**CSU Sacramento**

**Philosophy 2: Ethics**

**Fall 2009**

**Instructor**: David Freelove

**Office**: 3032 Mendocino

**Office Hours**: Wednesday, 3:00-4:00; Friday, 9:00-9:50

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**Catalog Description**: Examination of the concepts of morality, obligation, human rights, and the good life. Competing theories about the foundations of morality will be investigated.

Satisfies General Education Area C3.

Learning Objectives:

At the end of the course the student should have the ability to:

--Define ethical terms used in the course.

--Distinguish various ethical concepts, theories, and positions.

--Engage in cogent and respectful discussion.

--Analyze specific ethical arguments for consistency and credibility.

--Apply ethical theories to moral dilemmas in professional and personal contexts.

**Required Text**:

*Plato Complete Works*, Edited by John M. Cooper. Hackett Publishing.

**Assignments**

Reading Assignments. Many reading assignments of different forms will be given throughout the semester. Examples include in-class reading assignments, in-class reading quizzes, take home reading assignments, WebCT assignments, etc. Each assignment will be relatively short. For example, an in-class quiz on a section of text may be announced on Wednesday for Friday. The quiz may consist in answering three multiple-choice questions or writing a paragraph or two. Expect one to two reading assignments per week. Each assignment will receive a score only. Some assignments will differ in the total score possible, depending on the difficulty of the assignment. Approximately 20% to 25% of the lowest scores will be dropped in the calculation of your grade for the reading assignments. So, for example, if 25 reading assignments were given throughout the semester, I may drop 6 of the lowest scores. Your reading assignment grade would then be based on your top 19 scores. Given this, I will not accept any late assignments or make-up assignments. The grading will be curved. The reading assignment grade will make up 40% of the course grade.

Exams. Three exams, two midterms and a final, must be taken to pass the course. The exams will consist of questions and tasks of the following kinds: multiple choice questions, true-false questions, short answer questions and short essays (1 to 2 pages of writing). Each exam is worth 20% of the course grade.

**Grading**. The “course grade” is the grade sent to the registrar and recorded in your transcripts. The course grade is determined according to the following formula.

Grading formula for the course grade: (g.p.v. for reading assignments x .4) + (g.p.v. for midterm 1 x .2) + (g.p.v. for midterm 2 x .20) + (g.p.v. for final exam x .20) + = course g.p.v.

A "g.p.v." is the numerical value associated with letter grades according to the following scale.

A = 4.0, A- = 3.7, B+ = 3.3, B = 3, B- = 2.7, C+ = 2.3, C = 2.0, C- = 1.7, D+ = 1.3, D = 1, D- =.7, F = 0.

The course g.p.v. is then converted into a letter grade according to the following scale.

4.0-3.85=A, 3.849-3.5=A-, 3.49-3.15=B+, 3.149-2.85=B, 2.849-2.5=B-, 2.49-2.15=C+, 2.149-1.85=C, 1.849-1.5=C-, 1.49-1.15=D+, 1.149-.85=D, .849-.5=D-, .49-0=F.

**Classroom participation.** Neither attendance nor classroom participation is graded. However, active, skillful, and courteous participation throughout the semester will boost your course grade by at least one grade. By "one grade" I mean the difference between, for example, a C+ and B-, or between a B- and B. If your classroom participation is active and especially skillful, I'll consider boosting your course grade by more than one grade.

C**itizenship grade.** While the course grading formula does not include a citizenship

component, I will add one for any individual showing poor citizenship in class. The grade will automatically be an F. How this will affect your course grade depends on whether I make the citizenship component .1, .5, 1, 5, 10, or 25 percent of the course grade. The weight of the citizenship grade will depend on the extent and severity of the breach of good citizenship.

**Disabilities**: If you have a disability that requires special homework, reading, exam, or classroom needs, please notify me at the beginning of the course in person or by email.

**Academic Dishonesty:** There are primarily three opportunities for cheating in this course. i. Copying the work of other students. ii. Using notes or crib sheets while taking an exam, whether they are written on paper, on shoes, on clothing, on pencils, or anything. iii. Looking at the exams of other students while taking an exam. Any case of cheating will result in a failing grade for that exam or assignment, and the student will be reported to the Judicial Affairs Officer. Studying with other students for exams will not be regarded as cheating. Do your own homework.

The following is only a rough guide to the topics of the course and the time at which they will be covered.

Week 1. Introduction to the course. Logic and argument. Some basic ethical concepts.

Week 2. Plato's *Protagoras*. Cultural relativism, ethical relativism.

Week 3. Plato's *Protagoras*. Psychological hedonism, ethical hedonism.

Week 4. Bentham, Mill. Utilitarianism. Objections and replies.

Week 5. Plato's *Euthyphro*. The relation between God and morality. The Divine Command Theory. Plato's *Gorgias*. Amoralism. Cynicism. Nietzsche.

Week 6. Plato's *Gorgias*. Hume's thesis on the "is-ought" distinction.

Week 7. Plato's *Gorgias*.

Week 8. Plato's *Crito*. Civil disobedience. Socrates vs. M.L. King.

Week 9 Plato's Crito.

Week 10. Immanual Kant. The categorical imperative.

Week 11. Plato's Republic. The Cynic, Again. Ring of Gyges.

Week 12 Plato's Republic. Plato's Theory of the Good.

Week 13 Plato's Republic. Plato vs. Thomas Jefferson on democracy.

Week 14 Subjectivism. Objections and replies.