

Philosophy 2401(04, 05): Ethics in Professional Life (3 credits)
Dr. Erica L. Neely
Spring 2017

Place and Time: Burgett 115, MWF 2-2:50 p.m. and 3-3:50 p.m.
Email address: e-neely@onu.edu
Office Hours: Burgett 121, MWF 12-2 p.m., and by appointment
Text (at bookstore): *Ethics for the Professions*, ed. John Rowan and Samuel Zinaich, Jr.
Web page: <https://northernonline.onu.edu/>

General Education Learning Outcome: Knowledge of the principles of civics or ethics on a professional, community, or global level.

Aims and Objectives

The purpose of this course is to provide students with a foundation in professional ethics. We examine fundamental questions in ethics relating to professionals and their interactions with other people. Although there is an abstract component to this class, we will largely be considering questions in applied ethics dealing with how to conduct ourselves in professional life. Students are encouraged to consider what ethical questions they will face both now and in their future callings. We will be considering a wide variety of professions; although not all students will engage in all of these, the kinds of dilemmas encountered have similarities across vocations and thus should prove illuminating for everyone.

This course consists of three units. In the first unit we consider the fundamental questions of professional ethics. What is a profession? How does one's role as a professional differ from other roles one plays? Are there special responsibilities involved in being a member of a profession? We will also consider the relationships among professionals and between professionals and clients. Not all professionals are self-employed – frequently they are employed by a company. What kind of rights do employees have? What responsibilities does an employer have in protecting those rights? Many ethical questions arise from relationships with clients – how do we handle questions such as confidentiality? Issues such as these will provide an introduction to the general subject matter of professional ethics; we will also see specific examples of ethical issues in particular professions.

In the second unit we begin examining particular moral theories and seeing how they tie into particular professions. We will consider three moral theories: utilitarianism, deontological ethics, and virtue ethics. Each of these provides a different way of looking at moral questions, and each should provide us with a framework for evaluating moral questions. We will then turn to articles dealing with the moral dilemmas of particular professions as a way of applying these moral theories to ethical issues that arise.

The third unit continues the application of theory to practice. We will consider articles and case studies in seven areas: business, engineering, health care, counseling, law, journalism, and education. Each of these has its own special ethical problems as well as highlighting broader ethical themes that span a variety of professions. By the end of this unit, students should be familiar with many ethical questions that may arise for them as they pursue their careers, as well as having some tools for dealing with those questions.

Assignments and Grading

Three Exams: 25% each
Participation: 25%

Exams – Exams are take-home essay exams, in which you will have some choice of what questions you want to answer. Note that you are not permitted to work with or consult other people while completing them; they must be entirely your own work. Each exam has a scheduled day that you may come ask me questions about it. Plagiarism will result in automatic failure in the course, so be certain to credit any sources that you use. With the exception of the third exam, all exams are due at the **beginning** of class on the day scheduled.

Participation – An important part of any philosophy course is discussion; this is the only good way to ensure you understand the ideas we are covering. While I do not take attendance every day in class, note that it is hard to participate if you are not there. Similarly, attendance alone is not sufficient – you need to contribute to the small-group and class discussions; contributions to the in-class activities also count. **If you are shy about speaking in whole-class discussions you may share your thoughts with me through email, on the discussion boards for the course, or with me after class.** Note also that inappropriate participation can negatively impact your participation grade; please be courteous to your classmates.

We will devise a technology policy on the first day of class. Here is space to fill it in:

Special Note on Academic Dishonesty

The University expects its students to conduct themselves in a dignified and honorable manner as mature members of the academic community and assumes that individually and collectively they will discourage acts of academic dishonesty. The University also expects cooperation among administrators, faculty, staff, and students in preventing acts of academic dishonesty, in detecting such acts, reporting them, and identifying those who commit them, and in providing appropriate punishment for offenders. The University Code of Academic Student Conduct is found in Appendix C of the Student Handbook: http://www.onu.edu/student_life/student_conduct/student_handbook

As committing academic dishonesty in an ethics course shows a distinct lack of appreciation for the subject matter (in addition to dishonoring your obligations as a student), it will result in an automatic failure in the course; the administration may pursue additional sanctions.

