Philosophy 111- Ethics

Instructor:	Jon Brammer	**Time:**	**T/TH 2:00pm to 3:15pm**
Room:	D-126	**Office:**	**TASC offices (C-113)**
Office Hours:	M-F by appointment	**Phone:**	**(860) 215-9214**

E-mail: jbrammer@trcc.commnet.edu

Course Description:

Philosophy 111 is an introductory survey course designed to expose students to the fundamentals of ethics, including an introduction to the origins and nature of moral rights and responsibilities, sources of ethical paradigms, and historical and contemporary theories of ethical decision-making. Students will be asked to analyze ethical situations through the perspectives provided by common traditions in the field (i.e. utilitarian, deontological, virtue ethics, etc…). In addition, students will be required to demonstrate understanding of independent scholarship and the ability to apply specific theories to a range of genres and contexts. The goal of the course is not to decide what is right or wrong for everyone, but rather to provide an understanding of different ways to approach morality and ethics.

Learning Outcomes:

- Demonstrate understanding of foundational ethical theories (e.g. deontology, utilitarianism, virtue, etc…) in various contexts
- Apply ethical frameworks to real world situations as well as both hypothetical and personal cases
- Demonstrate understanding of the complexity of current social issues and their ethical components
- Develop an understanding of personal ethical foundations and behaviors
- Collaborate with others on presenting ethical controversies in a rational and logical manner
- Use various critical thinking strategies to analyze and synthesize information from a variety of sources (i.e. primary texts, secondary texts, multi-media presentations, experiential learning, etc…)

Required Texts:

The Moral of the Story: An Introduction to Ethics, any recent edition, by Nina Rosenstand
Tales of Good and Evil, Help and Harm, any edition, by Philip Hallie (not available in bookstore; order online)

Attendance, Grading, and Due Dates:

Attendance- I will be checking attendance for the first few meetings, but after that, it is up to you to attend regularly. Because most of the main themes about various traditions will be discussed in class, it is to your advantage to attend regularly. *We will also be doing in-class writings on a regular basis that I will use to determine discussion/participation points.* A couple of missed classes will probably not result in any kind of huge deficit, but excessive absences (three or more) will most likely impact your work negatively. If you miss a session, please check the Blackboard site for the class if you want copies of lecture slides, handouts, etc. I use the *Remind.com* application to communicate brief messages related to course content and upcoming events. You can sign up to have those messages sent to your phone, e-mail, or both. I will provide details in class.

Grading- The grading for this course is flexible, and the grading contract for the class will be decided during our first meeting. The categories below indicate all the aspects that will be evaluated. The weight that is assigned to each one is up to the class as a whole. There are only a few limitations:

- the point totals for the ethical will and the exams are not changeable
- no category can be worth less than 100 points (besides ethical will)
- fractional totals or those not rounded to the nearest ten points are not acceptable
- in-class writings and discussion can't be more than 200 points
- the total number of points must equal 1000.

Categories of assessment/evaluation

In-class writings/discussion --→	200	points
Response papers (4) --→	200	points
Ethical controversy project --→	150	points
Ethical will --→	50	points
Mid-term and final exams (200 points for each) ---------------------→	400	points

Letter grades are then generated at the end of the term based on a strict percentage scale. Grades with an attached "+" or "-" will be given for those point totals which fall within the top or bottom 2% of each grade category (there is no "A+"). For example, a student with 830 points would receive a straight "B" grade. A different student, who had accumulated only 810 points, would receive a "B-" (810= the lowest 2% of the "B" category or .81x1000=810).

A=	900-1000 points
B=	800-899 points
C=	700-799 points
D=	600-699 points
F=	below 600 points

Due Dates- Due dates are included in the syllabus and are not generally flexible. Late papers will *not* be accepted unless a student is experiencing/has experienced an *extreme* situation. In such cases, please contact me or speak to me privately as soon as possible.

Please remember: It is your responsibility to keep up with assigned readings and paper due dates as presented in the syllabus. Check with me or a classmate to keep up with syllabus changes. The class Blackboard site will be used to archive slides, handouts, and other materials for the course.

Writing Papers:

Write papers for this class as if you were submitting them for an English course. Grammatically sound language and an academic tone will be expected on all out-of-class assignments. Any exceptions to that will be made explicit when writing tasks are assigned.

