

PHILOSOPHY 335 REGIONAL INTERCOLLEGIATE ETHICS BOWL (RIEB) Fall 2009

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Office Hours: TR 1-2 PM; W: 1:00-5:00 PM; or by appointment

Course Description:

RIEB prepares students for a statewide competition at semester s end. Course content includes (1) review of moral theory, (2) introduction to/refinement of skills in moral problem solving, (3) application of moral theory to moral dilemmas across a wide range of personal, social, and professional environments, and (4) oral presentation of solutions to moral dilemmas. Students **must** participate in the RIEB (one week-end during semester).

Course Goals:

- I. Acquisition/honing of skills in applying moral theory to moral dilemmas. To wit:
 - A. Deepen appreciation of moral theories and their implications to achieve:
 1. A more nuanced appreciation of ethical theory and its applications;
 2. Improved skills in textual exegesis
 - B. Acquisition of moral problem solving skills, specifically:
 1. Skills in exegesis and analysis of moral dilemmas;
 2. Skills in application of moral concepts to particular moral conundra;
 3. Skills in researching the contexts of particular moral conundra; and
 4. Skills in oral and written justification of resolutions of moral dilemmas.
- II. Application of skills in I.A.-B. to moral dilemmas across a wide range of moral dilemmas

Course Requirements:

- I. **Attendance:** *Attendance is mandatory. I expect nothing less than perfect attendance from everyone.* Missing class including absence for any reason, arriving late, or leaving early will result in a significant reduction in your grade.
- II. **Readings:** All readings are available at <http://sites.google.com/site/csucebf09/>. Class meetings consist of discussion about the readings. *It is absolutely essential that you complete assigned readings and are prepared to discuss them. Always bring your copy of assigned readings to class each day, as we will often examine particular passages.* The readings often will be difficult. Do not despair. We will work together to maximize your understanding of the concepts and the authors arguments, and I will work with you, in class and in office hours, to answer any questions you may have. However, adequately understanding these authors requires significant effort on your part. *I cannot overstate the importance of seriously studying readings, careful intellectual preparation (for example, come prepared to answer the following questions), and attendance in which very complex material is clarified.* As you read, attempt to determine the following:
 - A. What is the author s **position**?
 - B. What **reasons moral and factual** does the author give to support the position?
 - C. What **evidence** supports the reasons given?
 - D. What does the reading contribute to the moral dilemma under consideration?
- III. **Participation:** As the course is preparing you to participate in an oral competition, you should become increasingly comfortable speaking in front of the group, and doing so in an organized fashion. Each week some portion of class periods will be devoted to formal oral presentations. Less formally, *I will randomly call on students to answer questions about and give analyses of the readings. You are expected to respond intelligently when invited to do so, so you should get in the habit of organizing your thoughts about assigned readings.*
- IV. **Research:** Though some information will be available in assigned readings, each student must assume responsibility for background information on the cases/dilemmas for which s/he will be the point person. This will require outside efforts on your part to ensure that you know the particulars of your cases inside and out.
- V. **AJs:** Every other week you will write/revise an AJ for one of the cases for which you are the point person. Given your on-going research on your cases, I expect to see increasing detail and sophistication on your understanding of the nuances of the dilemma you are addressing, and of your arguments for a particular resolution. **Each AJ must have attached a FORMAL bibliography, so that I may track your research progress.**
- VI. **RIEB Competition:** We will participate in the annual California Regional Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl competition, Saturday, December 5, 2009. The competition will be held in Chico.
- VII. **Exams:** The final exam will consist in an analysis of the team s performance at the RIEB; details TBA.

Grading:

1. Attendance, analysis of readings, & participation jointly count for 20% of course grade, or 100 points. **You will start out with these points and, with good efforts on your part, retain them.**
2. Research and written AJs will jointly count for 50% of the course grade, or 250 points.
3. Participation in the RIEB competition **is required to pass the course.** Your performance is worth 30% of the course grade, or 150 points unless you fail to attend the competition, in which case this component constitutes 100% of your grade.

Texts: NB: Always bring your text to class.

