

# Ethics: How good people make tough choices.

School for New Learning  
DePaul University  
Winter Syllabus 2017

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Location: O'Hare Campus  
Dates/Time: Thursday 6:15-9:30  
January 5 – March 16

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

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Every day, we make decisions that impact our life, or the lives of those around us. Many of those decisions are grounded in our values and morals, a significant number of which we have developed since childhood. The easiest of these decisions are those which we make between what is right and what is wrong; often differentiating between good and evil, truth and lies, etc. However, most of our dilemmas do not stem from deciding the correct path when we are faced with right and wrong decisions. What most often puts us in a quandary is deciding between right v. right, and sometimes between the best of two wrongs. How then do we make the decision? In an era of perceived ethical uncertainty and moral skepticism, students will examine how decisions are made based on one of many ethical systems. In this course, you will learn how the conclusions that you come to are based on various ethical philosophies originating from Kant, Aristotle, Gilligan, and others. With our newly learned language, we will examine various everyday ethical issues, which we encounter, such as ethics in the workplace, environmental ethics, social issues, ethics in religion, and health issues, just to name a few. To ensure that all learning is applicable in students' everyday lives we will rely on current articles, readings, and case studies, as well as student's shared experiences.

## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

I earned my Bachelor degree from DePaul and Master Degree in Organization Development from Loyola, Chicago. I have worked extensively non-profit church based communities and financial institutions. In addition to teaching at School for New Learning, I have consulted, and developed courses and training, for individuals who work with faith based congregations. I have worked for SNL for nearly twelve years, and currently hold the position of Associate Director of Advising Operations.

## **METHODS OF LEARNING**

The primary method of learning will be class lecture and discussion, reading, and viewing and analysis of films. Here, students will have the opportunity to test and debate various rules, beliefs and assumptions, and relate them to their own experiences either at work, or within the framework of a larger social context.

Upon completion of this course, you should be able to describe the distinctive assumptions of two different ethical systems; identify and describe an ethical and/or social issue or problem; analyze the problem by comparing and contrasting how these two different systems would apply to that particular ethical or social issue or problem; identify an ethical perspective relevant to the issue or situation and use that perspective to raise or explore questions about the issue or situation.

To fuel the discussions and learning, students will:

- hear short presentations/lectures
- engage in reflective writing
- watch videos/movies
- work in small and large groups
- analyze case studies, all relating to ethical and social issue topics.

**REQUIRED READING:**

The competence which you are registered for will determine which book you need. If you are registered for two competencies, you will need two different books. You will only need to read from the books which are assigned to the competencies that you are registered for.

**ALL COMPETENCIES:**

My Sister's Keeper

Picoult, J., Washington Square Press (2004)

ISBN 0-7434-5453-7

- This is a novel and not difficult to read. You will need to finish reading the book by the end of week 7, so that we can discuss it during weeks 8 and 9. Yes, there is a movie with the same title, however, as with many movies, it eliminates many of the key points and dialogue, so you will not be able to fully engage in the conversation if you only watch the movie.

**A4**

How Should we Live; An introduction to Ethics (HWSL)

Pojman, L. P., Thompson (2005)

ISBN 978-0 534-55657-0

- You will not need to read the entire book, only chapters from it.

**A3C**

Social and Personal Ethics (S&PE)

Shaw, W., Thompson (2008)

ISBN 978-0-495-09500-2

- You will not need to read the entire book, only chapters from it.

**A3X**

Have a Little Faith (HLF)

Albom, M., Hyperion Press (2009)

ISBN 978-0-7868-6872-B

**FX**

Business Ethics: Mistakes and Successes(BE)

Hartkey, R., Wiley (2005)

ISBN #0-471-66373-5

- You will not need to read the entire book, only chapters from it.

## **COMPETENCIES:**

Credit Hours: four(4) credit hours for two(2) competencies (two credit hours for one competence)

**A4: Can analyze a problem using two different ethical systems.**

- Identifies and describes an ethical issue or problem
- Describes the distinctive assumptions of two different ethical systems
- Analyzes the problem by comparing and contrasting how these two different systems would apply to that particular ethical issue or problem.

Students demonstrate this competence by applying two ethical systems to a particular issue or problem that permits substantial ethical examination (for example, business practices, uses of technology, reproductive rights, class structures, institutional racism, sexual behavior, etc.). Students may choose any ethical system that is associated with particular thinkers. Students may consider the choices these thinkers identify, and the standards or measures by which these choices are made to obtain desired outcomes.