MLA format- All out of class assignments must be typed and double-spaced with realistic margins according to MLA format. I will outline this format in class prior to your first written assignment. Any up-to-date English/writing reference will have a section on how to use this set of writing conventions. These are two of the best online resources to use:

The Purdue Online Writing Lab:	http://owl.english.purdue.edu/
University of North Carolina:	http://www2.lib.unc.edu/instruct/citations/

Paper submission- All out of class assignments will be submitted through Blackboard.
- Acceptable file formats for attachments are.doc, .docx, .txt, .rtf, .pdf and .odt.
- Apple product users should note that the default ".pages" file format needs to be changed in order to make your document readable across platforms.
- Making documents accessible through cloud storage sites is *not* an alternative; *I will not log in to Google Docs or other similar sites to read papers.*

Returned Papers- All graded copies of papers will usually be returned one week after the due date. Sometimes that doesn't happen due to circumstances beyond my control, so please be patient. Be sure to familiarize yourself with the rubrics for every assignment so that you have a good understanding of the assessed categories for future assignments.

Computers- All papers should be proofed thoroughly by a human. Computer spell-checks and grammar checks are notoriously fallible. You can also take advantage of the writing tutors in TASC/Writing Center by making a face-to-face appointment or submitting a paper via e-mail at TRWritingCenter@trcc.commnet.edu

Campus Policies:

Plagiarism- Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of another person's words or ideas in your writing**.** *Conscious plagiarism is an unacceptable academic behavior that will result in a "0" for the plagiarized assignment, with no re-write possibilities. Any repeat offense will result in a failing grade in the course.* Plagiarism by omission or "unconscious" plagiarism will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. To review definitions of plagiarism and strategies of how to avoid it, I recommend these resources:

Purdue OWL Plagiarism Tutorial: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01/
University of Southern Mississippi: http://www.lib.usm.edu/legacy/plag/plagiarismtutorial.php

Cancelled classes- There is a possibility that class might be cancelled unexpectedly due to weather or another unforeseen circumstance. In such cases, check the college web site for official closing notifications. I will also post updates on Blackboard and/or through e-mail. *All electronic correspondence of that nature will be done through your official campus e-mail; I strongly recommend that you set that up to forward to another address if you don't check your campus e-mail frequently.*

Digication- All students are required to maintain an online learning portfolio in Digication that uses the college template. Through this electronic tool students will have the opportunity to monitor their own growth in college-wide learning. The student will keep his/her learning portfolio and may continue to use the Digication account after graduation. A Three Rivers General Education Assessment Team will select and review random works to improve the college experience for all. Student work reviewed for assessment purposes will not include names and all student work will remain private and anonymous for college improvement purposes. Students will have the ability to integrate learning from the classroom, college, and life in general, which will provide additional learning opportunities. If desired, students will have the option to create multiple portfolios.

Withdrawal policy- A student who finds it necessary to discontinue a course once class has met must provide written notice to the registrar. Withdrawal forms are available at the Registrar's office. No punitive "W" grades are assigned to any withdrawal requested before the unrestricted withdrawal deadline for the semester. Withdrawal requests received after this deadline must bear the signature of the instructor. No withdrawals are permitted after the last class preceding the final exam. Those who do not obtain an official withdrawal, but simply stop attending classes, run the risk of receiving an "F" grade for the course

Students with disabilities- Three Rivers Community College welcomes students with disabilities. In accordance with federal law, students with documented disabilities may request reasonable accommodations. Students are

required to submit a Self-Disclosure Form, provide documentation, and meet with a Disability Service Provider. Services for students with disabilities are coordinated through the Counseling Center. Please note that accommodations cannot be provided until you provide written authorization from a DSP, before the start of the semester, if possible.

Matt Liscum, Counselor, (860) 215-9265, Room A113	Elizabeth Willcox, Advisor, (860) 215-9289, Room A113
• Learning Disabilities • ADD/ADHD • Autism Spectrum • Mental Health Disabilities	• Medical Disabilities • Mobility Disabilities • Sensory Disability

Title IX information- BOARD OF REGENTS FOR HIGHTER EDUCATION AND CONNECTICUT STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES POLICY REGARDING SEXUAL MISCONDUCT REPORTING, SUPPORT SERVICES AND PROCESSES POLICY; Statement of Policy for Public Act No. 14-11: An Act Concerning Sexual Assault, Stalking and Intimate Partner Violence on Campus:

> "The Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR) in conjunction with the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU) is committed to insuring that each member of every BOR governed college and university community has the opportunity to participate fully in the process of education free from acts of sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence and stalking. It is the intent of the BOR and each of its colleges or universities to provide safety, privacy and support to victims of sexual misconduct and intimate partner violence."

