Philosophy 3301: Ethics  
Tom Pynn, Instructor of Philosophy  
MW 6:30-7:45, Spring 2009

To engage in a conversation means to place oneself under the leadership of the subject matter towards which the conversants are directed.

--Hans Georg-Gadamer, *Truth and Method*


E-mail address: tpynn@kennesaw.edu to be used only for communication purposes. If you use the email on WebCT/Vista, there is a chance that I may not respond for a couple of days. You are more likely to get a quicker response by using my KSU address. *Exams submitted electronically without authorization will be deleted.*

Course Description: Philosophy 2200 presents the student with an opportunity to engage in a guided philosophical examination of the different questions, texts and concepts developed by thinkers from both Western and Non-Western cultures. The student reads primary works of philosophy and engages in thoughtful discussion about the ideas raised by and in these works. Students take essay examinations, engage in class discussion, view documentaries, and attend guest lectures in the Mike Ryan Lecture Series and Peace Studies Lecture Series. All in-class and out-of-class activities focus on elevating the student’s critical ability to read philosophical texts, comprehend concepts and conceptual frameworks of the philosophers we study, and apply the ideas we study to their own self-understanding, other-understanding, and of the world they live in by speaking in class discussions and composing exam essays.

Primary Texts  
Michael C. Brannigan. *Ethics Across Cultures: An Introductory Text with Readings*

Highly Recommended: W. L. Reese, *Dictionary of Philosophy and Religion: Eastern and Western Thought* or a reputable dictionary of philosophy either in print or on-line.

Evaluation: The student will demonstrate *performative competence* in communicating (through writing and speaking) his/her understanding of the course material. Each exam emphasizes a close reading of the texts we study. The student will not use outside sources or secondary sources whether Internet, World Wide Web, journal, or book. If you want to use a text in addition to the ones required for this course you must have it OK’d by the instructor. Failure to cite outside sources on the exams, known as plagiarism, will result in an “F” for the exam. Continued plagiarism will result in your being brought before the school judiciary. See *Academic Integrity Statement* below. All exams are due when class begins. I will allow late exams only if the student contacts me about the absence at least one week prior to the exam date and/or if the student finds himself/herself in dire straits; e.g., giving birth, comatose, hospitalization for an extended period of time, and, of course, being dead. A student may email
me their assignment(s) **only** if prior arrangements have been made with me. See section **E-mail address**.

- **5 exams** (85%) covering each section of study. Each exam reiterates what is done in class: lecture, class discussion, and documentaries. The take-home essay exams are given out one week prior to the due date. The exams emphasize close reading of texts, reasoning acuity, and composition skills. No outside or secondary sources other than those studied in class are to be used.

- **Mike Ryan Lecture Series, Peace Studies Lecture Series or New York Times critiques:** (10 %). You may choose **either** to attend four of the MRLS/PSLS or compose critiques of 4 articles in the **New York Times**. See Webct/Vista for the critique guidelines. No partial credit. All lectures must be attended and all articles must be completed in order to receive credit for this component of the grade. Each summary is to be at least 500 words in a well-organized and developed composition. Each critique is graded on a pass/fail basis. **A combination of both MRLS and summary is not an option.** If you choose the **NYT** critique option, critiques are due no later than April 22, 2009. No critiques will be accepted after this date.

- **Class participation** (5%). Class participation is willingly and spiritedly engaging in reading aloud, asking questions and freely participating in discussion of the topics at hand with other students and instructor. Attendance is neither rewarded nor punished; however, students who miss class do not perform as competently as students who attend class on a regular basis.

**Extra credit:** You may acquire extra credit, but all exams must have been turned in to receive extra points. Extra credit is obtained by completing a 500-word summary of any philosophically or peace relevant lecture/event you attend at KSU or off campus (check with instructor for eligibility). A summary is an objective (no critique) account of the presenter’s main ideas that also includes the specific details of when and where the event took place, who spoke, and the title of the speaker’s presentation. Each summary you complete and submit is worth up to 5 points. Extra credit points will be added to the exam closest to the turn in date of your summary. There is no limit to the amount of summaries one can turn in. All extra credit must be turned in no later than one week after the last MRLS/PSLS whichever comes last.