Other Information

Although final grades are limited to whole letter grades, individual assignments will use the plus/minus scale; this will enable you to see whether your B is closer to an A or closer to a C.

Extra credit can be obtained by bringing me articles (or emailing me links to articles) with discussions of real-world professional dilemmas; you should include a comment about why you find it interesting.

Students requiring particular accommodations because of physical and/or learning disabilities should contact their Dean's office prior to or during the first week of classes. For additional information, see: http://www.onu.edu/student_life/disability_services

Please note that you are responsible for keeping track of all assignments and exams; you are also responsible for any material covered in class.

A day-by-day schedule of readings is included in this syllabus; assignments should be completed prior to class on the date they are listed. You may find it helpful to bring your book to class so that you may reference the readings during class discussions. **I particularly recommend you bring your book on days marked as having an in-class activity; you will find it difficult to complete those activities without your book.**

Day-by-Day Reading Assignments (complete prior to class)

January

W 1/18 First Day of Class

Unit One: Introduction to Professional Ethics

A. The What, Why, and How of Professional Ethics

F 1/20 Introduction: 1-10
Class Discussion

M 1/23 "What Is a Profession?" (Michael D. Bayles): 55-62
"Professional Responsibility: Just Following the Rules" (Michael Davis): 62-69

W 1/25 "The Excuses That Make Professional Ethics Irrelevant" (Banks McDowell): 80-86

F 1/27 "Strong Separatism in Professional Ethics" (John-Christian Smith): 70-75
"Just Another Day at the Office: The Ordinarity of Professional Ethics"

(Don Welch): 75-80

B. Employees and Employee Rights

M 1/30 "The Moral Foundation of Employee Rights" (John R. Rowan): 88-96
Class Activity

February

W 2/1 "Employment at Will and Due Process" (Patricia H. Werhane and Tara J. Radin): 96-101

F 2/3 "Work, Privacy, and Autonomy" (Richard L. Lippke): 101-108

C. Professionals and Clients

February

- M 2/6 “Client and Professional” (Paul Faber): 123-134
W 2/8 “Needs, Moral Self-Consciousness, and Professional Roles” (Andrew Alexandra and Seumas Miller): 134-140
“The Role of Autonomy in Professional Ethics” (James Stacey Taylor): 140-145
F 2/10 “My Client, My Enemy” (Judith Andre): 152-164
Class Activity

D. Specific Professional Topics

- M 2/13 “Nonsexual Multiple Relationships” (Kenneth S. Pope and Melba J.T. Vasquez): 322-330
“Lying and Deception in Counseling” (Ronald H. Stein): 330-335
W 2/15 No new readings
Receive Exam 1
F 2/17 **Exam 1 Question Period**

Unit Two: Theories and Beginning Applications

A. Utilitarianism and Deontological Ethics

- M 2/20 Utilitarian Ethics: 12-22
W 2/22 No new readings
Exam 1 Due
F 2/24 **Utilitarianism Group Meeting**
M 2/27 Deontological Ethics: 22-35

March

- W 3/1 No new readings
F 3/3 **Deontological Group Meeting**
M 3/6 **No Class – Spring Break**
W 3/8 **No Class – Spring Break**
F 3/10 **No Class – Spring Break**
M 3/13 “Confidentiality: A Comparison Across the Professions of Medicine, Engineering and Accounting” (Mary Beth Armstrong): 145-152
“Confidentiality, Counseling, and Clients Who Have AIDS: Ethical Foundations of a Model Rule” (Elliot D. Cohen): 315-322

B. Virtue Ethics

W	3/15	Virtue Ethics: 41-46
F	3/17	No new readings
M	3/20	Virtue Ethics Group Meeting
W	3/22	“Whistleblowing: Professionalism and Personal Life” (Mike W. Martin): 211-219 “Ethics, <i>Ethos</i> , and the Professions: Some Lessons from Engineering” (Gene Moriarty): 201-211
F	3/24	No new readings
M	3/27	No new readings Receive Exam 2
W	3/29	Exam 2 Question Period

