



**NORTHWEST**  
MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY  
MARYVILLE | KANSAS CITY

College of Arts and Sciences  
Department of Humanities and Social Sciences

**Professional Ethics**  
PHIL 39275, 48 contact hours, 3 credit hours

**5-Week Summer Session**

**Instructor:** TBA

**E-mail:** TBA

**Office Hours:** By appointment

**Course Description:**

An examination of the fundamental concepts, principles and major theoretical approaches of ethics used to determine the moral demands of human conduct with applications to ethical questions of contemporary interest. This course focuses on professional ethics.

**Rationale:**

The focus of this course will be on the variety of moral issues raised in the practice of business and the professions. The methods employed to achieve maximum profit or return on investment often raise issues of honesty and fair-play. The doctor/patient or nurse/patient relationship in the health professions raises issues of disclosure of information and informed consent. The lawyer/client relationship in the legal profession raises questions concerning what measures are permissible for a lawyer to represent the interests of his/her client. For those who are seeking a career in any of these or other professions, it is important to gain some familiarity with these issues, to consider the relevant factors involved, and to consider how they might be reasonably addressed. These issues also serve as valuable test cases in determining the adequacy of various ethical theories and widely accepted ethical principles.

**Objectives:**

The objectives of this course are:

- to gain a familiarity with a variety of ethical issues that are raised by business and professional practice;
- to consider these issues from a number of different theoretical perspectives; to evaluate the adequacy of the proposed solutions to these issues.



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**Outcomes:**

Student Learning	Assessment Methods
Communication	Exams, Papers
Critical Thinking	Exams, Papers
Managing Information	Exams, Papers
Valuing	Exams, Papers

**Required Texts:**

Richard Field, *A Practical Guide to Ethical Theory*

Joan C. Callahan, ed., *Ethical Issues in Professional Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).

Available at Textbook Rental Services, #CAET 1988.

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**Content/Readings:**

**Part I: Moral Reasoning and Ethical Theory**

[All required readings are in *A Practical Guide to Ethical Theory*

Recommended readings are in Joan C. Callahan, ed., *Ethical Issues in Professional Life*.]

**Introduction to Course**

I. Ethics

- [Recommended Exercises: [Normative/Descriptive Statements](#) ]

**Moral Reasoning**

II. Moral Reasoning: Principles and Problems

- [Recommended Reading: Callahan, ch. 1, "Basics and
- Background", pp. 3-19.] [Recommended Exercises:  
[Analyzing Simple Moral Arguments](#)]

**Ethical Theory**

III. Theoretical Normative Ethics

- [Recommended Exercise: [Applying Basic Moral Principles](#)]

IV. Teleological Ethical Theory

V. Deontological Ethical Theory

- [Recommended Exercises: [Recognizing Ethical Theories in Moral Argumentation](#),



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[Recognizing Ethical Theories in Argument, Formulating Maxims \(Kantian Ethics\),  
Correct and Incorrect Applications of the Universal Law Formulation of the  
Categorical Imperative, Correct and Incorrect Applications of Contractarianism\]](#)

- VI. Applying Ethical Theory: Some General Suggestions
  - [Recommended Reading: Callahan, ch. 1, pp. 19-24.]
  - [Recommended Exercise: [A series of exercises on various topics](#)]

## Part II: Professional Ethics

[All required readings are in Joan C. Callahan, ed., *Ethical Issues in Professional Life*.]

### **Professionals and Clients: Models and Metaphors** (Callahan, ch. 4) Veatch,

- "Models for Ethical Medicine in a Revolutionary Age," pp. 89-92.
- May, "Contract or Covenant?" pp. 92-95.
- Bayles, "The Professional-Client Relationship," pp. 113-20.
- Case: Police and Paternalism, pp. 120-21.

### **Occupational and Ordinary Morality** (Callahan, ch. 3)

- Freedman, "Professional Responsibility of the Criminal Defense Lawyer: The Three Hardest Questions," pp. 51-58.
- Wasserstrom, "Lawyers as Professionals: Some Moral Issues, pp. 58-69. Carr, "Is Business Bluffing Ethical?" pp. 69-72.
- Gillespie, "The Business of Ethics," pp. 72-76. Nagel, "Ruthlessness in Public Life," pp. 76-83.
- Case: Zealous Advocacy and Cross-Examining the Truthful Witness, pp. 84-85.

### **Deception** (Callahan, ch. 5)

- Ellin, "Special Professional Morality and the Duty of Veracity," pp. 130-39. Collins, "Should Doctors Tell the Truth?" pp. 139-41.
- Bok, "Lying and Lies to the Sick and Dying," pp. 141-50.
- Bok, "Lies for the Public Good," pp. 150-56. Case: Hiring the Ex-Convict, pp. 169-70.

### **Informed Consent** (Callahan, ch. 6)

- Ingelfinger, "Informed (but Uneducated) Consent)," pp. 180-82. Gorovitz, "Informed Consent and Patient Autonomy," pp. 182-88. Mitford, "Cheaper than Chimpanzees," pp. 189-93.



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- Cohen, "Medical Experimentation on Prisoners," pp. 193-201.  
Case: Back from the Dead, pp. 202-3.
- Case: Psychosurgery for a Sexual Offender, pp. 203-4.
- **Individual and Collective Responsibility** (Callahan, ch. 8)
  - French, "Corporate Moral Agency," pp. 265-69.
  - Danley, "Corporate Moral Agency: The Case for Anthropological Bigotry," pp. 269-74.
  - French, "What Is Hamlet to McDonnell-Douglas or McDonnell-Douglas to Hamlet: DC-10," pp. 274-81.
  - Muyskens, "The Nurse as a Member of a Profession," pp. 290-95. Case: The Ford Pinto, 296-97.
- **Social Responsibility and Justice** (Callahan, ch. 10)
  - Friedman, "The Social Responsibility of Business," pp. 349-50.
  - Anshen, "Changing the Social Contract: A Role for Business," pp. 351-54.
  - Freedman, "Access to the Legal System: The Professional Obligation to Chase Ambulances," pp. 368-74.
  - McCullough, "The Right to Health Care," pp. 375-81. Case: Care for the Uninsured, pp. 383-84.
  - Case: Doctors Punish Lawyers, pp. 384-85.

