LSHV-401-01 Norms and Ethics

Dates: Spring 2020, Thu 6:30 PM - 9:00 PM

Location: Intercultural Center, Room 208A

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Office Hours: By appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is one of four foundational courses for the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies program. The Mission statement of the Graduate Liberal Studies programs states:

> Building on the mission statements of Georgetown University and on the School of Continuing Studies, the Graduate Liberal Studies Degree (GLS) programs (DLS and MALS degrees) at Georgetown University rest on the belief that human life and human action have meaning and that human beings, throughout their lives, must seek it out and live by its implications. Liberal Studies courses—which engage students in reading, reflection, writing, and discussion—are meant to bring students the range of knowledge and vision to lead wise and rewarding lives.

"Norms and Ethics," most broadly, is intended to "examine basic methods and issues around moral and ethical concerns and enduring challenges of the human pursuit of the good life across cultures" (as defined on the "Curriculum" webpage). The course aims to equip students with intellectual and critical skills utilized across the curriculum, as can be seen in how each of the Mission and Learning goals of the MALS program include a normative and ethical aim:

- Examine perennial and current problems and recurring questions that we pose about our own identities, our past and future, our unique national experiences and conflicts, international behavior, and our place in a threatened environment.
- Understand the social ideals and values that unite us as humans and attempt to address the needs of a hurried, often fragmented world
- Analyze new ideas and develop new insights about our common life and mutual understandings
- Demonstrate awareness of human values as encompassing what constitutes human life and meaning, what it means to be a rational and free person, and what contributes to human flourishing and well-being

- Recognize the human values and ethics emphasized in one or more areas of study available to liberal studies, namely, in American and international studies; the classical, medieval, and modern worlds; religious studies; literature; philosophy; visual culture; social and public policy; science and society; and/or professional ethics
- Integrate classroom knowledge with practical skills in your personal and, perhaps, professional life
- Conduct rigorous interdisciplinary inquiry, i.e., how to engage various disciplines in the humanities and/or social sciences and integrate them in addressing topics related to your individual research interests
- Engage in intensive writing assignments of varied character and length in order to demonstrate proficiency appropriate to graduate-level scholarship
- Demonstrate the competence to consciously reflect on and assess your own scholarly development and that of your classmates with the aid of both faculty and peer review
- Practice the goals of Jesuit education, i.e., education of the whole person and education of "people for others" in leadership and service to the community

This course examines ethics, human inquiry that investigates the nature of the moral life, norms of right and wrong individual behavior and institutional structures, and the nature of human goods. Most fundamentally, ethics is a way of life—disciplined inquiry into some of the most basic modes of thought and action. Ethics is not mere puritanical counting up "dos" and "don'ts" but about how we shape our actions and behaviors in light of our most basic values, hopes, and goods. We will focus on these issues through a historical and theoretical examination of the major developments in ethics in the Western tradition and by thinking about norms and ethics framed by various concepts (e.g. justice) and areas of application (e.g. political institutions). We will consider comparative analysis, both its possibilities and limits. Religious and philosophical sources will be explored. Coupled with our historical examination of the core ethical traditions, we will explore their application in contemporary situations—personal relationships and individual lives, the workplace, professional settings, healthcare and bio-ethics, the environment, the military, politics, and business.

The course will be conducted mostly through discussion and in-depth analysis of the assigned readings, with some background lectures as appropriate. Students should be prepared to participate actively, based on a thoughtful reading of the texts.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Specific Learning goals of this course include:
- Describe the various modes of "goods" that different moral systems assert humans are to achieve through behavior and life;
- Articulate the various sources of knowledge one has about these goods (e.g. via reason, intuition, revelation, religious traditions, customs, culture) and the interrelation between these various sources across different moral systems;
- Understand the debates about whether there is an objective moral order or whether morality is situational and culturally dependent;
- Describe how moral systems relate these moral goods and moral knowledge to the practices and habits one should undertake in order to act well;
- Articulate various moral models about the nature and scope of one's duty and responsibility, and to whom (or what) those duties are owed;

- Relate these issues of goods, knowledge, duties, and actions to the relationship of self to various communities (moral, political, ethnic);
- Engage in the application of these theoretical moral norms to concrete situations—that is, to engage in practical ethics;
- Understand the complexities of applying ethical principles and values to life situations;
- Understand the complexities and limits of thinking comparatively about moral norms and ethics across diverse social, cultural, political, and religious situations;
- Explore and understand at a basic level the intellectual, material, and historical development of ethics in the Western tradition.
- Construct a substantial research paper, including all of the appropriate steps of research and writing: choosing topics, problem identification, methodology, thesis development, outline production, and drafting.

