L30 Phil 131F (02) Spring 2019
Present Moral Problems

Instructor: Dr. Mark Povich
Place: Psychology, Room 251
Time: Monday/Wednesday 2:30 PM – 4:00 PM
Office Hours (January Hall, Room 206): Friday 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM or by appointment
Email: mapovich@gmail.com

Description: This class will improve your ability to think about what is good, what is right, and how you should live your life. We will learn core ethical concepts and skills through the discussion of issues having to do with animal rights, free will, relationships, exploitation, poverty, and death.

Structure: The course comprises two interactive lectures (1h20min) and extensive discussions per week.

Readings: Practical Ethics (PE) by Peter Singer and other assorted readings. All will be uploaded onto the course website on Blackboard under Course Documents.

Evaluation: The course will be graded as follows:
- Attendance and class participation worth 5%
- 2 in-class midterms, each worth 20%
- 1 term paper worth 25%
- Weekly discussion questions (1 or 2 questions for each reading), worth 15% (you’re allowed to miss four without affecting your grade)
- Argument reconstruction worth 15%

The term paper is due in class, in hard copy, on the announced deadline.

Important to Note: It is expected that students will prepare for and attend class regularly. Students are encouraged to consult the instructor with any problems or concerns about the course early in the semester.

Grade Ranges:

A+: 97-100  B+: 87-89  C+: 77-79  D+: 67-69  F: 0-59
A : 94-96  B : 84-86  C : 74-76  D : 64-66
A- : 90-93  B- : 80-83  C- : 70-73  D- : 60-63

Tentative Schedule of Readings:

Week 1 (Jan 14th & Jan 16th): Introduction and Developing Critical Thinking
No readings for this week

Week 2 (Jan 21st & Jan 23rd): Introduction to Ethics
NO CLASS Monday, Jan 21st MLK Day
PE chapter 1

Week 3 (Jan 28th & Jan 30th): Equality
PE chapter 2, pp. 16-34
Cordelia Fine, *Delusions of Gender: How Our Minds, Society, and Neurosexism Create Difference*, chapter 3

Week 4 (Feb 4th & Feb 6th): Animal Rights
PE chapter 3
"Puppies, Pigs, and People: Eating Meat and Marginal Cases" by Alastair Norcross

Week 5 (Feb 11th & Feb 13th): Death and Killing
PE chapter 4
Shelly Kagan, *Death*, chapter 10

Week 6 (Feb 18th & Feb 20th): Killing Animals
PE chapter 5

Week 7 (Feb 25th & Feb 27th): Abortion
PE chapter 6
“An Argument that Abortion is Wrong” by Don Marquis

Week 8 (Mar 4th & Mar 6th): Euthanasia
PE chapter 7
“Against the Right to Die” by J. David Velleman

1st Midterm, Wednesday March 6th

Week 9 (Mar 11th & Mar 13th)
NO CLASS Spring Break

Week 10 (Mar 18th & Mar 20th): Wealth Inequality
PE chapter 8
“It’s Basically Just Immoral to Be Rich” by A.Q. Smith

Week 11 (Mar 25th & Mar 27th): Class Exploitation
**Paper assigned, Monday Mar 25th**
Ernest Mandel, “The Theory of Value and Surplus Value”

Week 12 (Apr 1st & Apr 3rd): Freedom and Capitalism
“The Structure of Proletarian Unfreedom” by G. A. Cohen
David Schweickart, *After Capitalism*, chapter 2
Week 13 (Apr 8th & Apr 10th): Climate Change
PE chapter 9
“A Perfect Moral Storm: Climate Change, Intergenerational Ethics, and the Problem of Moral Corruption” by Stephen M. Gardiner

Week 14 (Apr 15th & Apr 17th): Environmental Ethics
PE chapter 10
“The Value of Nature” by Ronald Sandler
Paper due, Wednesday Apr 17th

Week 15 (Apr 22nd & Apr 24th):
Overflow
2nd Midterm, Wednesday Apr 24th

Note on Avoidance of Academic Offences:

All students registered in the course are expected to know what constitutes an academic offence, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for their academic actions. When the commission of an offence is established, it will be acknowledged by disciplinary penalties. If you need help in learning how to avoid academic offences such as plagiarism, cheating, and double submission, or if you need clarification of aspects of the discipline policy, ask your course instructor for guidance. Other resources regarding the discipline policy are your academic advisor and the Undergraduate Associate Dean.

Note for students with disabilities:

Cornerstone: The Center for Advanced Learning, located on the first floor of the Gregg Residence Hall (along the walk between the underpass and the clock tower on the South Forty), collaborates with all academic departments to help arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with them at the beginning of each academic term. You can find more information at: http://cornerstone.wustl.edu/DisabilityResources.aspx

Accommodations based upon sexual assault:

The University is committed to offering reasonable academic accommodations to students who are victims of sexual assault. Students are eligible for accommodation regardless of whether they seek criminal or disciplinary action. Depending on the specific nature of the allegation, such measures may include but are not limited to: implementation of a no-contact order, course/classroom assignment changes, and other academic support services and accommodations. If you need to request such accommodations, please direct your request to Kim Webb (kim_webb@wustl.edu), Director of the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center. Ms. Webb is a confidential resource; however, requests for accommodations will be shared with the
appropriate University administration and faculty. The University will maintain as confidential any accommodations or protective measures provided to an individual student so long as it does not impair the ability to provide such measures.

If a student comes to me to discuss or disclose an instance of sexual assault, sex discrimination, sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence or stalking, or if I otherwise observe or become aware of such an allegation, I will keep the information as private as I can, but as a faculty member of Washington University, I am required to immediately report it to my Department Chair or Dean or directly to Ms. Jessica Kennedy, the University’s Title IX Director. If you would like to speak with directly Ms. Kennedy directly, she can be reached at (314) 935-3118, jwkennedy@wustl.edu, or by visiting the Title IX office in Umrah Hall. Additionally, you can report incidents or complaints to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards or by contacting WUPD at (314) 935-5555 or your local law enforcement agency. See: Title IX

You can also speak confidentially and learn more about available resources at the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center by calling (314) 935-8761 or visiting the 4th floor of Seigle Hall. See: RSVP Center

**Bias Reporting:**

The University has a process through which students, faculty, staff and community members who have experienced or witnessed incidents of bias, prejudice or discrimination against a student can report their experiences to the University’s Bias Report and Support System (BRSS) team. See: brss.wustl.edu

**Mental Health:**

Mental Health Services’ professional staff members work with students to resolve personal and interpersonal difficulties, many of which can affect the academic experience. These include conflicts with or worry about friends or family, concerns about eating or drinking patterns, and feelings of anxiety and depression. See: shs.wustl.edu/MentalHealth