PHL 212 Introduction to Ethics  
University of Rhode Island  
Summer 2018 – Session 3  
ONLINE  
Instructor: Pragati Sellon, Esq.  
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Office hours: By Appointment  
Pragatisellon@Gmail.com

Objectives: This course is an introduction to ethical reasoning and theory. Throughout the semester, we will explore the questions “What is ethical” and “Who gets to decide”. While ethics may arguably be subjective, the reality remains that a society’s common ethical framework has deep implications for the individual. One’s rights and obligations are intrinsically linked this common societal sense of morality. The main goal of this class is to explore your personal ethical “center” while balancing it with constructs including the judicial system, religion and politics.

This course is an introduction to 3 things:  
(1) Principal normative ethical theories held by various philosophers including but not limited to Socrates, Emmanuel Kant, and Thomas Hobbes  
(2) How society interprets various these theories and how this interpretation affects the legal, religious and political frame works which guide behavior within a society.  
(3) Learning how to think and analyze positions and arguments from a philosophical perspective.

Please note that this is course requires considerable writing.

Policy notes, with a theme of respect: Academic honesty and honesty in general are of the utmost importance. It is acceptable, indeed desirable, for students to help one another when possible, but any help that informs the way in which a paper is written, or a presentation is prepared and given, must be credited. Moreover, there is not very much research required in this course, but all sources that are used, not just printed or electronic ones must be noted. Also, the use of electronic devices in class is permitted only with prior approval from the instructor, and then only when it furthers the academic enterprise, for example, taking notes on (as opposed to sending instant messages with) a laptop computer. Wireless phones and other such devices should be stored away before the beginning each class session. Finally, no behavior that resembles bullying of any kind will be tolerated.

As you can imagine, we will engage in discussions regarding many “hot” topics. While I encourage open discussion, please be kind and respectful to one another. Even if you do not agree with another analysis or viewpoint, it is important for the class as a whole to allow discourse to occur freely and without fear of judgment. All topics should be discussed within the context of the assigned reading and personal attacks are will not be tolerated.

Requirements: I recommend that students “attend” class two times per week throughout the summer session. This means that you should log into our Sakai classroom and review any updates or assignments that maybe posted. Our online classroom will be interactive and include weekly class discussion topics. There will be unannounced quizzes which will be posted at radon times throughout the semester. Reading the course material is essential to doing well in the class. Students will be asked to write two (2) five (5) to (seven) 7 page papers. Details of these requirements will be given as the semester progresses.
**Final Grade Calculation:** For the purpose of arriving at the course grade, I will give weights to the assignments as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance/participation (determined by weekly participation in class discussions)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper #1</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper #2</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes (Total of 5)</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
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Summer 2018/Session 3/Course Schedule

- **May 21st, 2018**
  - Read Introduction to Ethics
  - Exchange relevant contact information
  - Read Chapter 1 (pgs. 1-14)
  - Complete Chapter 2 (pgs. 15-32), The Challenges of Cultural Relativism
  - Explore Sakai

- **May 28th, 2018**
  - Complete Class Discussion Topic 1
  - Complete Chapter 3 (pgs. 33-48), Subjectivism in Ethics, Chapter 3

- **June 4th, 2018**
  - Complete Class Discussion Topic 2
  - Complete Chapter 4 (pgs. 49-63), Does Morality Depend on Religion

- **June 11th, 2018**
  - Complete Class Discussion Topic 3
  - Complete Chapter 5 (pgs. 64-81), Ethical Egoism

- **June 18th, 2018**
  - Complete Class Discussion Topic 4
  - Complete Chapter 6 (pgs. 82-98), The Social Contract Theory
  - **Paper #1 Hypothetical will be posted**

- **June 25th, 2018**
  - Complete Class Discussion Topic 5
  - Complete Chapter 7 (pgs. 99-110), The Utilitarian Approach
  - Complete Chapter 8 (pgs. 111-125), The Debate Over Utilitarianism
  - **Paper #1 Due no later than 5 pm!**

- **July 2nd, 2018**
  - Complete Class Discussion Topic 6
  - Complete Chapter 9 (pgs. 126-136), Are There Absolute Moral Rules

- **July 9th, 2018**
  - Complete Class Discussion Topic 7
  - Chapter 11 (pgs. 147-158), Feminism and the Ethics of Care
  - **All Students must watch the film Dead Man Walking (1995), Directed by Tim Robbins. Second paper is based on this film.**

- **July 16th, 2018**
  - Complete Class Discussion Topic 8
  - Complete Chapter 12 (pgs. 159-173), Virtue Ethics
  - **Final Paper Hypothetical will be posted**

- **July 23rd, 2018**
  - **Paper #2 is due no later than 5 pm!**