Philosophy 3301: Ethics
Tom Pynn, Instructor of Philosophy
MW 5-7:45, Summer 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 strong chance that I will not respond for days. You are to use my KSU address. Exams submitted electronically without authorization will be deleted.

Course Description: Philosophy 3301 presents the student with an opportunity to engage in a guided philosophical examination of the different questions, texts and concepts developed by ethical thinkers from both Western and Non-Western cultures. The student reads primary works of ethical philosophy and engages in thoughtful discussion about the ideas raised by and in these works. Students take essay examinations, engage in class discussion, and view documentaries. All in-class and out-of-class activities focus on elevating the student’s critical ability to read philosophical texts, comprehend ethical 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.

Required Text
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.
● **4 exams** (90%) 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.

● **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 response to any philosophically relevant film. See Web CT for an explanation of what I want to read in a philosophical response. Each response 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 responses one can turn in. All extra credit must be turned in no later than July 15, 2009.

*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.

**June 1-10: Aretaic and Virtue Ethics**
June 1-3: “Crito”: [http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/crito.html](http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/crito.html)
June 8-10: Aristotelian/Virtue Ethics: 59-67, 79-90
June 10: Case Study

Exam I due: June 17, 2009

**June 15-24: Deontology and Utilitarianism**
June 15-17: Deontology: 99-140
June 22-24: Utilitarianism: 141-175
June 24: Case Study

Exam I due: July 1, 2009

**June 29- July 8: Confucian Ethics**
June 29: Introduction to the Chinese Worldview
July 1-6: Confucian Traditions; 285-294, 306-313
July 8: Confucian Virtue; 295-305
July 8: Case Study

Exam III due: July 15, 2009

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

Exam IV due: July 29, 2009
Important Dates

- Last day to withdraw with a W: June 24, 2009
- Last Day to submit extra credit: July 15, 2009
- Last Class: July 22, 2009

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