



**MERCER**  
COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

# COURSE OUTLINE

Course Number	Course Title	Credits
<b>PHI-205</b>	<b>Moral Choices</b>	<b>3.0</b>
<b>Hours: Lecture/Lab/Other 3/0/0</b>	<b>Co- or Pre-requisite  ENG-101</b>	<b>Implementation Semester &amp; Year  FA 2022</b>

**Catalog description:**

Examines contemporary moral issues such as abortion, euthanasia, capital punishment, affirmative action, pornography, hate speech, gay rights, corporate responsibility, world hunger, global consumption, war and terrorism. Stresses the critical application of moral theory, principles and methods.

**General Education  
Category:**

**Goal 6: Humanities**

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**Required texts & Other materials:**

Doing Ethics, Lewis Vaughn, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition, Norton, 2022, ISBN: 978-0-393-53251-7

The Ethics Toolkit, Julian Baggini & Peter S. Fosl, Wiley-Blackwell, 2007, ISBN:9781405132312

Handouts & Websites as directed; for updated editions/similar text-check bookstore

**Course Student Learning Outcomes (SLO):**

***Upon successful completion of this course the student will be able to:***

1. Identify and define key ethical terms, problems and theories (ILGs 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11) (PLOs 1, 2, 3, 4)
2. Employ the logical and critical thinking methods and evidentiary criteria of philosophy to determine and critique the ways of addressing contemporary moral issues (ILGs 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11) (PLOs 1, 2, 3, 4)
3. Distinguish and analyze the relevant ethical and factual considerations of the major contemporary moral issues studied (ILGs 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11) (PLOs 1, 2, 3, 4)
4. Interpret, summarize and paraphrase the views of ethicists and others as expressed in actual practice, and in philosophical and contemporary issues writings (ILGs 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11) (PLOs 1, 2, 3, 4)
5. Frame and present your own moral views clearly, logically, concisely and coherently Interpret,

summarize and paraphrase the views of philosophers as expressed in philosophical writings  
Present and support your own views on philosophical issues clearly, logically, concisely &  
coherently (ILGs 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11) (PLOs 1, 2, 3, 4)

Outcomes 1. through 4. relate to “philosophical ethical literacy” with respect to content knowledge. Outcomes 2. through 5. relate to “philosophical moral reasoning practice” with respect to methods applied to relevant content material. Other learning goals may be specified in particular sections by the instructor with the course coordinator’s approval in addition to but not as a replacement for the above listed goals.

### **Course-specific Institutional Learning Goals (ILG):**

**Institutional Learning Goal 1. Written and Oral Communication in English.** Students will communicate effectively in both speech and writing.

**Institutional Learning Goal 5. Social Science.** Students will use social science theories and concepts to analyze human behavior and social and political institutions and to act as responsible citizens.

**Institutional Learning Goal 6. Humanities.** Students will analyze works in the fields of art, music, or theater; literature; philosophy and/or religious studies; and/or will gain competence in the use of a foreign language.

**Institutional Learning Goal 7. History.** Students will understand historical events and movements in World, Western, non-Western or American societies and assess their subsequent significance.

**Institutional Learning Goal 8. Diversity and Global Perspective:** Students will understand the importance of a global perspective and culturally diverse peoples

**Institutional Learning Goal 9. Ethical Reasoning and Action.** Students will understand ethical frameworks, issues, and situations.

**Institutional Learning Goal 10. Information Literacy:** Students will recognize when information is needed and have the knowledge and skills to locate, evaluate, and effectively use information for college level work.

**Institutional Learning Goal 11. Critical Thinking:** Students will use critical thinking skills understand, analyze, or apply information or solve problems.

### **Program Learning Outcomes for Liberal Arts (PLO)**

1. Concept Knowledge Understand the vocabulary, methods, and major concepts present in the humanities, the social sciences, and the natural sciences
2. Communication Articulate complex ideas clearly and effectively, both verbally and in writing
3. Critical Thinking Perform a series of thinking tasks including speculation, analysis, and synthesis (i.e., abstract reasoning)
4. Research Methods Utilize research materials and methodologies

### **Units of study in detail – Unit Student Learning Outcomes:**

The general plan for this course is broadly in two parts; the first unit serves as a primer of ethical theory; while subsequent units address various contemporary issues treated through articles that focus on subject particulars and applications of more general ethical theory.

