



BLHS 100 Introduction to Ethics

Introduction to Ethics (BLHS-100)

Dates: January 10 - April 30, 2018

Location: This course takes place online. Georgetown University School of Continuing Studies (SCS) uses Canvas as its Learning Management System. This course will be taught entirely through the Canvas platform. To learn more about Canvas, please go through the [Canvas Guide for Students](#).

Faculty: Gregory Havrilak, Ph.D.

Contact Information: gch9@georgetown.edu; O: 202-784-7316; C: 703-994-8360

Virtual Office Hours: By appointment only. Contact me by email to set up an appointment.

Downloadable Syllabus

The complete syllabus is available in PDF (for download). If you do not have the free Adobe Reader to view the PDF file, please download at [Adobe](#).

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Ethics is the philosophical study of morality. We study ethics to ask fundamental questions about the good life. By studying ethics we engage human values, rules and justifications. Ethics and morality are intimately connected; however, a distinction exists between the two. Whereas morality concerns itself with rules of conduct, ethics focuses on why certain actions are judged to be right, while others are wrong.

This course is an introductory course in ethics. We will begin by asking the basic question—what is ethics, and move on to look at the connection between ethics and religion, the history of ethics, and attempt to answer questions about the “good life.” The major concepts, theories and approaches to the academic study of ethics will be examined. Our survey will use classic texts from ancient, medieval and modern writers, secular and religious.

The second half of the course will attempt to place theory into practice, as we look at several contemporary ethical/moral issues confronting the world. By design the course is interdisciplinary, as various themes will enter into our discussion from ethical, philosophical and

religious paradigms, as we attempt to compare/contrast traditional views with contemporary issues.

Students will have the opportunity to select either a major ethicist or contemporary ethical issue to research and prepare a final presentation for the class.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Recall the history, language and concepts of moral philosophy.
2. Define the major ethical theorists and their systematic schools.
3. Discuss various tools for expressing tolerance for other people's moral viewpoints—even if they disagree.
4. How to contribute to on-going moral debate and discussion.
5. Apply teleological and deontological theories.
6. Reason well in ethics by identifying/citing the various structures of ethical arguments.
7. Identify what course of conduct would promote the greatest amount of happiness in the world.
8. Identify the difference between what is good and what is right.
9. Identify moral value by the intention of the agent and the principle of a person's action.
10. Examine the importance of reason and the unqualified rational nature of moral principles in Kant.
11. Trace social living under state rule and moral life under a civilized society.
12. Articulate the connection/relationship between moral values and religious beliefs.
13. Explain why modern moral philosophers may have failed.

REQUIRED READINGS

Weekly readings should be accomplished according to the calendar schedule.

The following readings are available for purchase at the Georgetown Bookstore and online vendors:

1. Russ Shafer Landau, *The Fundamentals of Ethics, Fourth Ed* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018). ISBN-13: 9780199997237
2. Alasdair MacIntyre, *A Short History of Ethics, Revised Ed.* (London: Routledge, 2002). ISBN-13: 9780415287494

3. James Rachels, Stuart Rachels, *The Elements of Moral Philosophy, Sixth Ed* (Boston: McGraw Hill, 2007). ISBN-13: 9780073386713
4. Robert C. Solomon, Clancy W. Martin, *Morality and the Good Life, Fifth Ed.* (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2008). ISBN-13: 978-0073407425

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Technical Requirements

As an online student your "classroom" experience will be very different than a traditional student. As part of your online experience, you can expect to:

1. Communicate via email including sending attachments
2. Navigate the internet using a Web browser
3. Use office applications such as Microsoft Office or Google Docs to create documents
4. Learn how to submit assignments in Canvas
5. Communicate with peers using discussion boards and other platforms
6. Upload and download saved files
7. Have easy access to the Internet
8. Navigate Canvas, including using the email component within Canvas
9. Use a microphone to record audio through your computer
10. Use an internal or external camera to record video through your computer

In this course we will use Zoom.

- Zoom enables users to conduct synchronous ("real-time") conferences, presentations, lectures, meetings, office hours and group chats via audio, video, text chat and content sharing. [Technical support for Zoom is available.](#)

Computer Requirements

Students need to have sufficient technology and Internet access to complete this course. The requirements are listed by [Canvas in the Instructure Guides](#).

Audio and Video Capability

- You will need an internal or external microphone. Most computers now come with them built in.
- You will need an internal or external camera. Most computers now come with them built in.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

This course is conducted entirely online, which means students do not have to be on campus to complete any portion of it. Students will participate in the course using Georgetown University's online learning management system called Canvas. Each Module will be released on a weekly basis every Sunday at 11:59 pm (ET). Students are required to move through each module in sequential order.

