

DEPARTMENT HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

COURSE OUTLINE – Fall 2024

PH3330 (B2: Professional Ethics – 3 (3-0-0) 45 Hours for 15 Weeks

Northwestern Polytechnic acknowledges that our campuses are located on Treaty 8 territory, the ancestral and present-day home to many diverse First Nations, Metis, and Inuit people. We are grateful to work, live and learn on the traditional territory of Duncan's First Nation, Horse Lake First Nation and Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation, who are the original caretakers of this land.

We acknowledge the history of this land and we are thankful for the opportunity to walk together in friendship, where we will encourage and promote positive change for present and future generations.

INSTRUCTOR:	Hugh Hunter	PHONE:	(780) 539-2823
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OFFICE HOURS:	Appointments by request.		

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION:

This course will examine the roles and responsibilities of professionals, as well as ethical challenges they face. These challenges often involve balancing self-interest, clients' interests, and the public good. At times they involve weighing clients' interests and clients' wishes (and their autonomy). They may also involve efforts to resolve conflicts between the professionals' personal moral beliefs and their perceived duties as professionals. Challenges and issues will be explored through consideration of debates within specific fields (such as accounting, medicine, engineering, journalism and law) - often with relevance across professions. Controversies will also be investigated through study of general discussions of common concerns. Ethical concepts and outlooks will provide assistance in facing the challenges.

PREREQUISITE(S)/COREQUISITE:

None

REQUIRED TEXT/RESOURCE MATERIALS:

Fritz Allhoff, Jonathan Milgrim, & Anand J. Vaidya, editors. *Professions in Ethical Focus: An Anthology* 2nd edition. Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2021.

DELIVERY MODE(S):

On-Campus.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

The learning outcomes stressed in this course are Communication Skills, Critical Thinking Skills and Ethical Reasoning.

1. Students will use **Communication Skills**

- Communicating clearly and concisely employing written and verbal skills appropriate to class assignments and discussion.
- Demonstrating interpersonal skills by listening effectively, establishing a rapport with peers, and monitoring non-verbal signals.
- Expressing awareness of and respect for self and others.
- See section on What we do in Philosophy for more.

2. Students will use **Critical Thinking Skills**

- Analyzing theoretical concepts and examining the connections between them.
- Critically assessing philosophical theories and arguments in support of these theories.
- Developing arguments with strong logical inferences between premises and conclusions.

3. Students will use **Ethical Reasoning**

- Applying ethical reasoning to practical situations.
- Recognizing and examining multiple perspectives.
- Analyzing and discussing issues from an ethical perspective.

TRANSFERABILITY:

Please consult the Alberta Transfer Guide for more information. You may check to ensure the transferability of this course at the Alberta Transfer Guide main page <https://transferalberta.alberta.ca/>.

**** Grade of D or D+ may not be acceptable for transfer to other post-secondary institutions. Students are cautioned that it is their responsibility to contact the receiving institutions to ensure transferability**

EVALUATIONS:

Participation	10%
Ethical Scenario Summary	15% September 24
Ethical Scenario Analysis	15% October 22
Final Report Outline	10% 19 November
Final Report Oral Presentation	25% (In class between 31 October and 5 December)
Final Report Written Version	25% 10 December

Expected Statutory Holidays and Breaks: (no class on these days)

November 11th to November 15th—Fall Break

Participation:

Philosophy exists in dialogue, and your active participation will help you improve in philosophy. Participation means doing the readings and bringing your questions and ideas to class. As you read, ask yourself, “Is this true?” “Did that argument make sense?” These questions will help you flag passages to raise in class. Participation also consists in engaging in your responsibility to find important information on the course outline, keeping track of due dates, submitting material on time, and keeping up with course content when you are unable to attend class, which includes watching recorded lectures. Your grade will be based on a combination of all these aspects of participation.

Quizzes and Exams:

The quizzes are take-home and should be completed through myClass prior to the due date. The exams are “in-class” (see the requirements for VC students below). The purpose of the quizzes and exams is to give you the opportunity to illustrate your understanding of the course material, which includes course readings, lectures, and in-class discussions. You will also illustrate your critical thinking skills by developing written arguments in response to case studies selected from the textbook. These are all skills you will develop in class; thus, it is to your advantage to attend and actively participate in every class. Further details of the exams will be explained closer to the exam dates.

- Exam and quiz deferrals may only be granted in extenuating circumstances such as extreme illness or other serious circumstances beyond the student’s control. Work commitments, holidays, or forgetfulness are not considered legitimate reasons for missing assigned deadlines.

Contesting Grades:

There should never be any reason for you to feel ashamed or angered by your grade. One of my priorities in this class is to help you learn, and the assignments and my comments on your work are aimed at this goal. I do not expect perfection, and neither should you. I expect you to do your best and to use the assignments to help guide you on how you can improve.

If you wish to contest your grade, please do the following:

1. Double check the assignment instructions and the grading criteria.
2. Thoroughly read all the comments in a charitable manner.
3. Make an appointment or come see me after class your grade at least 24 hours after receiving your graded assignment. It is my policy never to discuss assignments on the day they have been handed back.
4. Come prepared. After looking over the comments and the assignment requirements, you should be able to tell me why you think your answer should have earned more marks.

Please remember I can only give you grades for the content represented on the assignment. You may be able to verbally articulate what you meant to say in the meeting, but if that meaning is not clearly illustrated in the assignment content, I cannot give you grades for it.

GRADING CRITERIA:

Please note that most universities will not accept your course for transfer credit **IF** your grade is **less than C-**.

Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines		Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines
A+	4.0	95-100		C+	2.3	67-69
A	4.0	85-94		C	2.0	63-66
A-	3.7	80-84		C-	1.7	60-62
B+	3.3	77-79		D+	1.3	55-59
B	3.0	73-76		D	1.0	50-54
B-	2.7	70-72		F	0.0	00-49

COURSE SCHEDULE/TENTATIVE TIMELINE:

3 September	Introduction
5 September	3 John Stuart Mill, "Utilitarianism"
10 September	2 Immanuel Kant, "Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals"
12 September	7 Yuri Cath, "Reflective Equilibrium"
17 September	1 Robert Audi, "Some Approaches to Determining Ethical Obligations"
19 September	9 Ernest Greenwood, "Attributes of a Profession"
24 September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethical Scenario Summary Due on myClass • 10 Don Welch, "Just another day at the Office"
26 September	11 John T. Sanders, "Honor among Thieves"
1 October	12 Michael Davis, "Professional Responsibility"
3 October	18 Sissela Bok, "Whistleblowing and Leaks"
8 October	20 Michael Pritchard, "Responsible Engineering"
10 October	21 Keneth Kipnis, "Ethics and the Professional Responsibility of Lawyers"
15 October	22. Kathy Fitzpatrick and Candace Gauthier, "Towards a Professional Responsibility Theory of Public Relations Ethics"
17 October	25. Andrew Stark, "Comparing Conflict of Interest across the Professions"
22 October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 36. David Thomasma, "Telling the Truth to Patients" • Ethical Scenario Analysis due on myClass
24 October	38. Christopher Nathan, "Liability to Deception and Manipulation"
29 October	40. Mary Beth Armstrong, "Confidentiality: A Comparison across the Professions of Medicine, Engineering, and Accounting"
31 October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Report Oral Presentations • 44. Kenneth Kipnis, "A Defense of Unqualified Medical Confidentiality"
5 November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Report Oral Presentations • 49. Caitlin Flanagan, "The Problem with HR"
7 November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Report Oral Presentations • 64. Edmund Pellegrin, "The Virtuous Physician and the Ethics of Medicine"

12 November	FALL BREAK
14 November	FALL BREAK
19 November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Report Oral Presentations • 65. Pamela Grace, “Nursing Ethics and Professional Responsibility” • Final Report Outline Due on myClass
21 November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Report Oral Presentations • 66. Michael Davis, “Is There a Profession of Engineering”
26 November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Report Oral Presentations • 67. Yotam Lurie and Shlomo Mark, “Professional Ethics of Software Engineers”
28 November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Report Oral Presentations • 72. David Detmer, “The Ethical Responsibilities of Journalists”
3 December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Report Oral Presentations • 73. “Patricia Cook,” “The Military”
5 December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Report Oral Presentations • 75. Seumas Miller, “Professional Ethics for Police”
10 December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deferred Final Report Oral Presentations • Review/Catch Up • Final Reports Due on myClass

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

Responsibilities of all students:

1. Please do not be late for class.
2. Students are expected to complete assigned readings before class. Do not fall behind in the assigned readings because it is difficult to catch up.
3. If students miss class, it is their responsibility to obtain the information they missed. If available, recorded lectures may be shared in the case of reasonable absences.
4. Policies regarding final exams are governed by institutional policy. Students should consult the Examinations policy in the NWP Calendar. Students should consult the NWP Calendar for any questions regarding deferred exams but note that students are required to be available to write exams during the entire final exam period.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:

Academic Misconduct will not be tolerated. For a more precise definition of academic misconduct and its consequences, refer to the Student Rights and Responsibilities policy available at <https://www.nwpolytech.ca/about/administration/policies/index.html>.

**Note: all Academic and Administrative policies are available on the same page.

Additional Information:

What we do in Philosophy

Philosophers are sort of like product testers for ideas. A product tester doesn't test a product under regular use conditions, but rather puts the product into extreme conditions. For example, if a product is designed to run at -25° Celsius, a product tester might try to see if it works at -35°, because if it works in -35° it's safe to say it will work in -25°. In philosophy, we subject ideas to stress tests by considering the extreme cases. As you read through the readings, you'll find some unlikely and strange scenarios. We want to see if our ideas work in those scenarios, because if our ideas work in weird, extreme scenarios we can be sure they will work in ordinary cases as well.

Just like product testers, the fact that we are testing an idea doesn't mean that we believe it. Sometimes we don't even like the idea! But a product tester is neutral. The point is just to run the tests and see how the idea performs. We must always remember that we are testing ideas, not the people who happen to believe in them. As the philosopher Socrates often said, someone who shows you a problem with an idea that you believe in is doing you a favour by showing you that there are better, truer ideas out there to be discovered.

Additional Rules

- You are adults. Please treat class as you would any professional setting. That means governing your actions so as not to disrupt the class.
 - Feel free to use your technology discretely so long as it does not distract others.
 - If you need to take a call, leave to use the bathroom or leave early, do it quietly so as not to disrupt the class on the way out.
 - Don't start conversations on the side that will disrupt the class (join in class discussion instead!)

Use of Class Recordings

Classes (or parts of classes) in this course may be recorded by the instructor for use as an instructional resource for the class. These recordings are protected under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP) and are to be used for academic purposes only. Students must not sell, duplicate, distribute, or publish evaluative assessments, course lecture notes, handouts, recordings, or other information provided by an instructor, or use the above for any commercial purpose. These restrictions apply to all recorded materials unless you receive express written permission by NWP and all the participants involved in the recording. Students who misuse recordings may also be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct (for more information the Polytechnic Policy on Student Rights and Responsibilities under the section on Academic Misconduct

<https://www.nwpolytech.ca/about/administration/policies/>