

## **PHILOSOPHY 138: SOCIAL ETHICS/ETHICS BOWL**

Fall 2002  
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W 1-3

### **COURSE OUTLINE**

Course Description: This course introduces a systematic framework for thinking about ethical dilemmas that arise in personal, professional and civic life. It will review theoretical, biological and socio-cultural conceptions of moral obligation, as well as relevant socio-historical, cultural and scientific contexts. The course will enhance your ability to recognize the complex interplay between moral concepts and lived experience and to resolve moral dilemmas. You will demonstrate these abilities in the regional Ethics Bowl competition in December.

Course Objectives: Students will learn to:

- 1) analyze and construct philosophically respectable arguments;
- 2) appreciate the relationship between ethics and the natural and social sciences;
- 3) distinguish normative from factual claims;
- 4) distinguish moral, social and scientific evidence & justification;
- 5) correlate moral concepts and lived (personal, social, biological) experience; and
- 6) resolve moral dilemmas.

General Education Goals: As part of an upper division theme (Ethics and Social Policy), this course addresses a topic likely to be important throughout your life. Theme courses investigate subjects from multiple perspectives, enabling you to incorporate knowledge from the natural sciences, social sciences and humanities. In addition to expanding your general fund of knowledge and your intellectual expertise in these disciplines, this course should:

- 1) increase your ability to deal with complex issues,
- 2) encourage you to adopt a scholarly perspective to investigations, and
- 3) refine your skills in critical thinking and in written and oral communications

Text: A packet of readings is available at Sir Speedy Printing, 730 Main Street (corner of 8th Street and Main). The packet is required. Please note that Sir Speedy accepts cash and credit cards, but not checks.

Course Requirements: There will be two exams. The first exam will be based on the reading assignments, lectures and discussions related to ethical theory. This subject matter will constitute the first third of the course. The second exam will entail a case analysis that will allow you to demonstrate the skills you've mastered over the course of the semester. It will be completed during our assigned final time (which I believe is Wednesday, December 18, at 6PM).

The final two thirds of the class will be spent analyzing cases and justifying solutions to the moral dilemmas presented therein. These analyses and justifications (or AJs) will be group projects. Each group will prepare each case and turn in their assigned AJs each week. In addition, each group will present 5 or 6 of these cases in class. You will not know before class whether you will be asked to present. The case presentations will be modeled on Ethics Bowl procedures and evaluated on Ethics Bowl criteria. The final course requirement is to participate in the regional Ethics Bowl at CSU, Chico, Saturday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, 9AM to 1PM.

Your grade will be determined as follows:

2 exams	25% each	50%
Case presentations		30%
Ethics Bowl		<u>20%</u>
		100%

## CLASS SCHEDULE

### I. Moral Theory

- Utilitarianism
- Kantian Ethics
- Rights Theory
- Virtue Ethics

### II. Theories of Justice

- Rawls and Nozick

### EXAM I

### III. Case analysis and justification

- Ethics Bowl procedures and evaluation criteria

### IV. Sample cases and in-class examples

### V. Group case presentations, two per class meeting

### VI. Ethics Bowl

### VII. FINAL EXAM