

**PHI 250: Introduction to Professional Ethics**  
**Thursdays 7-9:30**  
**Spring 2009**  
**Blaney Hall Room 11**

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**Textbook:** *Ethical Issues in Professional Life*, Joan C. Callahan, ed.

**Course Description:**

This course is an introduction to the fundamental principles of ethical theory and their application to the professions. While individual professions such as nursing, business, law, medicine, social work and journalism will be discussed, the emphasis of the course is on the ethical principles and issues which apply to all professions, including confidentiality, deception, whistle-blowing, and social responsibility. Students will study various codes of professional ethics, encounter case studies drawn from multiple professions, and engage in research on a profession or issue of their own choosing. The course will be conducted in seminar format.

**Course Objectives**

Students completing this course will have attained a thorough knowledge of 1) the major ethical theories of the Western tradition; 2) the major principles of professional ethics; 3) the application of these theories and principles to multiple professions; and 4) will be able to formulate and defend a moral position on an aspect of professional life and performance. In addition, particular attention will be paid to improving students' skills in written communication.

**Assessment**

Student knowledge of the major ethical theories and major principles of professional ethics will be evaluated on the basis of performance on one midterm and one final examination. The ability to apply these theories and principles to multiple professions will be evaluated on the basis of performance on the midterm and final examinations, and on the basis of performance on a research project. Moral reasoning skills will be evaluated on the basis of performance on the research paper and on the basis of the writing assignments. Writing skills will be evaluated on the basis of the writing assignments.

**Requirements**

Attendance/Participation	10%
Midterm exam	20%
Short paper	15%
In-class writing assignments	15%
Research paper	20%

Final exam

20%

### **Due Dates**

Papers and take-home exams are due in class on the date indicated. Work may be emailed to me prior to the deadline, as long as it is a Word document. Any work not brought to class, or not received by email by 7:00 p.m. on the due date is late and will be penalized accordingly.

### **Writing Intensive**

This is a **writing intensive** course, fulfilling the WRI2 requirement of the curriculum.

### **Course Policies**

- Students must retain a hard copy of all submitted work.
- Students must complete and submit all required work to pass.
- Work that is submitted late without prior consent from the instructor will be penalized 1/3 grade per day until it is received.
- Attendance is required and graded. Chronic lateness will result in a drop in the attendance grade.
- Plagiarism will be penalized either with a failing grade for the paper, or with a failing grade for the course, depending on the severity of the case, at my discretion
  - ***There is a mandatory writing workshop on February 26. Failure to attend or to have a completed paper for that workshop will result in your grade for the assignment being lowered 5 points. This penalty will carry over into rewrites as well. If you have a dire emergency, please speak with me.***

*Plagiarism is representing another person's words or ideas as your own. If you include words or ideas in your paper or test which come from another source, without letting me know with the appropriate documentation, you have plagiarized. The source can be anything: Web pages, newspapers, your textbook, a television show. There is an appropriate way to document every conceivable kind of source. It is plagiarism whether it is a direct quote, a paraphrase, or an idea. "Forgetting" to put in citations is not an acceptable excuse for plagiarism, any more than "forgetting to pay" is an acceptable excuse for shoplifting. Plagiarism is a serious offense and will be dealt with seriously.*

### **E-Companion**

In order to reduce the use of paper, this course will utilize the eCompanion software to post all documents for the course: the syllabus, PowerPoint slides, paper topics, study guides, etc. Please call IT at 3348 if you have trouble accessing the eCompanion site.

### **Honor Philosophy**

This course will be conducted in accordance with the principles of the Cedar Crest College Honor Philosophy.

### **Email Policy**

All communications must be made using Cedar Crest College email accounts. This is to protect your privacy, in accordance with federal law.

**Class Cancellation Policy**

In the event that I must cancel class, I will make every reasonable effort to email each of you at your Cedar Crest College account. If the cancellation is weather related, and the College is remaining open, you may check my voicemail at extension 3417. If I need to cancel class because of weather, I will leave an outgoing message on my voicemail advising students that class is cancelled. I will also post an announcement on the course's eCompanion site.

**Statement on Accommodations**

Students with documented disabilities who may need academic accommodations should discuss these needs with their professors during the first two weeks of class. Students with disabilities who wish to request accommodations should contact the Advising Center.

## Readings and Assignments

- Jan. 22 Introduction to the course
- Jan. 29 Chapter 1: “Basics and Background”  
**First in-class writing assignment**
- Feb. 5 Chapter 3, “Occupational and Ordinary Morality”  
5. “Professional Responsibility of the Criminal Defense Lawyer”  
6. “Lawyers as Professionals: Some Moral Issues”  
7. “Is Business Bluffing Ethical?”  
**Second in-class writing assignment**
- Feb. 12 Chapter 4, “Professionals and Clients: Models and Metaphors”  
10. “Models for Ethical Medicine in a Revolutionary Age”  
12. “From Loyalty to Advocacy: A New Metaphor for Nursing”  
14. “The Professional-Client Relationship”
- Feb. 19 Chapter 5, “Deception”  
17. “Lying and Lies to the Sick and Dying”  
18. “Lies for the Public Good”  
\* “Self-Interest and Business Ethics: Some Lessons of the Recent Corporate Scandals” Thomas L. Carson (available on eCompanion course site)
- Feb. 26 Writing Workshop/ Review for midterm  
**Short Paper Due**
- Mar. 5 Chapter 7, “Privacy and Confidentiality” – Privacy  
26. “Can You Pass the Job Test?”  
27. “Privacy, Morality and the Law”  
**Midterm Exam due**
- Mar. 12 No Class – Spring Break
- Mar. 19 Chapter 7, “Privacy and Confidentiality” – Confidentiality  
29. “The Limits of Confidentiality”  
30A. “Majority Opinion in *Tarasoff*”  
30B. “Dissenting Opinion in *Tarasoff*”
- Mar. 26 Chapter 6, “Informed Consent”  
23. “Informed Consent and Patient Autonomy”  
25. “Medical Experimentation on Prisoners”
- Apr. 2 Video: “The Insider”  
**Research Paper Due**

- Apr. 9 Chapter 8, "Individual and Collective Responsibility"  
33. "Corporate Moral Agency"  
35. "What is Hamlet to McDonnell-Douglas?"
- Apr. 16 Chapter 9, "Social Responsibility and Professional Dissent"  
40. "In Defense of Whistle-Blowing"  
41. "Whistle-Blowing and Professional Responsibilities"
- Apr. 23 Appendix One: Sample Codes of Professional Ethics
- Apr. 30 Review for Final Exam