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS TITLE IX STATEMENT OF POLICY:

> "Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) prohibits discrimination based on sex in education programs and activities in federally funded schools at all levels. If any part of a school district or college receives any Federal funds for any purpose, all of the operations of the district or college are covered by Title IX.
>
> Title IX protects students, employees, applicants for admission and employment, and other persons from all forms of sex discrimination, including discrimination based on gender identity or failure to conform to stereotypical notions of masculinity or femininity. All students (as well as other persons) at recipient institutions are protected by Title IX – regardless of their sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, part-or full-time status, disability, race, or national origin-in all aspects of a recipient's educational programs and activities."

If any student experiences sexual misconduct or harassment, and/or racial or ethnic discrimination on Three Rivers Community College Campus, or fears for their safety from a threat while on campus, please contact Vicki Baker, Title IX Coordinator: 860-215-9208; vbaker@trcc.commnet.edu; room E-110

Revisions to the syllabus:

The information contained in the syllabus is subject to revision at my discretion. I will inform the class of any changes that are made. If you miss a class, contact me or talk to a classmate upon your return to verify that you have the most up-to-date information.

Reading and Assignment Schedule for Philosophy 111- spring 2018

Week 1- 1/18
- o Introduction to the course, active reading strategies, writing responses, course ground rules; in class dilemmas; an ethical current event; blending things

Week 2- 1/23 and 1/25
- o *Moral of the Story*- Chapters 1 and 2- thinking about values, narrative for ethical study, sources of values; Aesop and "Thumbcutter" narratives; Plato and Aristotle intro readings; *Pulp Fiction* narrative
- o *Tales of Good and Evil*- afterword

Week 3- 1/30 and 2/1
- o *Moral of the Story* - Chapter 3- ethical relativism, cultural differences, anthropological concerns, multiculturalism; Benedict reading; *Do the Right Thing* narrative
- o *Tales of Good and Evil*- chapters 1 and 2
- o **Response paper #1 due by end of the week**

Week 4- 2/6 and 2/8
- o *Moral of the Story* - Chapter 3 and 4- relativism continued; versions of egoism, altruism, *Lord of the Rings* narrative example, Katz reading
- o *Tales of Good and Evil*- chapter 3

Week 5- 2/13 and 2/15
- o *Moral of the Story* - Chapter 5- introduction to utilitarian theories, Bentham, Mill, act and rule utilitarianism, Dostoyevsky reading, LeGuin reading; using matrices
- o *Tales of Good and Evil*- chapters 4 and 5

Week 6- 2/20 and 2/22
- o *Moral of the Story* - Chapter 6- Kantian deontology, the categorical imperative, Kant excerpt readings, *High Noon* narrative
- o *Tales of Good and Evil*- chapters 7 and 8
- o **Response paper #2 due by end of the week**

Week 7- 2/27 and 3/1
- o Take midterm exam parts I and II

Week 8- 3/6 and 3/8
- o *Moral of the Story* - Chapter 7- Personhood, human rights, perspectives on justice, UN declaration of human rights, King reading, *Gattaca* narrative; Nussbaum handout
- o *Tales of Good and Evil*- chapters 9 and 10
- o **No class meeting on Thursday, 3/8**
- o **Ethical controversy research proposals due by the end of the week**

Week 9- 3/13 and 3/15
- o Spring break- no class meetings

Week 10- 3/20 and 3/22
- o *Moral of the Story* - Chapters 8 and 9- Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and introduction to virtue ethics; objections to virtue theory, changing or situational virtues, Nicomachean Ethics reading
- o *Tales of Good and Evil*- chapter 11 (first half)
- o **Ethical Will due by the end of the week**

Week 11- 3/27 and 3/29
- o *Moral of the Story* - Chapters 10 and 11- more contemporary perspectives, existentialism, Nussbaum and human capacities
- o *Tales of Good and Evil-* chapter 11 (second half)

Week 12- 4/3 and 4/5
- o *Moral of the Story* - Chapter 13 (just war section and media ethics section)
- o SR- just war packet- Intro to just war theories
- o **Response paper #3 due by end of the week**

Week 13- 4/10 and 4/12
- o *Moral of the Story* – Chapter 13 topics (continued)
- o SR- spin and media bias
- o Documentary viewing

Week 14- 4/17 and 4/19
- o *Moral of the Story* - Chapter 13 (bioethics topics and animal rights topics)
- o SR- bioethics mixed reading packet; bioethical issues, animal rights
- o Documentary viewing

Week 15- 4/24 and 4/26
- o No meetings this week- complete wiki project
- o **Response paper #4 due by end of the week**

Week 16- 5/1 and 5/3
- o Share resource pages; wiki project presentations
- o Make final exam study guide

Week 17- 5/8 and 5/10
- o Take final exam parts I and II

Any and all remaining pieces of work, *without exception*, are due by 3pm on Friday, 5/11/2018.