Student Expectations

This course consists of 13 modules. You are expected to do the readings, watch the lecture videos, and to engage with the course material in depth. Participation is essential to your success in this class. In order to get full credit for participation, you will have to complete all of your module assignments and quizzes.

Time Expectations

Our online classes are designed to meet the same academic standards as our place-based (face-to-face) courses. You can think of each module equal to the same level of participation, commitment, and academic rigor as a face-to-face class. Students should plan on spending approximately 9-12 hours per week on the work for each online module.

Absences

There are no excused absences in an online course. The instructor will count a student as "absent" in any week in which the student fails to submit any of the assignments due that week, including participating in online discussions, quizzes, assignments, and/or activities. After the student accumulates two such "absent" weeks, the student will receive a failing grade in this course, regardless of grades earned in any other assignment.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic and personal integrity in pursuit of their education at Georgetown. Academic dishonesty in any form is a serious offense, and students found in violation are subject to academic penalties that include, but are not limited to, failure of the course, termination from the program, and revocation of degrees already conferred. All students are held to the Honor Code.

The Honor Code pledge follows:

In the pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown University Honor System: To be honest in any academic endeavor, and To conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together.

Plagiarism

Stealing someone else's work is a terminal offense in the workplace, and it will wreck your career in academia, too. Students are expected to work with integrity and honesty in all their assignments. The Georgetown University Honor System defines plagiarism as "the act of passing off as one's own the ideas or writings of another." More guidance is available through the [Gervase Programs](#). If you have any doubts about plagiarism, paraphrasing, and the need to credit, check out [Plagiarism.org](#).

COURSE ACTIVITIES AND ASSIGNMENT

Written work is due by the assigned due date on Canvas. **You must submit your weekly written assignment online by the time assigned in Canvas; DO NOT SEND YOUR PAPERS TO OTHER PERSONAL OR PROFESSIONAL EMAIL ADDRESSES.** Follow-ups and class participation is contingent on the timely submission of your initial responses.

Late Submission Policy:

All deadlines are final. In the event of a personal or family emergency, please contact Prof. Havrilak to discuss any extension of deadlines. **Grades for late assignments will automatically be reduced of the maximum points, in addition to points reduced in the normal grading process. Assignments that are late by more than five days will receive no credit.**

As stated in the [Student Handbook](#), you must notify me and obtain my approval if you are unable to complete any assignment by the published submission deadline. I will gladly grant extensions for assignments as long as the request is made by e-mail at least 24 hours before the due date/time. The request must include the date and time when you intend to submit the assignment. If you fail to give both a date and a time, however, the request will not be honored. However, no late submissions or extensions are available for the last week of class or for any Discussion Board participation. Late responses with no previous arrangements for all assignments will be penalized by 10% for each day or portion of a day that the assignment is late, unless previous arrangements have been made.

Assignments

Readings and Lectures

Due: Modules 1-13

You are expected to do the readings that are part of each class session, to watch the lecture videos, and to otherwise engage the material presented on the class website.

Writing Assignments

Modules: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12

Your responsibilities include writing ten 300 word essays and taking six knowledge checks as specified on the calendar. Essays will be submitted via Canvas assignments to the professor, and the professor will return the essays to the students electronically with feedback. All essays must be typed, double-spaced, conform to standard MLA conventions of structure and source citation, and observe all of the niceties of style, grammar, etc. The Lauinger Library website includes a page with [citation guidelines and formats](#).

Knowledge Checks (12% of your grade)

Due: Modules: 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10

You will complete six knowledge checks over the semester. Knowledge Checks in this course are short quizzes consisting of five multiple choice questions that test how well you have internalized key information covered in the module.

Discussion Board Posts (18% of your grade)

Due: Modules: 3, 5, 7, 9, 11

You are also expected to make five discussion board posts as well as reply to at least two discussion posts per week. This will count towards your participation grade.

Participation is essential to your success in this class. In distance education courses you are required to participate just as if you were in a face-to-face course. This means that in order to get full credit for participation, you will have to complete your discussion assignments, lesson assignments and quizzes on a timely basis.

Required readings for each class are listed below in the Course Content Outline. All others are highly recommended, and may be referred to in class. Video lectures, shorter articles and important documents will be uploaded to Canvas. Additional websites will be announced, and official documents will be made available in class.

Final Project: (20% of your grade)

Due: Module: 13

Students will have an opportunity to select from a list of contemporary ethicist (Wittgenstein, Hick, Moore, Spencer et al.), or a contemporary ethical issue, for their audio presentation. You will create a 10 minute audio presentation using the Canvas audio recording application or another software of your choice. Since only one presentation may be given for each ethicist/issue, students must obtain approval from the instructor for their selection.

