

NOVA COLLEGE-WIDE COURSE CONTENT SUMMARY

PHI 220 – ETHICS and SOCIETY (3 CR.)

Course Description

Provides a systematic study of representative ethical concepts and theories and discusses their application to concrete moral dilemmas and social issues and problems. **This is a Passport and UCGS transfer course.**

Lecture 3 hours. Total 3 hours per week.

General Course Purpose

To recognize the role of philosophical concepts and theories regarding morality and apply them to concrete moral dilemmas. To analyze and discuss significant social issues and problems. Applies to general education in humanities requirement; fulfills the Ethics requirement or major requirements for many applied science and transfer programs.

Course Prerequisites/Corequisites

None

Course Objectives

At the completion of this course the student will be able to identify and critically evaluate the major ethical systems. The student will be able to use these theories to analyze contemporary moral issues. Specifically, the student will be able to:

Critical Thinking

- Analyze and assess the strengths and weaknesses of ethical theories and of competing solutions to concrete moral dilemmas.
- Demonstrate an understanding of major historical theories of ethics that impact culture and society.
- Apply ethical theories to concrete moral dilemmas that impact culture and society.

Communication

- Through written, visual, and/or oral communication identify and articulate concrete moral dilemmas and philosophical problems regarding morality.
- Through written, visual, and/or oral communication construct arguments to offer solutions to ethical problems, defend those solutions, and identify and respond to objections to those solutions.

Major Topics to be Included

The Discipline of Ethics

- Explain the discipline of philosophy and the place of ethics within that discipline.
- Distinguish the concept of moral value from other types of value.
- Explain the role of moral values in everyday life and identify concrete moral dilemmas.
- Distinguish among branches of ethics, such as metaethics, normative ethics, and applied ethics.

Moral Reasoning

- Explain the role of logic in ethics.
- Distinguish between deductive and inductive arguments.
- Evaluate the quality of deductive and inductive arguments and identify fallacious reasoning.
- Distinguish between moral and nonmoral claims and discuss the role that each plays in moral reasoning.

Metaethics

- Explain the philosophical problem of relativism in ethics.
- Examine and compare major historical theories of metaethics, such as objectivism, subjectivism, and cultural relativism.
- Analyze and assess arguments for and against competing metaethical theories and theories? strengths and weaknesses.

Normative Ethics

- Explain the need for theories of moral value.
- Examine and compare major historical normative theories, such as virtue ethics, Kantian deontology, and utilitarianism.
- Analyze and assess arguments for and against competing normative theories and theories? strengths and weaknesses.

Applied Ethics

- Identify and discuss moral dilemmas, and significant contemporary social ethical issues and problems.
- Apply moral concepts and theories to social issues.
- Evaluate and argue for one's own position on social issues.