

## **PHI 122: Ethics**

Spring 2010, Section 02

M 6:00 – 8:40 pm

TBA

### **Instructor Information:**

Shawn E. Klein

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Office: Lang 114

Office Phone: 815-226-4115

Office Hours: MW 11:30-1:30; M 3:30-5; and by appointment.

Class Website: <http://www.whoneedsphilosophy.com/>

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/rcphil>

### **Catalog Description:**

A survey of theories of values and virtues, rights and duties, with application to contemporary issues such as affirmative action, capital punishment, environmentalism, and censorship. PRQ: None. Credits: 3.00

### **Course Objectives:**

At the end of the semester, the student should be able to:

1. Critically engage and evaluate philosophical argument.
2. Identify and explain what is controversial about a moral issue.
3. Understand and evaluate the different proposed resolutions to these issues.
4. Develop and defend one's own ethical beliefs about these issues.

### **Textbook:**

PHI 122 Reader available from University Readers. See below for ordering instructions.

Remaining readings available from class or website: [www.whoneedsphilosophy.com](http://www.whoneedsphilosophy.com)

### **Reader Ordering Instructions:**

Step 1: Log on to [www.universityreaders.com](http://www.universityreaders.com).

Step 2: Click on the white "STUDENTS BUY HERE" button located in the "Student Store" section (upper right-hand corner of the page).

Step 3: Create an account or log in if you have an existing account to purchase.

Step 4: Easy-to-follow instructions will guide you through the rest of the ordering process. Payment can be made by all major credit cards or with an electronic check.

Please direct all ordering questions to [orders@universityreaders.com](mailto:orders@universityreaders.com) or call 800.200.3908.

**Grading and Evaluation:**

Final grades are based on a 400-point system consisting of the following:

Participation	50
Reading Focus Papers	100
Class Focus Papers	100
Exam 1	50
Exam 2	50
Exam 3	50
Total:	400 pts

The grading scale is as follows:

374 – 400	94 – 100 %	A
358 – 373	90 - 93 %	A-
346 – 357	87 - 89 %	B+
334 – 345	84 – 86 %	B
318 – 333	80 - 83 %	B-
306 – 317	77 - 79 %	C+
294 – 305	74 – 76 %	C
278 – 293	70 - 73 %	C-
238 – 277	60 – 69 %	D
0 – 237	0 – 59 %	F

**Class Participation & Attendance:**

Class participation is an essential part of the philosophical process and classroom learning. Class participation includes taking part in class and group discussions as well as other in-class assignments. Out of class homework assignments may be included as part of the student's class participation grade.

Attendance as such is not required, but students are expected to attend every class. Regular class attendance is necessary in order to understand the material in this class and to participate. Students should plan to attend all classes and participate in discussions and class exercises. Tardiness or leaving early is not appreciated, and if happens often enough, it *will* affect your final grade.

If students miss a class, for whatever reason, it is *their* responsibility to find out what work was missed. They should always get class notes from another student. The students are responsible for the work from any missed class.

Quizzes or any other in-class worked missed due to an absence cannot be made up.

*Senior Day:* Seniors planning to participate in senior day must see the instructor for permission to miss class.

## **Focus Papers:**

*Reading Focus Papers:* one-page discussion that answers the following question: “What do you think was the most important point or central concept expressed in the reading?”

You should not summarize the article; discuss your personal preferences, or biographical or historical information.

You can turn a reading paper for any assigned reading.

*Class Focus Papers:* one-page discussion that answers the following questions: (1) “What do you think was the most important point made in class today?” and if appropriate, (2) “What unanswered questions do you still have?”

You should not summarize or outline the class; give an evaluation of the class, or focus on class business.

Only one class paper per class period will be accepted. Pre-break and post-break portions of class are each distinct class periods.

### Format Requirements:

- One typed page, no more, no less.
- Standard fonts (Times New Roman, Arial, etc.),
- Standard font size (12 pt.),
- double-spaced,
- Standard margins (1” or 1.25” all around).

Papers not meeting these requirements will not be accepted and will be returned students without a grade. Papers that contain significant grammatical or spelling errors will not be accepted and will be returned to the students without a grade. These returned papers cannot be resubmitted.

*No late papers will be accepted;* if you miss a class, you miss the paper. Class Focus Papers are accepted only at the next class meeting. Reading Focus Papers are accepted on the days of discussing that reading. Papers will *only* be accepted in class. Papers will *not* be accepted by email without prior permission.

Each paper is worth up to 10 points. Your grade is based on earning 100 points for Reading papers and 100 points for Class papers. You can do as many as 15 papers in each set, but once you reach 100 points in that set, no more papers will count towards your grade.

