

# The University of Findlay: College of Liberal Arts

## SYLLABUS

*The Mission of the University is to equip our students  
for meaningful lives and productive careers.*

### **Philosophy 220.N1: “Ethical Issues in the Modern World”**

- ◆ 3 Semester Hours
- ◆ Scheduled Chat Sessions: Mondays, 6:30-8:30pm, Beginning August 25  
[Every Other Monday Except for November 24]
- ◆ No Prerequisites

**Instructor:** Dr. Rich Smith  
Office – WTS 222 Office Phone: ext (419) 434-4592  
Home Phone: 422-0635 (Please do not call after 9:00 pm!)  
E-mail: rsmith2@findlay.edu

### **Course Description:**

- ◆ Introduction to moral philosophy and its application to contemporary ethical issues. The course is designed to help equip you with skills and information to enable you to make competent ethical decisions in real-life situations.

### **Overarching Purpose of the Course:**

- ◆ To further the university’s mission to equip students for meaningful lives and productive careers.
- ◆ To further the mission of the university’s general education program to offer students a broad-based foundation of knowledge and skills that will help them become life-long learners as members of a profession as well as members of the global society.
- ◆ To further the mission of the philosophy department to help students cultivate self-knowledge, develop critical thinking skills, complement other specializations, and strengthen career preparation.

### **Specific Course Objectives:**

- ◆ To raise your moral recognition level by developing your abilities to recognize, analyze, and clarify value issues in ordinary life situations.
- ◆ To acquaint you with current theories in applied ethics and the relative strengths and limitations of these approaches.
- ◆ To introduce and develop appropriate strategies for dealing with moral problems and making moral decisions, including clarifying available options and the relevant outcomes of each, examining applicable moral principles, and noting relevant extra-moral constraints such as applicable laws, institutional policies, and financial limitations.
- ◆ To enhance your ability to transcend personal feelings and assumptions when confronting moral problems, and to exhibit open-mindedness, creativity, and flexibility in making moral judgments.
- ◆ To heighten your understanding and appreciation of how concepts, principles, and skills learned in the study of applied ethics can have relevant applications in other areas of everyday life, including people's personal beliefs, practices, attitudes, and relationships.
- ◆ To provide opportunities for examining your own personal values and analyzing the implications of decisions made on the basis of these values.
- ◆ To further develop your communication skills by clear and cogent analysis and discussion of moral issues.

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**The Following General Education Learning Outcomes Will Be Addressed:**

- ◆ Students will take courses which expose them to a range of basic religious beliefs and diverse ethical perspectives and which encourage them to develop their own perspectives on global issues.
- ◆ Students will become familiar with the historical, scientific, literary, and/or philosophical content of a range of disciplines.
- ◆ Students will acquire and practice skills for reading, writing, speaking, listening, abstract inquiry, critical thinking, logical reasoning, and using computers and related technology.
- ◆ Students will develop an appreciation for and means of analyzing art, literature, music, communication, science and/or theatre.
- ◆ Throughout their general education experience, students will analyze and reflect upon the challenges facing our global society as well as the importance of being a life-long learner and responsible citizen.

**Required Textbook:**

- ◆ Thomas Mappes & Jane Zembaty, *Social Ethics: Morality & Social Policy*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition, McGraw Hill, ISBN: 13: 978-0-07-312545-9 OR 10: 0-07-312545-8.

**Course Schedule:**

- ◆ See the “Course Schedule” for a list of assignments and due dates for all graded materials. Note that some things should be completed prior to the first chat session.

**Instructional Strategies:**

- ◆ Your online learning experience will incorporate diverse educational strategies, including but not limited to interactive chat sessions, asynchronous discussion, reading assignments, written case analysis, a group project, and library/Internet research. A conscious effort will be made to foster an enthusiastic, exciting, and active learning environment.

