

# PHIL 4100: Professional Ethics

Summer I, 2017

<b>Instructor:</b> Jonathan Vajda	<b>CRN:</b> 22304
<b>E-mail:</b> jonathan.m.vajda@wmich.edu	<b>Meets:</b> Tu/Thur, 3:00pm-5:30pm
<b>Office:</b> 3020 Moore	<b>Room:</b> 2212 Dunbar Hall
<b>Office Hours:</b> by appointment	

## Course Description

“A philosophical examination of the foundations of ethics in the professions. Topics to be considered include the professions and professionalism, relationships between professional and ordinary ethics, social responsibilities of the professions, professional/client relationships, regulation of the professions, and codes of ethics.”

## Course Learning Outcomes

- 1) Students will learn and criticize the most popular ethical theories on offer.
- 2) Students will develop skills in evaluating difficult ethical situations, especially with a view toward practical import into various professions, including business and medical contexts.

## Course Materials

- 1) A large percentage of the reading materials will be provided on eLearning website as needed: <http://elearning.wmich.edu/>
  - a. Please print off the texts assigned there, take notes on the reading, and bring them (notes and copies) to class.
- 2) *Business in Ethical Focus: An Anthology, 1<sup>st</sup> Ed.* (2008), edited by Fritz Allhoff and Anand Vaidya (ISBN 978-1-551-11661-7) [“Required”]
  - a. This text is available at the WMU bookstore. It’s not cheap. Amazon has some used copies that are cheaper though.
  - b. Text was requested on Course Reserve in the Waldo Library; if they get it, then you can check out the book for 2 hrs at a time.
  - c. The text just got a new edition (2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 2017). The differences between the new and the required text haven’t been evaluated. If you have the new edition...
    - i. You are fully responsible for making sure the assigned pages, sections, and work are completed according to the 1<sup>st</sup> edition.
    - ii. Ask classmates *before* asking the instructor whether the text corresponds.
- 3) Cellulose pulp, pressed and bound (e.g., college-ruled notebook) and a modern scribal apparatus (e.g., pencil) for taking notes during class.

## Grading Guidelines

I'll assign final grades with the following interpretations:

100-93	A	4.0	77-73	C	2.0
92-88	BA	3.5	72-68	DC	1.5
87-83	B	3.0	67-60	D	1.0
82-78	CB	2.5	59-0	E	0.0

## Assignments

Your final grade will be based on the following assessments:

- Short Essays (5 assigned) **60%**
  - Four (4) essays, worth 15% each, i.e., 60%
  - Lowest essay is dropped 0%
- Muddiest Point Questions (14 available, 10 graded) **30%**
  - Best ten are graded, each MPQ is worth 3%
- Class participation **10%**

### Short Essays (60% of final grade).

There will be five (5) "short essays" assigned throughout the semester. The instructions will vary slightly. All of them will require 500-1000 words each (i.e., 2-4 pages, double-spaced). Some will be compare and contrast; others may require you critique a view. Read instructions carefully for each assignment.

### "Muddiest Point Questions" (30% of final grade).

There will be fourteen (14) "muddiest point questions" assigned throughout the semester. Complete instructions are on *eLearning*. This assignment asks you to isolate an issue in the assigned reading before we discuss the reading in class, and then raise questions, concerns, criticisms. These assignments are *very* short, i.e., 150-500 words (between ½ and 1½ pages, double-spaced). The purpose is to demonstrate (a) you have read the text, and (b) you are critically engaging the text. Graded credit/no-credit: it must show (a) *and* (b) to pass; it may not be turned in after discussing it in class.

### Class Participation (10% of final grade).

Show up to class every day having completed the assigned reading and homework (see the **Course Schedule** for dates and assignments). Be actively engaged: take notes and ask relevant questions. I will note your participation, so make sure you're attending every day and interacting each week in order to ensure full credit. (See **Professionalism in the Classroom**)

## How to Submit work

- Hard-copy. Homework is to be submitted in hard-copy at the beginning of class (i.e., before lecture starts) on the date it is due (see **Course Schedule**) in order for the work to be considered "on-time."
- Electronic submissions. Use the **Dropbox** folder on eLearning. Use this when you are unable to attend lecture or when you cannot submit the document on time. *Never email me your homework unless I indicate otherwise.*

## **Late Work, Class Absences, and Emergencies**

### Late submissions of Short Essays. (MPQs cannot be turned in late)

“On time”	No penalty!
1 minute - 24 hours late (1 day)	10% penalty
24 hours - 48 hours late (2 day)	20% penalty
More than 48 hours late (more than 2 day)	100% penalty

### Absent from class.

Since we only meet 15 times in total, there are no unexcused absences. Apart from excuse, if you are 15 minutes late for class, you will be marked absent for that day.

### Emergencies.

If there is an emergency preventing you from attending or completing work, communicate ASAP and keep communication open. Notices *after* class will *not* be honored. E.g., if you miss class due to health, I expect an email before the end of the class period. To accommodate exams, I need verification (doctor’s note, obit, etc.).

## **Professionalism in the Classroom**

### Expectations of Professionalism.

You are expected to behave in a respectful and professional manner in the classroom. Treat your time in class like you would a business meeting: review content beforehand, be attentive and ask questions. Look for every meeting as a way to make progress: Jot down action items to complete before the next meeting.

### Electronic devices.

Phones must be put away and silent (not low volume or vibrate) or off. Use of laptops or tablets is permitted only for note taking and class activities. Breach of either will negatively impact their participation grade.

## **Academic Dishonesty**

You are responsible for making yourself aware of and understanding the policies and procedures in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs that pertain to Academic Honesty. These policies include cheating, fabrication, falsification and forgery, multiple submission, plagiarism, complicity and computer misuse. [The policies can be found at <http://catalog.wmich.edu> under Academic Policies, Student Rights and Responsibilities.] If there is reason to believe you have been involved in academic dishonesty, you will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. You will be given the opportunity to review the charge(s). If you believe you are not responsible, you will have the opportunity for a hearing. You should consult with your instructor if you are uncertain about an issue of academic honesty prior to the submission of an assignment or test.

## **Students with Disabilities**

Any student with a documented disability (e.g., physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc.) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact the Disabilities Services for Students center at the beginning of the semester; contact information is here:

<http://www.wmich.edu/disabilityservices/index.html>. A disability determination must be made by this office before accommodations are provided by the instructor.

## **Religious Observances**

The following constitutes university policy with respect to religious observances and course obligations.

*The University is a diverse, multicultural enterprise and, as a community, we jointly embrace both individual responsibility and dignified respect for our differences. It is our general policy to permit students to fulfill obligations set aside by their faith.*

*It is our intent that students who must be absent from scheduled classes to fulfill religious obligations or observe practices associated with their faith not be disadvantaged. However, it is the student's responsibility to make arrangements with his/her instructors in advance. It is in the student's best interests to approach each instructor expeditiously and with sufficient notice that the rights and responsibilities of the instructor are not disrupted. Instructors should make it known to classes early in the term what they consider reasonable notice for anticipated absences. Without specifying a fixed notification time, we acknowledge in this policy joint responsibility: instructors will inform students of their requirements and students will make every effort to cause no disruption in the instructors' plans and duties.*

*Instructors should assume that a claim of religious observance has veracity, especially when advance notice is provided by the student. Students likewise must recognize that it is their responsibility to meet all their course obligations. Instructors are not obligated to provide materials to students unless these materials would have normally been distributed to the entire class. For example, if an instructor does not normally post notes, a student cannot expect notes to be provided for lectures missed.*