These assignments make up a significant portion of your final grade, so failure to do them will severely hurt your grade.

See the attached Sample Paper for a guide on how your papers should look. See the attached Focus Paper Grading Rubric for how the papers will be graded.

**Exams:**

There will be three in-class exams, each worth 50 points. Each of the exams will cover an instructor designated selection of material. Unless explicitly declared otherwise, students should expect any material covered in any reading, lecture, or discussion to be fair game for an exam question. The structure is open to change by the instructor based on class needs and the final composition of each exam will be explained in class when the exam is handed out.

**Academic Misconduct:**

Students are expected to adhere to the Rockford College Academic Honor Code. Plagiarism and cheating of any kind will not be tolerated under *any* circumstances. Please see the Student Code section of the Student Handbook (available from the Rockford College website: <http://www.rockford.edu/?page=StudentHandbook>) for a full explanation of plagiarism and Academic Misconduct.

If you are unsure if a situation falls under academic dishonesty or not, consult the instructor prior to turning in the work.

**If you turn in a plagiarized paper, exam, or any other product of academic misconduct, this will result, at instructor's discretion, in a failing grade for the *entire* course, appropriate college authorities will be notified, and disciplinary procedures will be initiated.**

**Classroom Behavior:**

It is expected that all students will behave in a polite, respectable manner at all times, and that they will always be tolerant and civil towards their fellow students and instructor. Any other behavior at any time will not be tolerated. The instructor reserves the right to remove a student if they fail to follow this policy.

**Dropping/Withdrawal:**

It is part of a student's academic responsibility to decide whether or not to drop or withdraw from a course once enrolled. If you find this course does not meet your needs or that you need to withdraw for some other reason, you must take the appropriate actions to drop or withdraw from the course. If you need to withdraw but are unable to come to campus, please contact me via telephone or email. *Instructor will not drop any students for non-attendance.*

**Electronics:**

All cell-phones, pagers, and other electronic devices must be turned off during class times. See the instructor if there is a reason that you need such a device on.

It is permissible to use a laptop to take notes, but any internet connections must be turned off. This privilege will be suspended if the laptop is used for a purpose unrelated to classroom activities.

Texting or messaging of any kind is not permitted during class. If a student cannot resist, then the device will be confiscated for the duration of the class period.

You must get instructor approval for recording of classroom activities.

**Statement of Accommodation:**

If you believe you are eligible to receive any type of academic accommodation, through such federal laws as the ADA, please contact the Lang Center for Health, Wellness, and Counseling, 815 226-4083. The Lang staff manages disability services for Rockford College

**Course Schedule:**

Attached to this syllabus is the schedule for this course. Keep in mind that the schedule is tentative and open to change at the instructor's discretion.

**Addendums:**

- Confirmation form: This form must be signed and returned to instructor.
- Sample Focus Paper.
- Focus Paper Grading Rubric
- Information on being a philosophy major

Date	Unit	Readings
Mon, 1/25	Introduction; Is Morality Relative?	Pojman, Louis. "The Case Against Moral Relativism"
Mon, 2/1	Is Morality Relative?	
Mon, 2/8	Does Morality Require Religion?	Arthur, John. "Why Morality Does Not Depend on Religion"
Mon, 2/15	What's the Point?	Solomon, Robert. "Utilitarianism" and "Kant and Deontology"; Smith, Tara. "Morality's Root in Life"
Mon, 2/22	Does Morality Require Altruism?	Rand "The Soul of an Individualist"; Pojman, Louis. "The Ayn Rand Argument for the Virtue of Selfishness"
Mon, 3/1	Honesty and Lying; Exam 1	Frankfurt Transcript (online); Bok, Sissela, "Never to Lie?"
Mon, 3/8	Spring Break	
Mon, 3/15	Honesty and Lying	Smith, Tara. "White Lies"; Hsieh, Diana. "Dursley Duplicity" (online)
Mon, 3/22	Loyalty and Integrity	Integrity Handout
Mon, 3/29	Love and Sex	Branden, Nathaniel. "The Need and Desire for Love"; McGinn, Colin. "Sex"
Mon, 4/5		
Mon, 4/12	Animals; Exam 2	Machan, Tibor. "Concern for Animals"; Curnutt, Jordan "A New Argument for Vegetarianism"; TBD
Mon, 4/19	Animals	
Mon, 4/26	Drugs and Alcohol	Boaz, David. "A Drug-Free America--or A Free America" (online); TBD
Mon, 5/3		
Mon, 5/10	Exam 3	
<p>This schedule is a tentative and rough guide to the semester.  It is subject to change depending on the needs and contingencies of class.  All readings are from the reader unless otherwise noted.</p>		

Student\_Name

Date\_Handed\_In

Reading Paper for [Title\_of\_Assigned\_Reading] or Class Paper for [Date\_of\_Class]

This is the text body for the sample focus paper. Your paper should look very much like this sample. You should follow a very simple structure. The first paragraph should introduce what you are focusing on. The middle paragraphs should develop this idea. The last paragraph should tie it together and conclude.