**A3C: Can examine a social issue from an ethical perspective.**

- Identifies and describes a social issue or situation.
- Identifies an ethical perspective relevant to the issue or situation.
- Uses that perspective to raise or explore questions about this issue or situation.

Students demonstrate this competence by using an ethical perspective to analyze a social issue. They may create their own ethical perspective, but should always engage the ideas of one or more significant ethicists. The issues or situations that students address in this competence should affect large groups of people. Students should explore the implications of this analysis for their own experience.

**A3X – Can identify and interpret the significant events which have shaped their ethical and moral value system.**

- Identifies and describes their ethical or moral value system.
- Identifies and examine the influences which have shaped their beliefs.
- Can associate and relate the relationship between their value system and its connection to a greater philosophical perspective.

Students demonstrate this competence by identifying their own moral and ethical values and finding the connection between their own rules, beliefs and assumptions, and those of other significant thinkers or philosophical perspectives. Students should also explore how their decisions and actions have an impact within the larger community.

**FX – Can apply the principles of ethics in the workplace environment.**

- Identifies and describes an ethical issue in the workplace.
- Identifies an ethical perspective relevant to the resolution of the workplace issue.

Students demonstrate this competence by using an ethical perspective to analyze a workplace issue. The issues or situations that students address in this competence can effect only the individual, but may also effect larger groups of people. The students should explore the implications of this analysis for their own experience.

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## **ASSESSMENT, GRADING, CLASS PARTICIPATION AND ASSIGNMENTS**

**CLASS PARTICIPATION:** Given the experiential nature of what and how we will be learning in this class, engaged, mindful participation in all of the classroom activities will be an essential part of the demonstration of your learning. Partner with someone in class and exchange contact information. If you are not able to attend class, a) please let me know in advance and, b) obtain any materials or course documents from your partner.

### **PAPERS**

You will be expected to submit a short paper before each of classes #2– 9. So, you will write 8 papers. Guidance for the papers is below.

## ASSESSMENT & GRADING

At the end of the quarter, you will be given a letter grade for each competence you are registered for. Your final grade(s) in this course will be based on the number of points you earn from your class participation and reflection papers. I do not accept any extra credit work.

**Class attendance and participation** are worth up to **10 points** per class session. So you can earn up to a total of **100 points** for attendance and participation in all class sessions. It is impossible to duplicate what happens in class. So if you miss any class sessions, you will miss out on some key learning experiences.

The **papers** are each worth up to **20 points**. So the eight papers combined are worth a total of up to **160 points**. I will provide a complete assessment rubric for these papers during the first class session.

***Each student must submit one paper of their choosing to the DePaul Writing Center for feedback. 10 points will be deducted from the final grade if a paper is not submitted.***

The **final synthesis** is worth **40 points**. I will provide a complete assessment rubric for this presentation during one of the first few weeks of the term.

Your final grade(s) will be determined as follows:

### **Total Points Final Grade**

|         |    |
|---------|----|
| 295-300 | A+ |
| 286-294 | A  |
| 280-285 | A- |
| 275-279 | B+ |
| 266-274 | B  |
| 260-265 | B- |
| 255-259 | C+ |
| 246-254 | C  |
| 240-245 | C- |
| 220-239 | D  |
| >119    | F  |

Students are expected to complete all of their work on time. If you cannot complete an assignment on time, please let me know ahead of time. There may of course be unforeseen circumstances that may get in the way of your completion of an assignment, however these are exceptional circumstances, not the rule. Late papers will not be accepted. If you need to submit a late paper, one point for every day that it is late will be deducted up to five days. Beyond that, the grade will be an automatic zero.

If you wish to take the course on a **Pass/Fail** basis, you must inform me in writing (by email) before the third class. Once you have chosen to do so, you cannot change back to a letter grade.

DePaul University anticipates that all students will attend all classes. Participation in class discussions is crucial and carries significant weight. It is understood that illness, business, or family related issues may arise and one or two absences may be unavoidable. However, should you anticipate missing more than two classes (one full Saturday), it is recommended that you drop the course, as it will make assessment of your work difficult, and in the event of several missed classes, impossible.