Unit Three: Applications and Examples

Healthcare

F	3/31	“Four Models of the Physician-Patient Relationship” (Ezekiel J. Emanuel and Linda L. Emanuel): 242-254 Class Activity
---	------	---

April

Business

M	4/3	“A Stakeholder Theory of the Modern Corporation” (R. Edward Freeman): 166-172 “The Moral Duties of Organizations: Dual-Investor Theory and the Nature of Organizations” (Eugene Schlossberger): 173-180 Exam 2 Due
---	-----	---

Law

W	4/5	“The Adversary System of Justice: An Ethical Jungle” (Allen Taylor): 337-344 “Pure Legal Advocates and Moral Agents: Two concepts of a Lawyer in an Adversary System” (Elliot D. Cohen): 349-358
---	-----	---

Healthcare

F	4/7	“Legal and Ethical Myths About Informed Consent” (Alan Meisel and Mark Kuczewski): 254-261 Class Activity
---	-----	--

Sharing Information: Engineering and Business

M	4/10	“Trade Secrets and Patents in Engineering: Ethical Issues Concerning Professional Information” (Eugene Schlossberger): 224-227 “Paternalism in the Marketplace: Should a Salesman Be His Buyer’s Keeper?” (James M. Ebejer and Michael J. Morden): 180-183
---	------	---

Healthcare

W	4/12	“Health Care as a Business: the Ethic of Hippocrates Versus the Ethic of Managed Care” (Mark H. Waymack): 293-298 “Physicians and Managed Care: Employees or Professionals?” (Kate T. Christensen): 298-305
---	------	--

F 4/14 **No Class – Easter Break**

M 4/17 **No Class – Easter Break**

Healthcare

W 4/19 “Physician-Assisted Suicide: Promoting Autonomy or Medicalizing Suicide?”
(Tania Salem): 261-267
“Reassessing the Reliability of Advance Directives” (Thomas May): 268-277

Journalism

F 4/21 “The Ethical Responsibilities of Journalists” (David Detmer): 371-379
“Truth, Neutrality, and Conflict of Interest” (Judith Lichtenberg): 379-386
Class Activity

Education

M 4/24 “Autonomy and the Very Limited Role of Advocacy in the Classroom”
(Joel J. Kupperman): 433-441
“Professors, Students, and Friendship” (Peter J. Markie): 427-432
W 4/26 No new readings

Journalism

F 4/28 “Ethical Boundaries to Media Coverage” (Raphael Cohen-Almagor): 386-393
“Privacy, Politics, and the Press” (Dennis F. Thompson): 394-400

May

Healthcare

M 5/1 “A Dilemma of Caring: Ethical Analysis and Justification of the Nurse Refusing
Assignment” (Lucie Ferrell): 283-293
Class Activity

W 5/3 **Closing Class Discussion**
Receive Exam 3

F 5/5 **Exam 3 Question Period**

W 5/10 **Exam 3 Due, 4 p.m., my mailbox (Philosophy Department office, Burgett)**

Important Dates

F	1/20	Class Discussion	W	3/29	Exam 2 Question Period
M	1/30	Rowan Activity	F	3/31	Emanuel and Emanuel Activity
F	2/10	Andre Activity	M	4/3	Exam 2 Due
W	2/15	Receive Exam 1	F	4/7	Meisel and Kuczewski Activity
F	2/17	Exam 1 Question Period	F	4/21	Detmer and Lichtenberg Activity
W	2/22	Exam 1 Due	M	5/1	Ferrell Activity
F	2/24	Utilitarianism Group Meeting	W	5/3	Closing Class Discussion
F	3/3	Deontological Group Meeting			Receive Exam 3
M	3/20	Virtue Ethics Group Meeting	F	5/5	Exam 3 Question Period
M	3/27	Receive Exam 2	W	5/10	Exam 3 Due, 4 p.m.