

St. Edward's University
New College
Syllabus

CAPS 4360A
Moral Issues in Society
Spring 2020
(Online Section)

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Office Hours: See below

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1. Overview

Office Hours: I am available for office hours as needed in Premont 317. Please let me know when you wish to meet and I will try to accommodate.

Course Description: The New College Capstone course provides opportunities for students to successfully integrate a variety of skills identified in the St. Edward's University mission statement, including identification and analysis of a controversial value-laden issue or problem and independent library research on the issue to discover various points of view and proposed solutions. The final project includes evaluation and ranking of the various solutions and recommendation of a position whose defense is based on ethical principles and critical thinking. The format of the course allows for a wide variety of topics and for student-initiated research and problem solving. Prerequisites: NCCT 2330A, PHIL 3327A, a Critical Global Issues (CGI) course and completion of 90 semester hours.

Time Commitment: Students should commit eight to twelve hours a week for fourteen weeks for the completion of learning activities for this course. In some cases, a student may need more time than that to complete the required work. In very rare cases, a student may need less time than that. Students who cannot commit an average of ten hours per week for the entire fourteen-week duration of the course should consider enrolling in the course at another time. See the section "Expected Time Required to

Complete All Learning Activities” below for more details about the time commitment required.

Course Objectives: Upon completion of the course, the student should be able to:

- A. Identify a controversial value-laden issue or problem.
- B. Conduct systematic and in-depth scholarly research, using both hard copy and electronic sources.
- C. Identify the main parties involved in this controversy and their positions; and identify and analyze their arguments.
- D. Conduct a values analysis, and rank the values of the parties involved in the controversy.
- E. Develop a systematic and integrated problem solving procedure-- apply critical thinking methods and normative ethical theories towards analyzing complex arguments to arrive at a solution to the moral issue.
- F. Adopt a final solution to the controversy, and defend it as a just solution based on ethical principles and moral reasoning.
- G. Produce a clear, well written twenty- to thirty-page research paper that demonstrates the outcomes listed above.
- H. Effectively report the findings of his or her research to classmates.

Textbooks: There are no required textbooks for this class. Readings and other materials will be uploaded to Canvas.

2. Assignments and Grading

Participation 10%

Proposal 10%

Revised Proposal with Literature Review 10%

Revised Proposal with Method and Moral/ Ethical Analysis 10%

Revised Proposal with Findings 10%

Revised Proposal with Recommendations 10%

Final Capstone Project & Presentation 40%

This course is centered around a 20-30-page persuasive research paper on a controversial moral issue in society. Students will choose a topic and investigate the history and current state of the issue, including the perspective of all stakeholders. Students will think critically and analyze all arguments to propose an original solution to the problem chosen. This paper will follow the standard academic paper five-chapter

format: Introduction, Literature, Method, Findings, and Discussion. The final discussion chapter will vary from other academic papers in that it will primarily be a persuasive discussion arguing for a specific solution to a problem chosen by the student.

Calendar

Week 1 Intros and Capstone expectations

Week 2 Introduction to academic research & writing

Week 3 Library research and literature reviews

Week 4 Proposal Development 1

Week 5 Proposal Development 2

Week 6 Proposal presentations due

Week 7 Research Methods (Chapter 2 due)

Week 8 Research Methods 2

Week 9 Moral and Ethical Analysis

Week 10 Moral and Ethical Analysis 2 (Chapter 3 due)

Week 11 Persuasive Writing 1

Week 12 Persuasive Writing 2 (Chapter 4 due)

Week 13 Wrap-up Week

Week 14 Final presentations due

Research: The student will perform both scholarly and original fieldwork for this project. We will go over details for both during the course. Students are expected to utilize the SEU library facilities for this course. They offer both online and in-person research assistance. You should also seek assistance from the writing center if you need assistance with writing style and formatting.

<http://library.stedwards.edu>
<https://www.stedwards.edu/writing-center>

Critical Thinking and Moral Reasoning: You are expected to use what you learned in prior classes to demonstrate critical thinking and moral reasoning skills in this paper. As a “capstone” paper, it should demonstrate the academic skills that you have developed throughout your time at St. Edward’s University.

Technical Guidelines for All Papers:

- * Use MLA style throughout.
- * Use 12-point Times New Roman font.
- * Double space
- * Insert page numbers
- * 1” margins all around
- * Heading: (top left corner of all pages):
 (Name)
 Dr. Mike Hollis
 CAPS 4360A.02
 (Date)
- * Double space again and center the title. Do not underline, italicize, place your title in quotation marks, or put the title in all capital letters (In other words, don’t use any of the style found in this syllabus).
- * Double space between the title and the first line of the text.