REQUIRED READINGS

Readings are noted below by class meeting. Many readings will be posted on Canvas as links to files or websites. A few books should be purchased:

- Friedrich Nietzsche, Walter Kaufmann (Editor), *On the Genealogy of Morals - Ecce Homo*, Knopf-Doubleday, 9780679724629
- Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*, Oxford, 9780199537167
- Sophocles, *Antigone*, David Grene, trans., Chicago, 2nd edition, 0-226-30792-1
- Plato, *Gorgias*, Donald Zeyl, trans., Hackett, 0-87220-016-7
- John Stuart Mill, *Basic Writings of John Stuart Mill*, Modern Library Classics, 0-375-75918-2
- Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, ed. Mary Gregor, Cambridge, 0-521-62695-1
- Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Tuck, ed. (Cambridge: 0-521-56797-1)
- Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, Laslett, ed. (Cambridge: 0-521-35730-6)

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Student Expectations

- You should strive to achieve the **ideals of a liberal arts education**: free and candid exchange of ideas, rigorous critique of claims, and toleration for considering variant positions.
- Thoughtful reading of assigned texts and colleagues' writing and engaged feedback and peer reviewing is expected and essential.
- Students should be prepared to participate actively in each week's research/writing assignment and engage actively in peer commenting and reviewing.
  - **Participation** is worth 30% of your grade.
- **Complete the assigned work for each class on time**. If you have a legitimate excuse, I need to know it (by email). Legitimate excuses include illness, family situation, or other events or responsibilities that may occasionally draw you away from a regular class meeting. To be legitimate, I need to know about it beforehand, or it may be deemed legitimate if I receive a notice from your dean, in the case of more serious issues.
    - **Excused absences** *do not* yield a grade penalty, although I reserve the right to impose reasonable "make-up" meetings or assignments to ensure that the covered material is satisfactorily understood.

- You will be penalized for **unexcused absences.** Penalties for unexcused absences are as follows:
    - 1   1 grade down (e.g. a B reduced to a C)
    - 2 or more unexcused absences will constitute a failure to complete the requirements of the course satisfactorily. Any student who misses more than two class modules, including online sessions and assignments, for any reason may be deemed to have failed the course.

- Complete the **Final Research Paper**, <u>and each and every intermediate steps of its preparation</u>, by the due dates.
    - The goal of the research paper is to allow you to dive deeply into a specific issue from the range of themes, issues, and problems you have addressed across the MALS core and to synthetically and analytically address this specific issue in a way that considers multiple time periods, traditions of culture and thought, and geographic diversity you have been exposed to in the core. The project is individualized and each student will be working on different issues.
    - During the course of the semester, from the beginning, you will work toward the goal of a final research paper, including the following major steps:
        - <u>Specific graded assignments:</u>
            - <u>Due Feb. 10:</u> construct a topic proposal that identifies a topic and a research problem and a thesis, (the claim you will argue in the paper) <u>worth 5% of your grade</u>
            - <u>Due March 30:</u> draft an outline and annotated bibliography (in which you identify important sources and how you will utilize them) *<u>worth 10% of your grade</u>*
            - <u>Due **by email**</u> and to Canvas by May 9 by 5pm: complete drafting of a 20 page research paper due at the end of the semester. *The final paper will be <u>worth 55% of your grade.</u>*
    - Papers, insofar as they need citations, will conform to the citation style outlined by Turabian and/or the Chicago Manual of Style.
    - **Late submissions** will be penalized at a 1 grade step down (e.g. a B reduced to a B-) for every 3 hours the assignment is late.
    - **No Incompletes** will be granted except in exceptional circumstances warranted by a family or medical emergency. Arrangements will be made with the appropriate dean and all work will have to be completed by a date set by the dean.

Time Expectations

Students should plan on spending approximately 10-15 hours per week on the reading and the class.

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 ASSIGNMENTS

Modules and Assignments

Week 1 (Jan 10):	Review Course; What is Ethics? What are Norms?
Week 2 (Jan 17):	A tragic view of ethical life: Sophocles, *Antigone* (book for purchase)
Week 3 (Jan 24):	A transcendental view of ethical life: Plato, *Gorgias* (book for purchase)
Week 4 (Jan 31):	Moral life in the city: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (pdf selection); Cicero, *De Re Publica* and *De Legibus*, (pdf selection)
Week 5 (Feb 6):	Christian Ethics: The teachings of Jesus and Paul (pdf selections)
Week 6 (Feb 13):	Early and Medieval interpretations: Basil, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas (pdf selections)
Week 7 (Feb 20):	The modern break, political society, democratic norms: Hobbes, *Leviathan*; Locke, *2nd Treatise of Government* (book for purchase)
Week 8 (Feb 27):	Modern rational ethics: Hume, Kant, and Practical reason (pdf selections)
Week 9 (March 5):	Skepticism: Shelley, *Frankenstein* (book for purchase)
(Spring Break March 6-15)	
Week 10 (March 19):	Skepticism and hope: Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals*, John Stuart Mill (books for purchase)
Week 11 (March 26):	Pluralism and Beyond Modernity: Lyotard, Foucault, Beauvoir (pdf selections)