Citation Style

This course uses Chicago-Turabian style for all writing and research assignments. Resources for this citation style are available through [Georgetown Library](#).

GRADING

Course grades include A, A-, B+, B, B-, C and F.

Please reference the below grading scale:

A: 93-100%

A-: 90-92%

B+: 88-89%

B: 83-87%

B-: 80-82%

C: 70-79%

F: 69 and below%

ACCOMMODATIONS

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, individuals with disabilities are provided reasonable accommodations to ensure equity and access to programs and facilities. Students are responsible for communicating their needs to the Academic Resource Center, the office that oversees [disability support services](#), (202-687-8354; arc@georgetown.edu) before the start of classes to allow time to review the documentation and make recommendations for appropriate accommodations. The University is not responsible for making special accommodations for students who have not declared their disabilities and have

not requested an accommodation in a timely manner. Also, the University need not modify course or degree requirements considered to be an essential requirement of the program of instruction. For the most current and up-to-date policy information, please refer to the [Georgetown University Academic Resource Center website](#). Students are highly encouraged to discuss the documentation and accommodation process with an Academic Resource Center administrator.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Support Services

SCS offers a variety of support systems for students that can be accessed online, at the School of Continuing Studies downtown location, and on the main Georgetown campus:

- [Academic Resource Center](#)
- 202-687-8354 | arc@georgetown.edu

- [Counseling and Psychiatric Services](#)
- 202-687-6985

- [Institutional Diversity, Equity & Affirmative Action \(IDEAA\)](#)
- (202) 687-4798

Georgetown Library

Students enrolled in online School of Continuing Studies SCS coursework have access to the University Library System's eResources, including 500+ research databases, 1.5+ million ebooks, and thousands of periodicals and other multimedia files (films, webinars, music, and images). Students can access these resources through the [Library's Homepage](#) by using their University username (NetID) and password (this is the same login information used to access email, BlackBoard, etc.). The Library does not mail physical items to students.

SCS students may make an appointment with a librarian to discuss a research topic, develop a search strategy, or examine resources for projects and papers. Librarians offer an overview of and in-depth assistance with important resources for senior or master's theses, dissertations, papers and other types of research. Appointments are conducted using Google Hangout (video-conferencing function) through the Georgetown Gmail System or by telephone. This service is available to currently enrolled students who need assistance with Georgetown-assigned projects and papers. Please review the [Services & Resources Guide for Online Students](#) for additional information.

Research Guide

The BALS program has an extensive online [Library Research Guide](#) designed for the subject and research specifications of our program. This Guide will give you direct access to the library resources central to your course research work.

Learning Resources

Georgetown University offers a host of [learning resources](#) to its students. Two that you might find particularly helpful in this course are the [Writing Center](#) and [Reflows](#).

- The [Writing Center](#) offers professional writing support through its online peer tutoring service.
- [Reflows](#) is an online research management tool that aids in organizing, storing, and presenting citation sources for papers and projects.

Technical Support

Click on the Help link (on the bottom-left corner in Canvas) to reach Canvas Support, including the [Canvas Student Guide](#) and 24 hour Canvas Support Hotline at 855-338-2770.

COMMUNICATIONS GUIDELINES

Netiquette Guidelines

To promote the highest degree of education possible, we ask each student to respect the opinions and thoughts of other students and be courteous in the way that you choose to express yourself. The topics in this course can be controversial and promote debate. Students should be respectful and considerate of all opinions.

In order for us to have meaningful discussions, we must learn to genuinely try to understand what others are saying and be open-minded about others' opinions. If you want to persuade someone to see things differently, it is much more effective to do so in a polite, non-threatening way rather than to do so antagonistically. Everyone has insights to offer based on his/her experiences, and we can all learn from each other. Civility is essential.

Communication with Peers

You will be expected to communicate with your peers via the discussion board and email through Canvas.

Notifications

In this course we will use Canvas to send email for private messages. You can either check your messages in the Canvas system or set your notifications to your preferred method of contact. Please check your messages at least once per day. When submitting messages, please do the following:

- Put a subject in the subject box that describes the email content with your name and module.
- Do not send messages asking general information about the class, please post those in the [General Questions Discussion Board Forum](#) question forum.

Questions Forum

In online courses, everyone will likely have many questions about things that relate to the course, such as clarification about assignments and course materials. Please post these in the [General Question Discussion Board Forum](#), which you can access by clicking Discussions in the course navigation menu. This is an open forum, and you are encouraged to give answers and help each other.

Turnaround and Feedback

If you have a concern and send me a message, you can expect a response within **one** business day. Please allow **three** business days for assessment submission feedback.