**Methods of Assessment:**

- ◆ Participation Case Study
- ◆ Exams Group Project
- ◆ Journaling (Keepers)

**Grades Will Be Determined on the Following Basis:**

Discussion Board #1 (Biographical Information)	1%
Blackboard Exercise (Details Will Be Given)	1%
Two “Keeper” Submissions (Details Will Be Given)	2%
Participation Self-Evaluation (Details Will Be Given)	1%
One Group Ethical Case Study (Details Will Be Given)	15%
One Individual Ethical Case Study (Details Will Be Given)	15%
Four Open Book Exams (Including the Final)	55% (10, 15, 15, 15)
Chat & Discussion Board Participation (Criteria Will Be Given)	10%

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**Course Grading Scale:**

A	92-100
A-	90-92
B+	86-90
B	82-86
B-	80-82
C+	76-80
C	72-76
C-	70-72
D+	66-70
D	62-66
D-	60-62
F	Below 60

**Honor Code:**

- ◆ *I will not knowingly engage in any dishonorable behavior, cheat, steal, lie or commit any act of plagiarism during my academic work, course, or endeavor. If I observe an act which I believe violates the University's Honor Code, I may, in my discretion, report it to the appropriate personnel.*

**Special Services:**

- ◆ If you are a student with a disability it is your responsibility to register with the Office of Disability Services and your instructor at least one week prior to a needed service so reasonable accommodations can be made.

**Synchronous Discussion (Scheduled "Chat" Sessions):**

- ◆ You are expected to participate in all scheduled chat sessions. If for some reason you must miss a session, it is your responsibility to inform the instructor (by phone or e-mail) beforehand.
- ◆ Participation is important not only in pursuit of one's own individual learning but also as a contribution to the learning of others in the class. Participation means coming to the chat periods well prepared, having the textbook and other study materials ready at hand, and joining in discussions attentively and in a critical spirit. Respectfully listening to others' comments can be as important in many cases as making your own statements. An optimum discussion is one that allows appropriate input from everyone in the class.

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### **Asynchronous Discussion (“Discussion Board” Forums):**

- ◆ You are expected to participate in the various ongoing threaded conversations located in the Discussion Board. For each module one or more forum topics will be posted. You then have the opportunity to respond by giving your thoughts on the matter and/or raising other questions. Through the Discussion Board you also can create new “threads” to ask questions or exchange ideas with other students on related topics.
- ◆ For the bare minimum, you are expected to post at least two messages (one of which should be a reply to someone else’s comment) for each Discussion Board forum during the course. Waiting until the day of chat to post your comments will be frowned upon. Forums will be closed off for additional postings at noon on the day of the scheduled chat session.

### **Communication Protocol and Formats:**

- ◆ For e-mail correspondence use this format:  
TO: rsmith2@findlay.edu  
SUBJECT: Philosophy 220  

If including an attachment, be sure that your program files are virus-free. [Note that WordPerfect files will not be accepted. WordPerfect users should use the “save-as” feature on your program to save the work as an MS Word file. You can then attach the MS Word file to your e-mail. Also Macintosh users must convert files to a readable MS Word format.]
- ◆ For submitting papers, exams, and other assignments you should use the “Assignment” function on Blackboard. You will find instructions for doing this as part of the directions for the required “Blackboard Exercise” (for Module 2).
- ◆ For scheduled “chat” sessions:
  1. Click on the Communication button, click on “Collaboration,” and then click on the appropriate “lightweight” chat session. It will be named according to the date for that week’s session.
  2. To ensure that we can begin the regular chat room class sessions promptly, plan to be logged on at least a few minutes before the scheduled time.
  3. To help make the chat session enjoyable and to provide for participation by all students, please follow these tips:
    - a) Use short sentences.
    - b) Have a series of questions prepared before class, so that you can quickly and easily introduce them during the discussion.
    - c) Don’t hesitate to direct questions to particular individuals by name.
    - d) If you plan on pasting text as part of the chat, limit sections to no more than 50 words and pause briefly between sections to allow others to read it.
    - e) Be familiar with and try to follow the basic rules of netiquette—i.e., etiquette on the Internet. [See “Netiquette” (under the Course Information button).]

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**If You Encounter Technical Difficulties**, please contact the instructor by phone or e-mail. Your patience and understanding will be appreciated. It is important to understand that online courses present special challenges for both students and instructors.

If you have questions about Blackboard fundamentals, contact the University of Findlay's Technology Support Services (phone 419-434-4357, or e-mail at <techsupport@findlay.edu>). A Blackboard manual is also available by clicking on the given menu button on the left side of your course home page.