Tentative Syllabus

Philosophy 181: Ethics
Summer Session I 2014
Synchronous Sessions: Thursdays 3 – 4 pm

Professor: Dr. Christina Drogalis
Office Hours: Fridays, 1 – 2pm (on Adobe Connect)
Email: cdrogalis@luc.edu

Course Description and Goals:
There are three learning objectives for this course. By the end of the semester, students will be able to:
1.) identify the major arguments found in philosophical texts.
2.) engage in philosophical discussion
3.) articulate in writing arguments from some of the major thinkers in the history of philosophy.

Throughout the course, you will be receiving feedback – both from me and from yourselves – regarding your progress towards these objectives. Your final grade will reflect whether you have achieved these goals.

Online courses in philosophy pose a particular challenge because of the lack of face-to-face interaction and the inability to have group discussions in person. For this reason, it will be very important to carefully read and follow the rubrics and guidelines for reading philosophy, online discussions, and writing papers. Also, it is important to stick to the schedule for each week and to check in with the course Sakai site often, to see what conversations are going on in the blogs and to check for updates.

Areas from the University Core Curriculum that this course satisfies:

| Knowledge Area(s) satisfied: | Philosophical Knowledge, Ethics |

Texts for the course:
There are no required texts for the course. All necessary texts will be posed on Sakai.

Course Requirements:

Your final grade will be determined based upon the following assignments:
(1) Online Discussions – 40%
(2) Short Papers – 60%

On Mondays: I will post the readings for the week, which will all be scanned in Sakai (no need to buy a textbook). I will also post your reading guide, which will accompany all readings, and all other assignments for the week. For each reading, you will be asked to answer a few questions in a blog post.

By Tuesdays by midnight: You must answer the reading questions in a blog post on Sakai.

By Wednesdays by midnight: You must respond to two blog posts with questions or comments, following the discussion rubric that I've uploaded to Sakai. Also, your assignment for your short papers, due Sundays by 5 pm, will be posted to the Assignments tab on Wednesdays.

On Thursdays from 3pm to 4pm: We will have one hour synchronous session using Adobe Connect, a program similar to Skype (although only the instructor can be seen on video, typically). There are
instructions on Sakai for how to access Adobe Connect. In these sessions, I will use an outline or powerpoint and lecture to explain parts of the text that I think are particularly challenging, summarize the conversations going on in the blog posts, and answer any questions that I see arising in the blog post discussions.

**On Fridays from 1 pm to 2 pm:** I will host office hours on Adobe Connect. This is optional but can be helpful if you're struggling with the material or have questions that pertain to your paper assignment.

**By 5 pm on Sunday:** Your paper for the week must be uploaded to Sakai.

**Online Discussions:**
One of the goals of this course is to learn to engage in philosophical discussion. In order to do this, you must participate in online blog discussions. Each week, when the reading is assigned, you will also be given 3 or 4 questions to answer in an blog post. Some of these questions will ask you about the content, while some will ask you to think about and respond to a certain aspect of the reading. You must answer these questions in a blog post by Tuesday at midnight. Then, by Wednesdays at midnight, you must respond to at least two students' blog posts.

You will be graded on these two tasks. I will grade your participation based on the Online Discussion Rubric that I've posted on Sakai. Please look at this rubric before starting a blog post. The rubric not only lets you know what criteria I'll use to assess your participation but has helpful instructions regarding how to have a productive online discussion. Each week's participation will be worth 6% of your final grade, with your original blog post answers to the reading questions counting for 3% and your response to two other students' posts counting for 3%, as well. All together, blog post discussion participation will count for 36% of your final grade.

The additional 4% of your online discussion grade will come from your attendance in the weekly synchronous sessions. In these sessions, I will ask you each to answer a question or participate in a small group discussion. If you are present to participate in these, you will receive 2/3 of a percentage towards your final grade. (If you are unable to attend a synchronous session, please let me know in advance.)

**Reading Assignments:**
Each week, on Monday mornings, I will post your reading assignment for the week. **There is no textbook required for this course.** All readings will be scanned and posted onto Sakai. They will each be accompanied by a reading guide, to help with your navigation of the text, and several questions that you will be asked to answer in your weekly blog post. The weekly reading questions are intended to help you to develop the skill of identifying the major arguments in a philosophical text.

