper should be written in complete sentences, not in outline form.

Summarize your research. Include (1) a general introduction to your topic, (2) a description of the main points you will discuss, (3) a discussion of each point, (4) your conclusion, and further questions. Each paper should begin with a paragraph stating: "The topic of my research is ..., " then continue "Specifically, I will discuss...", "The main points I will cover are..."

The paper should be about 6 pages long.

Include a cover sheet with the following information: instructor's name, student's name,

research title, date. Also, include a revised and corrected version of your Annotated Bibliography.

Staple together the cover sheet, paper, and Annotated Bibliography.

If you would like to change your topic after you hand-in your Research Report or Bibliography, notify me and re-do the written assignments for the new topic.

Points will be deducted if any part of the written work is late. One point per day will be deducted for each part of the written assignment which is handed-in late. Also, Research Reports must be handed-in in order to receive credit for Bibliographies and papers, and Bibliographies must be handed-in in order to receive credit for papers. Written assignments which are more than one week late will receive no credit.

There are many topics which are appropriate for your research project. Possible topics include:

- moral relativism
- the role of emotion in moral knowledge
- moral agency
- moral conflicts
- responsibility and freedom
- the relation between pleasure and the good; Plato's *Gorgias*
- altruism and egoism
- politics and ethics
- feminist ethics
- loyalty
- Aristotle's view of justice
- friendship
- Kant's *Lectures on Ethics*
- Rawl's *A Theory of Justice*

Extra-Credit Option:

Students may receive extra-credit for using the UNI Writing Center to improve the quality of their Research Projects. A total of six additional points will be available through this option. Specific information about the extra-credit option will be provided in February.

We will not be reading the entire Nicomachean Ethics. The reading assignments will be:

- Book I
- Book II
- Book III, chap. 1-5
- Book VI, chap. 5-13
- Book VII, chap. 1-10
- Book X

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) provides protection from illegal discrimination for qualified individuals with disabilities. Students requesting instructional accommodations due to disabilities must arrange for such accommodations through the Office of Disability Services (ODS). The ODS is located at 103 Student Health Center and the phone number is 273-2676 (voice) or 273-3011 (TTY).