

Montgomery County Community College
 PHI 115
 Problems in Philosophy
 3-3-0

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

An introduction to philosophy and philosophical investigation that is less general, but no more advanced, than PHI 100 (Introduction to Philosophy). Philosophical methods will be used to examine some of the most troublesome ethical/social issues of contemporary life. Among the issues/problems that might be discussed are the following: The issues of cloning and genetic engineering; the issue of drug use and drug addiction; the issue of same-sex sexual relations and same-sex marriage; the issue of the use of non-human inhabitants of this planet for research and for food; the issue of punishment and the death penalty; the issues of euthanasia and assisted suicide; the issues of racism, sexism, ageism, and affirmative action. Alternative versions of this course may focus on topics such as justice, beauty, truth, and ultimate reality.

REQUISITES:

Previous Course Requirements

None

Concurrent Course Requirements

None

LEARNING OUTCOMES Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	EVALUATION METHODS
1. Articulate the range and the depth of the diversity of opinion on various contemporary moral and social issues.	Lecture Class Discussion Short Papers	Exams Quizzes Short Papers Essays Discussions

LEARNING OUTCOMES	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	EVALUATION METHODS
2. Explain the difference between the concepts, "genetic human", "moral human", and "person", and the importance of these concepts in discussions about abortion, genetic engineering, cloning, and the rights of (current) non-human inhabitants of this planet.	Lecture Class Discussion Short Papers	Exams Quizzes Short Papers Essays Discussions
3. Explain the difference between the concept "person" and the concept "potential person", and the importance of the distinction between the two concepts in discussions about abortion and about genetic engineering and cloning.	Lecture Class Discussion Short Papers	Exams Quizzes Short Papers Essays Discussions
4. Explain the difference between therapeutic genetic engineering and cosmetic genetic engineering, and explain the difficulties in deciding which is an accurate characterization of a significant number of possible concrete cases.	Lecture Class Discussion Short Papers	Exams Quizzes Short Papers Essays Discussions

LEARNING OUTCOMES	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	EVALUATION METHODS
5. Explain the difference between the morality of execution as a means of punishment and the morality of allowing execution as a possible punishment knowing that mistakes will be made.	Lecture Class Discussion Short Papers	Exams Quizzes Short Papers Essays Discussions
6. Explain, at a basic level, the difference between moral wrong and legal wrong and explain different views of the proper relationship between the two in a country such as the United States.	Lecture Class Discussion Short Papers	Exams Quizzes Short Papers Essays Discussions
7. Explain the difference between the disease model of addiction and the moral model of addiction.	Lecture Class Discussion Short Papers	Exams Quizzes Short Papers Essays Discussions
8. Explain the "Relevant Difference" principle, and to explain its use as a device for philosophical investigation.	Lecture Class Discussion Short Papers	Exams Quizzes Short Papers Essays Discussions
9. Explain both the moral and the legal difference between mere different treatment on the basis of sex, race, etc., and discrimination on the basis of sex, race, etc..	Lecture Class Discussion Short Papers	Exams Quizzes Short Papers Essays Discussions
10. Explain the major philosophical arguments for and against the death penalty.	Lecture Class Discussion Short Papers	Exams Quizzes Short Papers Essays Discussions

LEARNING OUTCOMES	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	EVALUATION METHODS
11. Explain the major philosophical arguments for and against the use of addictive drugs.	Lecture Class Discussion Short Papers	Exams Quizzes Short Papers Essays Discussions
12. Explain the major philosophical arguments for and against the cloning of human beings.	Lecture Class Discussion Short Papers	Exams Quizzes Short Papers Essays Discussions
13. Explain the major philosophical arguments for and against genetically engineering human beings.	Lecture Class Discussion Short Papers	Exams Quizzes Short Papers Essays Discussions
14. Explain the major philosophical arguments for and against the use of current non-human inhabitants of this planet as they are currently used.	Lecture Class Discussion Short Papers	Exams Quizzes Short Papers Essays Discussions
15. Explain the major philosophical arguments for and against programs of affirmative action and programs of preferential treatment.	Lecture Class Discussion Short Papers	Exams Quizzes Short Papers Essays Discussions

At the conclusion of each semester/session, assessment of the learning outcomes will be completed by course faculty using the listed evaluation method(s). Aggregated results will be submitted to the Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs. The benchmark for each learning outcome is that *70% of students will meet or exceed outcome criteria.*

SEQUENCE OF TOPICS:

1. The Problem of Human Cloning and Genetic Engineering
2. The Problem of Abortion
3. The Problem of Our Proper Relationship to Non-Human Inhabitants of This Planet
4. The Problem of Same-Sex Relations and Same-Sex Marriage
5. The Problem of Capital Punishment

LEARNING MATERIALS:

ANALYZING MORAL ISSUE. [6TH ed.] Judith A. Boss, McGraw-Hill, 2012

Other learning materials may be required and made available directly to the student and/or via the College's Libraries and/or course management system.

COURSE APPROVAL:

Prepared by: Thomas Snowden	Date: 1985
Reviewed by: Bernard Mangiaracina	Date: 9/1998
Revised by: Benjamin F. Armstrong, Jr.	Date: 4/2004
Revised by: Benjamin F. Armstrong, Jr.	Date: 6/2014
VPAA/Provost or designee Compliance Verification: Victoria L. Bastecki-Perez, Ed.D.	Date: 6/17/2014
Revised by: Benjamin F. Armstrong, Jr.	Date: 12/16/2017
VPAA/Provost or designee Compliance Verification:	Date: 12/18/2017



This course is consistent with Montgomery County Community College's mission. It was developed, approved and will be delivered in full compliance with the policies and procedures established by the College.