Units in Summary

Unit 1 – Morality, Reason and Ethical Theories

Unit 2 – Ethical Issues – Life, Death and the Individual

Unit 3 – Ethical Issues – Individuals and Society

Unit 4 – Ethical Issues – Humanity and Nature

Unit 5 – Ethical Issues - War, Terrorism & Torture

Detailed Units:

**Unit I** Morality, Reason and Ethical Theories (SLO #1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

**Learning Objectives** *The student will able to:*

1. Identify reasons for studying ethics and applied ethics and distinguish between the major fields of philosophy, ethics and subfields of ethics and their central concerns
2. Explain key philosophical and ethical concepts such as objectivity, subjectivity, autonomy, good, etc., as well as the role of reason, evidence and their relation to theoretical approaches to ethics such as religious, relativistic, emotivist, and expressivist
3. Critically relate theoretical approaches to others and each other, including egoistic, virtue-based, duty-based, rights-based, social contract-based, utilitarian, scientific and other major theoretical approaches
4. Identify and use the principles and practices of reasoning, basic logic, fallacy awareness, arguments and judgment in application to moral matters

**Unit II** Ethical Issues – Life, Death and the Individual: (SLO #1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

**Learning Objectives** *The student will able to:*

1. Understand the basic differences, histories, major figures, and approaches to core ethics issues such as autonomy, identity, etc. in relation to major contemporary moral individual life and death issues
2. Critically compare and contrast the major general ethical theoretical issues as well as the key issues specific issues with respect to the issue of abortion.
3. Critically compare and contrast the major general ethical theoretical issues as well as the key issues specific issues with respect to the issue of euthanasia
4. Critically compare and contrast the major general ethical theoretical issues as well as the key issues specific issues with respect to the issue of capital punishment.

**Unit III** Ethical Issues – Individual and Society: (SLO #1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

**Learning Objectives** *The student will able to:*

1. Understand the basic differences, histories, major figures, and approaches to core ethics issues such as community, identity, etc. in relation to major contemporary moral issues with respect to the relationship between individuals and societies
2. Critically compare and contrast the major general ethical theoretical issues as well as the key issues specific issues with respect to the issue of pornography, censorship and illegal drug use.
3. Critically compare and contrast the major general ethical theoretical issues as well as the key issues specific issues with respect to the issues of sex, gender, sexuality and marriage.
4. Critically compare and contrast the major general ethical theoretical issues as well as the key issues specific issues with respect to the issues of race, ethnicities and affirmative action.

**Unit IV** Ethical Issues – Humanity and Nature: (SLO #1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

**Learning Objectives** *The student will able to:*

1. Understand the basic differences, histories, major figures, and approaches to core ethics issues such as community, identity, etc. in relation to major contemporary moral issues with respect to the relationship between individuals, communities and nature
2. Critically compare and contrast the major general ethical theoretical issues as well as the key issues specific issues with respect to the issues of environmental ethics.
3. Critically compare and contrast the major general ethical theoretical issues as well as the key issues specific issues with respect to the issues of genetic engineering.
4. Critically compare and contrast the major general ethical theoretical issues as well as the key issues specific issues with respect to the issues of animal rights.
5. Critically compare and contrast the major general ethical theoretical issues as well as the key issues

specific issues with respect to the issues of global justice.

**Unit V** Ethical Issues – War, Terrorism, Genocide & Torture: (SLO #1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

**Learning Objectives The student will able to:**

1. Understand the basic differences, histories, major figures, and approaches to core ethics issues such as community, identity, etc. in relation to major contemporary moral issues with respect to the issues of violence and armed conflict
2. Critically compare and contrast the major general ethical theoretical issues as well as the key issues specific issues with respect to the issues of warfare.
3. Critically compare and contrast the major general ethical theoretical issues as well as the key issues specific issues with respect to the issues of terrorism.
4. Critically compare and contrast the major general ethical theoretical issues as well as the key issues specific issues with respect to the issues of genocide.
5. Critically compare and contrast the major general ethical theoretical issues as well as the key issues specific issues with respect to the issues related to torture.

**Evaluation of student learning:**

- Citizenship:* Course-long assessment of how students demonstrate philosophical literacy and practice through their contributions to the class learning environment, that may include such factors as attendance, the amount and manner of class participation, helpfulness to other students' understanding, oral presentations (may be broken out as a separate grading category), etc.
- Homework:* 6 or more short assignments aimed at having the student demonstrate that they did the assigned reading assignment and can address the issues covered in their own words.
- Quizzes:* 2 or more brief assessments to allow students to demonstrate philosophical literacy in a specific unit of instruction
- Tests:* 1 or more class-length assessments to allow students to demonstrate content knowledge/philosophical literacy in covered units of instruction
- Examinations:* 2 or more class-length assessments to allow students to demonstrate philosophical practices (and literacy) as applied to units of instruction; at least includes one comprehensive in-class final exam
- Essays:* 1 or more assessments to allow students to demonstrate philosophical literacy and practices as applied to units of instruction. Well-argued papers are the first goal here, as a demonstration of philosophical reasoning, though assigning and assessing, in part, a research dimension to the assignment is fitting, though more for 200-level courses.

Course Grade Breakdown:

Citizenship	10-15% (not more than this) (includes 'participation')
Homework	10-15%
Quizzes	5-10%
Tests/Exams	30-50% (no one test/exam worth more than 20%)
<u>Essays</u>	<u>30-50%</u> (no one paper worth more than 25%)
Course =	100%

The particular grading breakdown is to be determined by each instructor in line with above and listed clearly in her/his syllabus.