

GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE

PHILOSOPHY 1010
INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY: VALUES AND SOCIETY

Fall term 1999
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Office hours: Thursdays 1-2 p.m.
 Fridays 11 a.m. to noon

What, if anything, is right and wrong in matters of life and death? Is euthanasia ever acceptable or required? How can we decide? To which theories or approaches can we appeal? What is a good life? Does capitalism hinder or promote the well-being of people? Are we generally obligated to obey the law? Why? Should society support, allow or restrict unconventional and unpopular forms of artistic expression?

We will examine these and other questions in this course which is designed to introduce you to the study of Philosophy. We will draw upon the ideas of classical and contemporary thinkers in order to explore their answers, and to offer you an opportunity to begin to develop your own carefully reasoned responses.

Course requirements:

First exam - 12 or 13 October	25%
Essay	35%
Final examination	40%

Required text:

Robert Paul Wolff, About Philosophy, 7th edition, Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1998.

Topics:

The order of topics will generally follow that of the first four chapters of the text. There will be some changes, however. In brief, the topics covered will be:

I. What is Philosophy?

II. Ethical Theory

- Virtue, moral motivation and credit
- Ethical relativism
- Reasons for studying ethics
- Ethical theories
- Feminist critique
- Issues: same-sex marriage, withholding food and water, the doctor-patient relationship and disclosure

III. Social and Political Philosophy

- Laissez-faire capitalism
- Buying and selling of human organs
- Social contract theory
- Social contract theory and minorities
- Obligation to obey the law
- Individual liberty
- Affirmative action

IV. Philosophy of Art

- Criticisms, purposes and defenses of Art
- Pornography, censorship and Art

Please note: the information on this outline is subject to changes. Any changes will be announced in class.