

Lingnan University
Department of Philosophy

Course Title	: Applied Ethics
Course Code	: PHI3201
Recommended Study Year	: 1-4 Years
No. of Credits/Term	: 3
Mode of Tuition	: Sectional approach
Class Contact Hours	: 3 hours per week
Category in Major Programme	: Free Elective
Prerequisite(s)	: N/A
Co-requisite(s)	: N/A
Exclusion(s)	: N/A
Exemption Requirement(s)	: N/A

Brief Course Description

Students will learn from this course moral thinking: not judgments to repeat, but how to judge various problematic moral cases. The course will consider a number of specific moral issues in applied ethics of relevance for contemporary society. These include abortion, euthanasia, death penalty; issues of diversity and equality in regard to race, gender, and economic status; and the extent of our moral obligations to the poor of other countries, to animals, and to the environment.

Aims

The aim is to introduce students to the main arguments for the opposed views on the hotly contested topics in applied ethics. It is expected that they will learn to analyze and evaluate the relevant arguments, and that this will also help them to take sides about these controversial issues in a more reasonable and informed manner.

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. describe the nature, methods, and theories of ethics (LO1);
2. *identify, summarize and criticize key* social ethical issues that give rise to diametrically opposed but strongly held and passionate views (LO2);
3. explain and evaluate various solutions to moral dilemmas (LO3);
4. develop more tolerance for the opinions that they disagree with, and that they will be more likely to engage in the rational debate about these divisive topics (LO4).

Indicative Content

1. Abortion
2. Euthanasia
3. Death penalty
4. Racism
5. Pornography
6. Privacy and Civil Society
7. Values in Nature
8. World Hunger
9. Cloning
10. Animals

Teaching Method

Lectures, presentations, and discussions

Measurement of Learning Outcomes

1. Short in-class quizzes, in which they will have to answer short questions on the various concepts and theories discussed in class (to assess LO1, and LO2);
2. A final exam, in which they will have to write long essay questions on the content of the course. Students will have to elaborate their views on the theories discussed in class (to assess LO1, LO2, and LO3);
3. A term paper (1500-2000 words) on a topic of the course (to assess mainly LO1, LO2, and LO3). The students will be provided with a list of readings related to the specific topic they choose to write about.
4. Students are expected to participate in classroom discussions and demonstrate good preparation—for instance, they will have to demonstrate adequate knowledge of the required weekly readings when called by the lecturer (to assess mainly LO4).

Assessment

Participation and in-class discussion (10%)

In-class quizzes (20%)

Paper (30%)

Final exam (40%)

Required Readings

Selections from:

Cohen, A. & Heath Wellman, C. (Eds.) *Contemporary Debates in Applied Ethics*. London and New York: Routledge, 2005. (Selections)

Singer, P. *Practical Ethics*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

Other material (papers, lecture notes, etc.) will be available on moodle.

Supplementary Readings

Frey, R. & Heath Wellman, C. (2003). *A Companion to Applied Ethics*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Glover, J. *Causing Death and Saving Lives*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975.

LaFollette, H. (Ed.) *Ethics in Practice*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2002.

May, L. and Sharratt S. C. *Applied Ethics*. London: Prentice-Hall, 1994.

Important Notes

- (1) Students are expected to spend a total of 9 hours (i.e. 3 hours of class contact and 6 hours of personal study) per week to achieve the course learning outcomes.
- (2) Students shall be aware of the University regulations about dishonest practice in course work, tests and examinations, and the possible consequences as stipulated in the Regulations Governing University Examinations. In particular, plagiarism, being a kind of dishonest practice, is “the presentation of another person’s work without proper acknowledgement of the source, including exact phrases, or summarised ideas, or even footnotes/citations, whether protected by copyright or not, as the student’s own work”. Students are required to strictly follow university regulations governing academic integrity and honesty.
- (3) Students are required to submit writing assignment(s) using Turnitin.
- (4) To enhance students’ understanding of plagiarism, a mini-course “Online Tutorial on Plagiarism Awareness” is available on <https://pla.ln.edu.hk/>