Upload all assignments into Canvas.

(Google: MLA OWL Purdue for a really good online style guide for MLA with examples)

3. SEU/ New College Required Disclaimers

Title IX: There is a new university policy and state law that makes it a criminal offense for university faculty to not report incidents of sexual harassment, sexual violence, stalking and many other similar types of incidents regarding university students, staff or faculty. These include any that faculty become aware of through personal communication and in class work and discussions. This is an important new law. As a mandatory reporter however, I do have to warn that while I take student privacy very

seriously, I will not neglect my duties to report offenses brought to my attention under this policy.

Course Expectations: Students in this online course should observe St. Edward's University's netiquette guidelines posted at <http://think.stedwards.edu/computerhelp/netiquetteguidelines>

Academic Integrity Policy: Per the Student Handbook, "St. Edward's University expects academic honesty from all members of the community, and it is our policy that academic integrity be fostered to the highest degree possible. Consequently, all work submitted for grading in a course must be created as a result of your own thought and effort. Representing work as your own when it is not a result of such thought and effort is a violation of our code of academic integrity. Whenever it is established that academic dishonesty has occurred, the course instructor shall impose a penalty on the offending individual(s). The maximum penalty for a first offense is failure in the course, and if that penalty is imposed, the student does not have the option of withdrawing from the course."

<http://think.stedwards.edu/deanofstudents/studenthandbook/academicintegrity>

- **Unintentional plagiarism:** Often, when students commit plagiarism, it is unintentional. But any form of plagiarism is a serious misstep; all acts of plagiarism, intentional or unintentional, will be penalized. Students are responsible for knowing what constitutes plagiarism and avoiding it. Students may wish to refer to a college writing guide, such as The Little Seagull Handbook, to familiarize themselves with what counts as plagiarism.
- **Self-plagiarism:** Submitting work a student submitted for credit in another course or previously published is considered self-plagiarism. Work a student submitted for credit in another course or previously published may not be submitted, in whole or in part, for credit in this course.
- **Feedback on work containing plagiarized content:** The instructor will not provide feedback on plagiarized content. The instructor will not provide feedback on a submission containing 30% or more plagiarized content.
- **Revision of work containing plagiarized content:** No extra revisions, beyond the paper revisions, if any, listed in the syllabus which all students are expected to write, will be granted for students to correct plagiarism in a submission.
- **Plagiarism at different stages of the writing process:** When there is plagiarism in a paper proposal, outline, draft, or revision the instructor does not detect, that plagiarism is still the student's responsibility and may be penalized retroactively if the plagiarism is detected in a later revision or version of the project. To reiterate: Any

form of plagiarism is a serious misstep; all acts of plagiarism, intentional or unintentional, will be penalized; students are responsible for knowing what constitutes plagiarism and avoiding it.

Dropping/ Withdraw Policy: It is the student's responsibility to be aware of add/drop/withdraw and refund deadlines. See web link:
<http://think.stedwards.edu/registrar/datesanddeadlines>

* Students should also communicate with their instructor, academic advisor, and financial aid advisor.

Incomplete Grades Policy: The grade of I (Incomplete) is given at the sole discretion of the instructor and with the approval of the dean. A grade of I must always be requested by the student; it is not automatically earned. To qualify for an Incomplete, students must have completed no less than one-half of the work in a course and, in a face-to-face course, have attended no fewer than one-half of the scheduled class meetings. The student must be able to document that the situation qualifies as exceptional. Exceptional circumstances include but are not restricted to a death in the immediate family; the onset of a serious medical condition; or an unexpected change in job or family circumstances. Exceptional circumstances do not include situations that can be considered a normal part of living. Course work must be completed and a grade submitted by the instructor to the Office of the Registrar no later than October 1 for summer courses, March 1 for fall courses and July 1 for spring courses, or a grade of F will be entered on the transcript.

Disability Services/Special Circumstances: St. Edward's University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodation for qualified students with a disability. If you have an established disability as defined in the Americans with Disability Act and would like to request accommodation, please let the instructor know early in the semester or as soon as you are eligible. Students will need to present documentation of their disability to the disability coordinator in Academic Planning and Support Services located in Moody Hall. Documentation guide:
<http://think.stedwards.edu/apss/requirementsproperdocumentation>

Student Support Services: Links to all student services may be found on the New College advising page:
<http://think.stedwards.edu/newcollege/helpful-links>