In the event of an absence it is imperative that you (1) let me know ahead of time, and (2) contact a classmate ahead of time to be your "tutor" for the missed session.

Unfinished work or work requiring revision will be given an Incomplete (IN) grade. In order to qualify for the IN, students must have regularly attended class, and must have completed two thirds of assignments. See below for more details on the DePaul University Incomplete Policy.

### CLASS SCHEDULE

| Ethics: Winter 2017 |        |  | Reading for next week                         |  |                     |   | Assignment for next week         |                         |     |    |  |
|---------------------|--------|--|---|--|---------------------|---|----------------------------------|-------------------------|-----|----|--|
| Class Session       | Date   | Class Session topic                            | A4  | A3C  | A3X                 | FX  | A4                               | A3C                     | A3X | FX |  |
|                     |        |  | How We Should Live: An Introduction to Ethics | Social and Personal Ethics                           | Have a Little Faith | Business Ethics: Mistakes and Successes   |                                  |                         |     |    |  |
| 1                   | 5-Jan  | Personal Values, Course Review                 | pages 1-12, 19-41 (Why do we need morality)   | Intro. & Chapter 3 (Four rival ethical perspectives) | pages 1-101         | Intro & ch. 15 (Exxon Alaskan Oil Spill)  | Written assignments per handout. |                         |     |    |  |
| 2                   | 12-Jan | Right v.Right / Environmental Issues           | pages 107-121 (Utilitarianism)                | Ch. 6 (Animals, vegetarianism & Env.)                | pages 102-185       | Ch. 23 (Role Model in Empl & Environmental Relations)                                   |                                  |                         |     |    |  |
| 3                   | 19-Jan | Ethical Paradigms / Environmental Issues       | pages 137-157 (Deontology)                    | Ch. 11 (The Ethics of War)                           | pages 186-254       | Ch. 16 (ITT: Heavy handed in Foreign Gov.) <u>or</u> Ch 17 (Lockheed: Oversees Bribery) |                                  |                         |     |    |  |
| 4                   | 26-Jan | Socialization/ Politics                        | pages 89-98 (Religion and Ethics)             | Ch. 8 (pages 262-269)(Adultery & Fidelity)           |                     |   |                                  |                         |     |    |  |
| 5                   | 2-Feb  | Moral Development / Issues of Religion & Faith | pages 193-204 (Human Rights)                  | Ch. 8 Pornography & Sexual Morality)                 |                     | Ch. 4 (ADM: Price fix, cronyism & whistle blower)                                       |                                  |                         |     |    |  |
| 6                   | 9-Feb  | Ethical Policies/ Social & Sexual Issues       | pages 166-186 (Virtue Ethics)                 | Ch. 9 (Gun Control)                                  |                     | Ch. 20 (Nike & cheap overseas labor)  |                                  |                         |     |    |  |
| 7                   | 16-Feb | Human Rights & Criminal Justice System         |   | Ch. 14 (pages)(Ethics in Business)                   |                     | Ch. 19 (Wal-Mart: A big bully?)   |                                  |                         |     |    |  |
| 8                   | 23-Feb | Workplace/Business Issues                      | pages 65-86 (Objectivism)                     | Ch. 4 (pages)(Suicide& Euthanasia)                   |                     | Ch. 13 (Nestle's Infant Formula: Unsafe product) and Ch. 22 (Johnson & Johnson)         |                                  |                         |     |    |  |
| 9                   | 2-Mar  | Medical/Health & Wellness                      |   | Ch. 2 (pages 33-41) (Ethical Relativism)             |                     | Ch. 24 (Conclusion: Lessons from the past)  |                                  |                         |     |    |  |
| 10                  | 9-Mar  | Synthesis, Presentations, Reflections, Wrap-up |   |  |                     |   |                                  | Final Paper Due 3/24/16 |     |    |  |

## **ADDENDA**

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### **DePaul University Plagiarism Policy**

The DePaul Student Handbook defines plagiarism as follows:

*“Plagiarism includes but is not limited to the following: (a) The direct copying of any source, such as written and verbal material, computer files, audio disks, video programs or musical scores, whether published or unpublished, in whole or in part, without proper acknowledgement that it is someone else’s. (b) Copying of any source in whole or in part with only minor changes in wording or syntax even with acknowledgement. (c) Submitting as one’s own work a report, examination paper, computer file, lab report or other assignment which has been prepared by someone else. This includes research papers purchased from any other person or agency. (d) The paraphrasing of another’s work or ideas without proper acknowledgement.” Plagiarism will result in a failure of the assignment or possibly of the course. If you are unsure of how to cite a source, ask!*

