

## **Philosophy 118: Moral Problems Fall 2009**

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### **Course Description:**

This course is intended to introduce students to several contemporary moral issues, and to philosophical thinking about those issues. After a brief introduction to moral theory, topics covered will include animal rights, abortion, capital punishment, gay rights, drug use and addiction, and finally, the environment and human consumption. Readings will be both contemporary and historical. Requirements will include two in-class exams, a final exam, one class presentation, several un-announced quizzes, and some homework.

### **Required Texts:**

1. James E. White. *Contemporary Moral Problems*, 9<sup>th</sup> edition. Thomson Wadsworth, 2009.
2. Other readings on Blackboard (marked below with “BB”)

### **Requirements:**

Quizzes and homework: 10%  
Class Presentation: 10%  
Two in-class exams: 25% each  
Final exam: 30%

### **Academic Integrity:**

Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty will be dealt with in accordance with CMU's *Policy on Academic Integrity*  
([http://academicsenate.cmich.edu/NonCad/ACADEMIC\\_INTEGRITY\\_POLICY.pdf](http://academicsenate.cmich.edu/NonCad/ACADEMIC_INTEGRITY_POLICY.pdf)).

### **Accommodations for students with disabilities:**

CMU provides students with disabilities reasonable accommodation to participate in educational programs, activities, or services. Students with disabilities requiring accommodations to participate in class activities or meet course requirements should first register with the office of Student Disability Services (Park Library 120, telephone 989-774-3018, TDD #2568), and then contact the professor as soon as possible.

### **Tentative Schedule:**

8/24: Introduction  
8/26: Walter Stace, “A Critique of Moral Relativism” (BB)  
8/28: David Hume, “Morality is Based on Sentiment”  
  
8/31: John Arthur, “Religion, Morality, and Conscience”  
9/2: Immanuel Kant, “The Categorical Imperative”

9/4: ...

9/7: NO CLASS – LABOR DAY

9/9: James Rachels, “Egoism and Moral Skepticism”

9/11: John Stuart Mill, “Utilitarianism”

9/14: Joel Feinberg, “The Nature and Value of Rights” (BB)

9/16: Immanuel Kant, “Our Duties to Animals”

9/18: ...

9/21: Peter Singer, “All Animals are Equal”

9/23: Tom Regan, “The Case for Animal Rights”; Mary Ann Warren, “Difficulties with the Strong Animal Rights Position”

9/25: ...

9/28: **FIRST EXAM**

9/30: U.S. Supreme Court, “Roe v. Wade” (excerpts)

10/2: John T Noonan, “An Almost Absolute Value in Human History”

10/5: Judith Jarvis Thompson, “A Defense of Abortion”

10/7: Mary Anne Warren, “On the Moral and Legal Status of Abortion”

10/9: ...

10/12: Sidney Callahan, “Abortion and the Sexual Agenda”

10/14: Don Marquis, “An Argument that Abortion is Wrong”

10/16: ...

10/19: U.S. Supreme Court, “Gregg v. Georgia”

10/21: Immanuel Kant, “The Retributive Theory of Punishment”

10/23: Ernest Van Den Haag, “The Ultimate Punishment”

10/26: Jeffrey Reiman, “Justice, Civilization, and the Death Penalty”

10/28: David Gelerntner, “What Do Murderers Deserve?”

10/30: ...

11/2: **SECOND EXAM**

11/4: Martha Nussbaum, “Gay Rights”

11/6: Jeff Jordan, “Is It Wrong to Discriminate on the Basis of Homosexuality?”

11/9: Jonathan Rauch, “Who Needs Marriage?”

11/11: Maggie Gallagher, “What Marriage is For”

11/13: ...

11/16: Bruce Landesman, “Access to Professional Services” (BB)

11/18: Laurence McCullough, “The Right to Health Care” (BB)

11/20: Amy Gutmann, “For and Against Equal Access to Health Care” (BB)

11/23: Kai Nielsen, "Autonomy, Equality, and a Just Health Care System" (BB)  
11/25: Robert Hood, "Global Warming"  
11/27: NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING

11/30: Bjorn Lomborg, "The Cost of Global Warming"  
12/2: Alan Thein Durning, "The Environmental Costs of Consumption"  
12/4: Review

**FINAL EXAM**