*Nota Bene:* All course work is to be typed in Times New Roman at 12 point, double-spaced, and in standard margins. I will not accept handwritten assignments. No covers or jackets or folders, please. **The student must complete and turn in all exams in order to receive credit for the course.** In each exam essay I am looking for: accurate presentation of the author’s ideas, use of relevant vocabulary items, your critique of the author’s ideas, accuracy of grammar, and college-level composition skills.

**Academic Integrity Statement:** Every KSU student is responsible for upholding the provisions of the Student Code of Conduct, as published in the Undergraduate Catalogs. Section II of the Student Code of Conduct addresses the University’s policy on academic honesty, including provisions regarding plagiarism and cheating, unauthorized access to University materials, misrepresentation/falsification of University records or academic work, malicious removal, retention, or destruction of library materials, malicious/intentional misuse of computer facilities
and/or services, and misuse of student identification cards. Incidents of alleged academic misconduct will be handled through the established procedures of the University Judiciary Program, which includes either an informal resolution by a faculty member, resulting in a grade adjustment, or a formal hearing procedure, which may subject a student to the Code of Conduct’s minimum one semester suspension requirement.

**Absence Policy:** There are no excused absences in college. Students are responsible for making up class by conferring with classmates (i.e. getting notes, discussing the main topics of conversation). Instructors are neither expected to, nor will I repeat class lectures for your convenience. The student will neither be punished for absence, nor rewarded for presence; however, the student is responsible for material covered: all readings, lectures, and documentary presentations. I will allow late exams only if the student contacts me about the absence **at least** one week prior to the exam date and/or if the student finds himself/herself in dire straits; e.g., giving birth, comatose, hospitalization for an extended period of time, and, of course, being dead. **A student may email me their assignment(s) only if prior arrangements have been made with me.**

**Plagiarism Policy:** See student handbook. If you are unsure of what constitutes plagiarism, please visit the writing center or see me during office hours. See **Academic Integrity Statement.**

**Expected Outcomes:** By the end of the semester the student will
- be familiar with the ethical concepts of the various philosophers, philosophical traditions and philosophical periods we have studied;
- be able to write philosophically on a variety of ethical topics;
- understand contemporary events within the purview of a ethical perspective;
- be able to apply the ideas we study to his/her life;
- understand the different contexts and criteria for ethics;
- have an understanding of the relation of ethics to a variety of (sub)cultures.

**Schedule of Events.**

**January 12:**  Introduction to Ethics

**January 14-26: Ethics, Culture, and Critical Thinking**  
Jan. 14-21: Ch. 1: 11-29  
Jan. 21`-26: Ch. 2: 30-56

Exam I due: Feb. 2, 2009

**January 28-February 16: Aretaic and Virtue Ethics**  
Feb. 4-16: Aristotelian/Virtue Ethics: 59-67, 79-90

Exam II due: Feb. 23, 2009

**February 18-March 18: Deontology and Utilitarianism**
Feb. 18-25: Deontology: 99-140
Mar. 2-18: Utilitarianism: 141-175

Exam III due: March 25, 2009

March 23- April 8: Confucian Ethics
Mar. 30-Apr.6: Confucian Virtue; 295-305
Apr. 8: Case Study

Exam IV due: April 15, 2009

April 13-29th: Buddhist Ethics
Apr. 13: Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter . . . and Spring
Apr. 15: The Four Noble Truths; 260-264
Apr. 20-22: The Four Signs of Existence; 256-259
Apr. 27-29: Buddhist Political Ethics (278-284) and Case Study

Important Dates

- MLK, Jr. Holiday: January 19th
- Last day to withdraw with a W: March 6, 2009
- Spring break: March 7-13, 2009
- Last Class: April 29, 2009

NOTE: Schedule of events subject to change by Fate, the insightful awareness of the instructor, and/or the collaboration between students and instructor.