1. Readings in Philosophy 335 @ <http://sites.google.com/site/csucebf09/>.
2. A good dictionary to keep by your side and consult as needed

Rules of the Game:

1. Come to class prepared to discuss your analyses of the readings.
2. I will do all I can to help you succeed in this class. I keep office hours so you will be able to come to discuss philosophy (really, I do). Such conversations are both fun and likely to improve your grasp of course material. Besides, you pay to have my expertise available to you; so you may as well get your money's worth.
3. If you have problems understanding course material, come see me as soon as you realize you are in trouble. Wait until the week before the competition and you **and your team** will suffer.
4. I try to accommodate personal obligations/crises without being a complete sucker. **If you are unable to complete a graded assignment on the assigned date, you must notify me before class on the day the assignment is due.** If you do not, you will receive a zero for the assignment. If properly notified, I will consider an alternative.
5. To prevent unpleasant surprises, I post grades frequently. I curve grades only at semester's end, and only if no one gets a natural A, which is uncommon.
6. Anyone caught plagiarizing written work will fail the class and be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs for disciplinary action. I will recommend expulsion from university, as anyone who cheats in an ethics course clearly does not have the intellect needed to appreciate complex concepts and was admitted to university by mistake.
7. If competing requirements (e.g., extracurricular activities, job, etc.) require you to miss class often, **see me immediately.**

Reading Assignments:

- 8.25 The Nature of Applied Ethics
- 8/26 **PERSONAL FURLOUGH DAY: NO office hours or phone/email communication**
- 8.27 Moral Dilemmas and Their Resolution: *Appeals to consequences*
READ: (1) Syllabus; (2) Bentham, Ch1 (ch I & IV); (3) Appeal to Consequences; (4) Case 1. Medical Outsourcing
Writing assignment: TBA
- 9.1 Moral Dilemmas and their Resolution: *Appeals to Autonomy*
READ: Appeal to Autonomy ; Treating Someone as a Mere Means ; and Case 1. Medical Outsourcing (yes, again)
Writing assignment: TBA
- 9/2 **PERSONAL FURLOUGH DAY: NO office hours or phone/email communication**
- 9.3 Moral Dilemmas and their Resolution: *Appeals to Respect for Persons*
READ:(1) Who Counts? (2) RFP (3) Towards a Theory of Respect for Persons and (4) Case 1. Medical...
Writing assignment: TBA
- 9.8 **CAMPUS-WIDE FURLOUGH DAY: NO CLASS, office hours, or phone/email communication**
- 9/10 Moral Dilemmas and their Resolution: *Appeals to Rights*
READ:(1) Foundational Ethics of the Health Care System...: **sections I-III**; (2) Appeal to Rights; (3) Who Counts? (Yes, again) and (4) Case 1. Medical Outsourcing
Writing assignment: TBA
- 9.15 Moral Dilemmas and their Resolution: *Appeals to Virtues*
READ: (1) Virtue Ethics. Hursthouse ; and (2) Appeal to Virtues
Writing assignment: TBA
- 9.17 Moral Dilemmas and their Resolution: *Appeals to Justice*
READ: (1) Justice as Fairness (Rawls)
Writing assignment: TBA
- 9.22 Moral Dilemmas and their Resolution: *Appeals to Justice*
READ: (1) Locke: Of Property and (2) Nozick: Justice
Writing assignment: TBA
- 9.24 Researching Moral Dilemmas
READ: (1) Case 1. Medical Outsourcing and (2) Outsourcing Health Care and Moral Responsibility
- 9.29 Applying the moral appeals:
READ: (1) A Framework for Moral Reasoning (2) Case 1. Medical Outsourcing and (3) Outsourcing Health Care and Moral Responsibility (yes, again)
- 10/1 Applying the moral appeals
WRITE: An absolutely perfect AJ steps 1-5 on Case 1. Medical Outsourcing
- 10.6--12.3: TBA NOTE, THOUGH: NO CLASS on 10/15 Faculty furlough day**

12.17 Thursday, 10-11:50 AM FINAL EXAM Office hours during finals week: Monday & Wednesday 1:00-3:30 PM