### **DePaul University Academic Integrity Policy**

DePaul University is a learning community that fosters the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas within a context that emphasizes a sense of responsibility for oneself, for others and for society at large. Violations of academic integrity, in any of their forms, are, therefore, detrimental to the values of DePaul, to the students’ own development as responsible members of society, and to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Violations include but are not limited to the following categories: cheating; plagiarism; fabrication; falsification or sabotage of research data; destruction or misuse of the university’s academic resources; alteration or falsification of academic records; and academic misconduct. Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could result in additional disciplinary actions by other university officials and possible civil or criminal prosecution. Please refer to your Student Handbook or visit <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/homehandbook.html> for further details.

### **DePaul University Incomplete Policy**

Undergraduate and graduate students have two quarters to complete an incomplete. At the end of the second quarter (excluding summer) following the term in which the incomplete grade was assigned, remaining incompletes will automatically convert to "F" grades. Ordinarily no incomplete grade may be completed after the grace period has expired. Instructors may not change incomplete grades after the end of the grace period without the permission of a college-based Exceptions Committee. This policy applies to undergraduate, graduate and professional programs. NOTE: In the case of a student who has applied for graduation and who has been approved for an Incomplete in his or her final term, the incomplete must be resolved within the four week grace period before final degree certification. n.b. The SNL student who wishes to receive the grade of IN must formally request in writing that the instructor issue this grade. This request must be made before the end of the quarter in which the student is enrolled in a course.

### **OTHER**

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential. To ensure that you receive the most appropriate accommodation based on your needs, contact the instructor as early as possible in the quarter, preferably within the first week of class, and make sure you have contacted:

- PLoS Program (for LD, AD/HD) at 773-325-4239 in the Schmidt Academic Center, room 220 or;
- The Office for Students with Disabilities (for all other disabilities) at 773-325-7290, DePaul University Student Center, room 307.

## WRITING RUBRICS

- The papers should be about 2 pages for each competence.
  - In these papers you should reflect a few of the most important insights that you have gained from your reading, classroom experience and experiences outside the classroom in between class sessions. You pick the topics for your weekly papers. There isn't any specific topic that your papers have to be about. They should be about whatever is most important that week in what you are learning from the course.
- Do not try to write about everything that you may have learned in the past week because your writing will be superficial! Focus on at most a couple of key learning experiences and develop your thoughts in some detail.
  - Write out the complete competence statement(s) that you are registered for at the beginning of every reflection paper. That is how I know that you know what competencies you are doing.
- The best way to be sure that you are relating your papers to the competencies you are registered for is to explicitly discuss what you are learning from the books you are reading for your competencies.
  - Do not waste space in your paper with quotations out of the assigned books.  
You can and should refer to ideas from the books, but discuss those ideas in your own words.
- Additional research beyond the materials we are already using in this course is neither necessary nor particularly recommended for these papers. There is more than enough material in the readings, the class sessions and your own experiences during the week to write about. Focus your energies on those.
  - Be sure to put your name and the date at the beginning of your paper. The papers should be double-spaced and in 12 point font. They should be Microsoft Word files (.doc or .docx). Proofread them before you turn them in. The DePaul Writing Center can help you too. ([depaul.edu/~writing](http://depaul.edu/~writing))
- Your papers are due at 6:15 pm. Submit them via email to [chayda@depaul.edu](mailto:chayda@depaul.edu). Do not try to load it to D2L.
  - Specific topics to write about may be assigned in lieu of the above.

I will assess each paper on the following five criteria:

- Your ability to think clearly about ideas, theories and practices associated with ethics.
- Your understanding of, and engagement with, the reading material and classroom experience.
- Your ability to develop and reflect on your own insights.
- Your ability to connect your learning to your competencies.
- Your ability to communicate effectively in writing. The assessment form that I will use to give you feedback on your papers has much more information about these five criteria.

### **Final Synthesis**

All students will be required to submit a final paper, which we will refer to as the "Ethics Manual". The "manual" will be your reference for what you learned during the course. On the last evening of class you will provide a 5-7 minute (min/max) overview of your key learning in the class and of your final synthesis/manual.