Week 12 (April 2):   Justice and Democratic Norms: Rawls and interlocutors (pdf selections)

Week 13 (April 16):   Economic Justice: Rational, Christian, Islamic (pdf selections)

Week 14 (April 23):   Human Rights: Capabilities and Cultural Relativism (pdf selections)

Due **by email** and to Canvas by May 9 by 5pm: complete drafting of a 20-22 page research paper due at the end of the semester. *The final paper will be worth 55% of your grade.*

Citation Style

This course uses APA or Chicago style (Chicago preferred) for all writing and research assignments, depending upon your area of research project. Resources for this citation style are available through

Georgetown Library Citation Guide

APA Style Guidebook

GRADING

Grading in this course will be determine by the following grading scale:

- A: 93% to 100%
- A-: 90% to 92%
- B+: 87% to 89%
- B: 83% to 86%
- B-: 80% to 82%
- C+: 77% to 79%
- C: 73% to 76%
- C-: 70% to 72%
- D+: 67% to 69%
- D: 63% to 66%
- F: 62% 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 Project Management 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

SCS offers a host of learning resources to its students. Two that you might find particularly helpful in this course are the Writing Center and Refworks.

- The Writing Center offers professional writing support through its online peer tutoring service.

- Refworks 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.

In this course we will use VoiceThread, TurnItIn and Zoom.

- VoiceThread is a tool that enables teachers and students to upload and asynchronously present images, video, and/or other media and respond to others presentations with audio, video, and/or text comments. Technical support for VoiceThread is available.
- TurnItIn is a writing assessment tool that is used to detect plagiarism and allows teachers to provide assignment feedback to students. Technical support for TurnItIn is available.
- 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.

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.

Statement of Student Conduct, Civility, and Engagement

The School of Continuing Studies offers students the opportunity to engage with faculty, staff, and peers in ways that foster intellectual growth and development in their chosen field of study. It is important to recognize that each member of our community brings his or her own values, thoughts, perspectives, and experiences into each interaction. We expect students to behave in a manner that is civil and respectful of others, and appreciate the learning opportunities that come from engaging pluralistic perspectives in a dynamic educational environment.

Engagement within the SCS Georgetown community takes places in on-campus meeting spaces and classrooms, and extends to online learning platforms and forums. Students should be particularly mindful that participation in class discussions, group assignments, emails, blogs, and social media reflect upon them personally, academically, and professionally. All viewpoints, editorials, and opinions expressed by students represent those students exclusively – and not the students' instructors, classmates, academic program, School, or University – even in cases when students are using Georgetown-affiliated systems like email, blogs, and online portfolios. The expectations for respect and civility are consistent for on-campus classes and spaces, as well as cyber, virtual, and online environments. Thus, civility and cybercivility are expected of all students, in all campus spaces.

SCS students are expected to adhere to the SCS guidelines for student conduct and the University Code of Student Conduct. In the event that a student's behavior is perceived to fall outside the stated SCS guidelines or may be a violation of the Code of Student Conduct, the matter may be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for further review and possible sanctioning. Such instances can include but are not limited to: disruption of official university functions (including teaching, research, administration), failure to comply with a directive issued by a University official, harassment and bullying, and incivility. For questions regarding the SCS student conduct expectations please review the policy in-full found in the Graduate Professional Studies Student Handbook. For questions about the Code of Student Conduct, please review the information provided by the Office of Student Conduct.

Communication with Peers

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.

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 days. Please allow two business days for assessment submission feedback.

Copyright

The materials used in Georgetown University courses ("Course Materials") generally represent the intellectual property of course instructors which may not be disseminated or reproduced in any form for public distribution (e.g., sale, exchange, etc.) without the written permission of the course instructor. Course Materials include all written or electronic documents and materials, including syllabi, current and past examination questions/answers, and presentations such as lectures, videos, PowerPoints, etc., provided by a course instructor. Course Materials may only be used by students enrolled in the course for academic (course-related) purposes.

Published course readings (book chapters, articles, reports, etc.) available in Canvas are copyrighted material. These works are made available to students through licensed databases or fair use. They are protected by copyright law, and may not be further disseminated or reproduced in any form for distribution (e.g., uploading to websites, sale, exchange, etc.) without permission of the copyright owner.

More information about intellectual property and copyright can be found here:
https://www.library.georgetown.edu/copyright

More information about computer acceptable use policy and intellectual property can be found here:
https://security.georgetown.edu/it-policies-procedures/computer-systems-aup