Note: Course schedule is subject to change with instructor notification and students will be responsible for abiding by these changes.

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**Methods of Instruction:** This course will be delivered fully online, and all instructional methods and assessments outlined as follows will be adapted to this format on Canvas. Initially this course will be conducted in a traditional lecture format, with emphasis placed on achieving a basic understanding of the various theoretical approaches of normative ethics. Following this, the format will change to a mixture of lecture, class and group discussion of particular ethical issues raised by professional practice, and cases that illustrate these issues.



Course Evaluation:

Course Grade Calculation		
Examinations will be graded point scale, and will be calculate the examination according to the following	Averaged exam grades and paper grades will receive a a 12 point scale.	To determine the final grade, exam and paper grade using
98-100 A+	A+ 12	12-11.5 A+
92-97 A	A 11	<11.5-10.5 A
90-91 A-	A- 10	<10.5-9.5 A-
88-89 B+	B+ 9	<9.5-8.5 B+
82-87 B	B 8	<8.5-7.5 B
80-81 B-	B- 7	<7.5-6.5 B-
70-79 C-/C/C+	C+ 6	<6.5-5.5 C+
60-69 D-/D/D+	C 5	<5.5-4.5 C
Below 60 F	C- 4	<4.5-3.5 C-
	D+ 3	<3.4-2.5 D+
	D 2	<2.5-1.5 D
	D- 1	<1.5-0.5 D-
	F -1	<0.5 F
	Note that for exams, the assigned could be below -1 in low failures.	

**Grading:** The final grade will be determined on the basis of (1) four examinations, worth together 50% of the course grade, (2) papers and/or class presentation, worth 50% of the course grade. Regular participation in class discussions, however, will also be considered, and may add as much as a full letter grade to the course grade calculation. Also significant improvement in grades could result in a higher grade. Note: four examinations and one paper are the minimum requirements for the course. Failure to fulfill these requirements will result in an F for the course. (In certain cases Canvas will calculate a different final grade than per my calculations. In such cases, as well as cases of improved grades because of participation and improvement, the necessary adjustments will be made in Canvas gradebook utilizing "adjustment points.")



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**Paper:** You are required to write one paper in this course (1,000 words in length). Two paper assignments will be handed out in class. The first paper assignment is required. If you wish to attempt to improve your paper grade, you may write the second optional paper, and the highest of the two paper grades will count as the paper grade for the course. Due dates will be announced in class. The topics for both papers will be handed out in class. Note: the first paper assignment is required. Failure to complete this paper will constitute failure to complete the minimum requirements for the course. .

**Examinations:** There will be four examinations in this course, each counting for 1/4 of the examination grade. These examinations will be graded on a 100 point scale, and will be averaged to calculate the examination grade according to the scale above. Dates and times for the first three exams will be announced in class. The last exam will be administered during the final examination session. No exams will be cumulative.

**Class presentation option:** Instead of writing a second paper, you may opt to offer a class presentation for the same credit on a topic of your choice. Topics must be approved by the instructor by the due date of the second paper (to be announce in class). The instructor will then schedule a date for the presentation. Presentations should be at least 10 minutes in length. The student will also be asked to respond to questions from the students and instructor. In addition to the presentation, a 300 word summary of the presentation must be handed in on the date that it is given. If you choose to do a class presentation, you can still write the optional third paper to improve your paper grade. The grade for this paper is higher than that of either the first paper or your class presentation, it will replace the lowest of these grades. More will be said about this option in class. Note: failure to offer a presentation on a scheduled date will result in an F for the assignment that **will not be expunged by writing a third paper. Also, be sure to arrive on time the day of your presentation. Tardiness may result in a failing grade.**

**Attendance:** Students are expected to attend all classes as specified in the course syllabi for each course. It is the responsibility of the student to promptly notify his or her instructor when unable to attend class.

**Final exams:** If an emergency occurs that prevents the administration of a course scheduled final examination, the final course grades will be calculated based on the work in the course completed to that point in time and the faculty member's considered judgment. Final exams will not be rescheduled, and a grade of "I" will not be given as a result of an institutional cancellation of a final examination. This final exam policy does not apply to online courses.

**Administrative drop:** An instructor may request the Office of the Registrar delete a student from a course roster if the student has not met the prerequisite for the course as stated in the catalog, or as a result of non-attendance in the course.

**Academic integrity policy:** The students, faculty, and staff at Northwest endeavor to sustain an environment that values honesty in academic work, that acknowledges the authorized aid provided by and intellectual contributions of others, and that enables equitable student evaluation. Please refer to Northwest Missouri State University's Academic Integrity Policy at <http://www.nwmissouri.edu/policies/academics/Academic-Integrity.pdf>



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**Non-discrimination and anti-harassment policy:** Northwest Missouri State University is committed to maintaining an environment for all faculty, staff, students, and third parties that is free of illegal discrimination and harassment. Please refer to the Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy at <http://www.nwmissouri.edu/diversity/titlevi.htm>

**Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) policy:** Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended (commonly known as the Buckley Amendment), is a federal law which provides that colleges and universities will maintain the confidentiality of student education records. Please refer to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) Policy at <http://www.nwmissouri.edu/policies/academics/Family-Educational-Rights-and-Privacy-Act.pdf>