Remember, in your paper there shouldn't be any historical or biographical material unless it is relevant for the focus of your paper. Also, I am not looking for your personal review of the readings or class. Avoid puffery and superficial comments. You don't have a lot of space and so you need to focus, focus, and focus. What you should be doing is finding one point that you think is most important in either the reading or the class and tell me about that point.

You must make sure to proof-read your papers. Grammar and proper spelling are not just for English classes. They exist to help you make your points more clearly and avoid confusion. You shouldn't need to include quotes or do external research, I want to hear what you think is important and in your own words. But, in cases where you do provide a quote or make use of someone else's ideas, you must provide appropriate citation. Failure to do so is academic misconduct and you will be punished appropriately.

## Focus Paper Grading Rubric

- **Accuracy and Understanding:**
  - Are you accurately representing the ideas from the article or class?
  - Are you demonstrating your grasp of the material by being able to put the ideas into your own words?
  - Things to avoid:
    - Factual errors
    - Reliance on long, direct quotations
    - Vague claims/attributions
    - Merely listing ideas or statements from class or readings
  
- **Critical Thought:**
  - Have you provided reasons and specific evidence to support your claims?
  - Do you provide unique examples and illustrations that support your claims?
  - Things to avoid:
    - Being non-specific or too general
    - Making a claim without providing grounding
  
- **Conciseness and Clarity:**
  - Can anyone pick up the paper and know what you are talking about?
  - Do you have a clear focus?
  - Things to avoid:
    - Jumping from idea to idea without transitions
    - Poor grammar, spelling, or organization that interfere with communication
    - Trying to recap the class or summarize the reading
  
- **Relevancy:**
  - Focus of your paper is something that is an actual candidate for being the most important or central idea.
  - Can you say what you want to say while staying focused on your point?
  - Things to avoid:
    - Unnecessary introductions or conclusions/Puffery
    - Irrelevant personal material or anecdotes
    - Going off on tangents unrelated to class/readings
    - Focusing on some offhand, tangential comment by professor/author.
      - (Exception: if you really think this is the most important point, then make the case)
  
- **Mechanical:**
  - Proof read; Use complete sentences
  - Double check spelling of names, new concepts
  - Standard margins, double-spaced, standard type-face and font-size
  - On time

## **Majoring in Philosophy: Graduate School and Career Benefits**

Socrates famously said “The unexamined life is not worth living.” We might update that to say “The *examined* life will make you a living.” Majoring in philosophy prepares you not just for a life of rational reflection, but for your career and professional life.

### *Graduate School Information:*

- LSAT (Law School Admission Test) is required for most laws schools.
  - Philosophy majors consistently score well, second only to physics/math majors, with an average score of 157.4 on the test, 5.2 points higher than the overall (weighted) mean.
- GMAT (Graduate Management Admission Test) is required for most graduate business programs, including MBAs.
  - Philosophy majors scored the fourth highest overall on the GMAT with a mean score of 580, trailing only the majors from physics, mathematics, and engineering.
- GRE (Graduate Record Exam) is required for many graduate programs.
  - According to the Educational Testing Service (ETS), philosophy majors rank first on the Verbal Reasoning and the Analytical Writing sections of the exam.

### *Careers and Professions:*

- Law
- Business/Management: from entrepreneurs and executives to marketing and public relations
- Government Service
- Clergy
- Publishing and Writing
- Medicine
- Journalism

### *A Few Notable Philosophy Majors:*

- Stephen Breyer and David Souter, Supreme Court Justices,
- Phil Jackson, NBA coach,
- Steve Martin, actor, author and comedian,
- Carl Icahn, billionaire financier,
- Carly Fiorina, former CEO, Hewlett Packard,
- Stone Philips, broadcaster
- Rudi Giuliani, former mayor of New York.

For more information, check out [www.whoneedsphilosophy.com](http://www.whoneedsphilosophy.com)

## Syllabus Confirmation Form

I acknowledge that I have read and understood the course syllabus, in particular the policies regarding academic misconduct, for [class:]\_\_\_\_\_. I agree to bring any questions or concerns to the instructor immediately.

This form must be completed, separated from the syllabus, and returned to the instructor prior to the last day to drop class (Spring 2010: 1/29/10).

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_