

**Meeting Time and Location:** Tue/Thu 2:20-3:35 at O&M 103

Instructor: Dr. Irene Price

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**Course Description and Objectives:**

This course surveys some of the major moral issues facing our society and culture today. We will be examining the ethical debates and arguments focusing on issues of social and economic justice, life and death, as well as liberty. The course will be divided into three main sections: 1.) ethical theory, 2.) life-and-death and liberty issues, and 3.) problems concerning social and economic justice. Each section will be followed by an exam. The aim of the class is to develop students' critical reasoning skills, which will be used to examine the specific moral problems.

**Required Readings:**

1.) James Rachels and Stuart Rachels, ed., *The Elements of Moral Philosophy*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2007).

2.) Thomas Mappes and Jane Zembaty, *Social Ethics: Morality and Social Policy*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2007).

**Exams and other Assignments:**

**3 Exams:** Exam #1 worth 25% of total grade, Exam #2 worth 30% of total grade, Exam #3 worth 35% of total grade. Exams may consist of multiple choice, short answer essay, identification of terms, or any combination thereof.

**Participation Assignments**, consisting of (1-2 paragraph) response papers to readings, class discussions, or films viewed in class. These assignments together will comprise the remaining 10% of total grade, and will be assigned in class without prior notice.

**Make-ups:**

Make-ups for exams or short writing assignments are given only in cases of unavoidable absence. This means that the absence must be excused, and the student must provide proper documentation. Please consult <http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule7.htm> (Student Rules) for additional information.

### **Class/Exam Policies:**

**All electronic devices are to be (and remain) turned off in class and during exams.** This includes phones, organizers, laptops, and the like. Students with documented disabilities may be exempted from this policy. Students found in violation of this policy during an exam will be disqualified from the exam.

Exams start at the beginning of class on the day for which they are scheduled. The amount of time allotted for the exam may be less than the class period. Students should therefore plan to arrive on time.

Baseball caps or other headgear, as well as articles of clothing or objects that may also be used to conceal notes, may not be worn during exams. This excludes headgear worn as a form of sincere religious expression.

Cheating will not be tolerated. Students should refer to the Honor Council Rules and Procedures on the web at <http://www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor> for further information concerning the Academic Integrity Statement:

“An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal, or tolerate those who do.”

### **Attendance and Participation:**

Regular attendance is expected, as is participation in class discussion. Students should be prepared for class, which means they should have read the assigned material prior to class, be ready to ask for clarification and further explanation whenever necessary, and in general, to take responsibility for their learning.

### **Class Discussion Rules:**

Please be as respectful of others' views as you would want them to be of yours. You are encouraged to voice your views in a civilized manner, which means that you should be prepared to listen and respond to potential criticisms of that view. Be aware, however, that not all claims and positions are equally plausible. It is the purpose of discussion to attempt to settle the question as to which view(s) have the better justification(s).

### **Americans with Disabilities Act:**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal antidiscrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Department of Student Life, Services for Students with Disabilities in Cain Hall, Rm. B118, or call 845-1637.

## **Tentative Schedule of Readings and Exams:**

Readings are to be completed prior to the class for which they are assigned.

Aug. 26	Introduction/Orientation	
Aug. 28	Rachels, Chapter 1	<b>Aug. 29 last day to add/drop</b>
Sept. 2	Rachels, Chapter 2	
Sept. 4	Rachels, Chapter 3	
Sept. 9	Rachels, Chapter 4	
Sept. 11	Film	
Sept. 16	Rachels, Chapters 6&7 (Utilitarianism/Mill)	
Sept. 18	Rachels, Chapters 8&9 (Deontology/Kant)	
Sept. 23	Catch up, Review	
Sept. 25	<b>Exam #1</b>	
Sept. 30	Mappes/Zembaty, pp. 1-38 (Abortion)	
Oct. 2	“	
Oct. 7	Mappes/Zembaty, pp. 58-96 (Euthanasia)	
Oct. 9	Film, “Dead Man Walking”	
Oct. 14	Mappes/Zembaty, pp. 104-148 (Death Penalty)	
Oct. 16	“	
Oct. 21	Mappes/Zembaty , pp. 217-248 (Pornography)	
Oct. 23	Mappes/Zembaty, pp. 296-315 (Drug Control)	
Oct. 28	Review	
Oct. 30	<b>Exam #2</b>	<b>Oct. 31 last day to Q-drop</b>
Nov. 4	Mappes/Zembaty, pp. 371-405 (Social Justice)	
Nov. 6	Film, “Modern Times”	
Nov. 11	Mappes/Zembaty, pp. 430-465 (Poverty)	
Nov. 13	“	
Nov. 18	Bonfire Remembrance Day	
Nov. 20	Catch up, Review	
Nov. 25	<b>Exam #3</b>	
Nov. 27	Thanksgiving	
Dec. 2	Last day of class	

**Note:** This schedule is subject to change to accommodate for the actual pace of the class. Changes, if necessary, will be announced in class, though students may be assured that exams will not be given prior to the dates for which they are currently scheduled.