**Short Papers:**
Six times during the semester, you will be assigned a short paper topic. This assignment will be posted to Sakai on Wednesdays, under the Assignments tab. These papers are intended to help you to improve your ability to articulate in writing the philosophical arguments that we're focusing on that week. There will be a guide and rubric for this kind of assignment on Sakai. These papers should be approximately 3 pages long and must be uploaded to Sakai by Sunday at midnight. **(Note: I am not a stickler about length. These papers should be around 3 pages, but being slightly under (around 2.5) or slightly over (around 4) is fine, as long as you have clearly and completely answered the essay prompt. The 3 page rule is simply a guideline. I think that answering each essay question should require you to write around 3 pages, though sometimes you may require more space to fully answer that week's question.)** Each paper will be worth 10% of your final grade.
Late papers will be accepted up to 2 days late, with a 2/3 of a grade penalty for each day that it is late. For example, if your paper earned a B+, it will be lowered to a B-, if it is one day late. Because of the quick pace of the class and how easy it is to fall behind, no late papers will be accepted after 2 days past the deadline (that is, no later than Tuesdays by 5pm).

**Online Etiquette:**
In this course, we will be working together to achieve the goals of the class. Because of this, we will do those things that help us to achieve those goals and avoid behaviors and activities that do not help us to achieve them. Please follow the rubric for online discussions and always treat other class members with respect.

**Accommodations for Disabilities:**
From the Loyola University handbook: “At times, students with disabilities may wish to avail themselves of the University's ancillary services. Students who would like accommodations at the University need to contact the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities. Contact information is available at [www.luc.edu/sswd](http://www.luc.edu/sswd).”

**Tentative Course Schedule of Readings and Assignments:**

**WEEK ONE: INTRODUCTION**
1.) What is philosophy?
2.) How do you read a philosophical text?

*Readings:*
Pierre Hadot, “Philosophy as a Way of Life”
David Concepción, “How to Read Philosophy”

**WEEK TWO: VIRTUE ETHICS AND FRIENDSHIP**
1.) According to Aristotle, what is friendship?
2.) What are the three kinds of friendships?
3.) Why must a person be good in order to have a complete friendship?

*Readings:*
Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*

**WEEK THREE: UTILITARIANISM AND SUFFERING**
1.) What is utilitarianism?
2.) How does a utilitarian determine if an action is right or wrong?

*Readings:*
John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*
Peter Singer, *What Should a Billionare Give and What Should You?*

**WEEK FOUR: DEONTOLOGY AND RESPECT FOR OTHERS**
1.) What is deontology?
2.) According to Kant, how do we determine whether an action is right or wrong?

*Readings:*
Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*
Onora O’Neill, “Between Consenting Adults”

**WEEK FIVE: MORAL RELATIVISM**

1.) Is there a universal standard of right and wrong?

*Readings:*
Richard Brandt, “Ethical Relativism”
Ruth Benedict, “A Defense of Ethical Relativism”
James Rachels, “The Challenge of Cultural Relativism”

**WEEK SIX: APPLIED ETHICS: TOPIC OF YOUR CHOICE**

This week, you will each select an ethical issue that you’d like to examine. You will then use utilitarianism and deontology to decide what the right action is in your particular issue. You will be required to do external research on the topic in place of assigned readings.

*Readings:*
To be decided

**Academic Dishonesty:**
Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism of any kind, including unintentional plagiarism, plagiarism in drafts of papers, purchasing papers written by someone else, googling information and using it without citing, and stealing and sharing other's answers or ideas. You are expected to have read and to abide by the University's honor code and policy on plagiarism, which are available online. Students found to be guilty of academic dishonesty will receive a punishment of an F in the course, at minimum, or recommendation for expulsion from the University, at maximum. (In the extremely rare event of a mitigating circumstance, a punishment of an F on the assignment is possible.)

**Email Policy:**
I will make every effort to respond to student emails within 24 hours on weekdays and 48 hours on weekends. Before emailing me with a question, however, please post the question in the Student Question section of Sakai. A fellow student might be able to answer your question faster than I can, or I can answer your question there, where it might help other students with the same question. (For this reason, also check first to see if your question has already been asked and answered there.) However, if your question is personal or only pertains to you, feel free to email me.

**Grading Scale:**

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<tr>
<td>100-94</td>
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<td>93-90</td>
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