

Course Outline Communicating Moral Issues

Course Description:

In this course, students will learn the basics of public speaking and applied ethics. Our everyday lives are filled with moral issues. How we communicate regarding those moral issues is important for how we understand those issues, as well as how we respond to those issues. This class focuses on preparing students to effectively communicate with others in these regards. In the first section of this course, students will learn the basics of public speaking and moral theory. In the remainder of the course students will learn about different kinds of public speaking, including informative speaking, commemorative speaking, and persuasive speaking, while exploring various moral issues, such as abortion, euthanasia, our treatment of animals, and climate change, among others.

Course Texts:

I am aware of the financial impediments posed by acquiring materials for class. To remove this potential barrier to your academic success, all readings are free-to-use and made available electronically.

Course Reading Schedule:

Day 1: Introduction

Day 2: Moral Values and Speech Basics

Reading: *The Art of Public Speaking* (Chapters 1 & 17, pp. 382-385)

Day 3: Speech Preparation and Delivery

Reading: *The Art of Public Speaking* (Chapters 4 & 12)

Day 4: Arguments and Moral Relativism

Reading: James Rachels, “The Challenges of Cultural Relativism”

Day 5: Utilitarianism

Reading: Lois Pojman, “Strengths and Weaknesses of Utilitarianism”

Day 6: Deontology and Rights

Reading: Onora O’Neill, “A Simplified Version of Kant’s Ethics”

Day 7: Virtue Ethics

Reading: Julia Driver, “Virtue Ethics”

Day 8: Organizing and Outlining Your Speech

Reading: *The Art of Public Speaking* (Chapters 8 & 10)

Day 9: Speaking to Inform

Reading: *The Art of Public Speaking* (Chapter 14)

Day 10: Trolleyology and Autonomous Vehicles

Reading: Patrick Lin, “Why Ethics Matter for Autonomous Cars”

Day 11: Abortion and Personhood

Reading: Mary Anne Warren, “On the Moral and Legal Status of Abortion”

Day 12: Abortion and the Ethics of Killing

Reading: Don Marquis, “Why Abortion is Immoral”

Day 13: Euthanasia and Self-Determination

Reading: Daniel Brock, “Voluntary Active Euthanasia”

Day 14: Euthanasia and the Role of Medicine

Reading: Daniel Callahan, “When Self-Determination Runs Amok”

Day 15: Vaccination and Public Health

Reading: Jessica Flanigan, “A Defense of Compulsory Vaccination”

Day 16: Genetic Enhancement

Reading: Frances Kamm, “Is There a Problem with Enhancement?”

Day 17: Recreational Drug Use

Reading: Douglas Husak, “Four Points About Drug Decriminalization”

Day 18: Global Poverty

Reading: Peter Singer, “Famine, Affluence, and Morality”

Day 19: Gun Ownership

Reading: Michael Huemer, “Is There a Right to Own a Gun?”

Day 20: Speaking to Commemorate

Reading: *The Art of Public Speaking* (Chapter 17, pp. 386-390)

Day 21: Factory Farming

Reading: Alistair Norcross, “Puppies, Pigs, and People”

Day 22: Eating Animals

Reading: William Stephens, “Five Arguments for Vegetarianism”

Day 23: Animal Experimentation

Reading: Andrew Knight, “Weighing the Costs and Benefits of Animal Experimentation”

Day 24: Animal Companions

Reading: Keith Burgess-Jackson, “Doing Right by Our Animal Companions”

Day 25: Speaking to Persuade

Reading: *The Art of Public Speaking* (Chapters 15 & 16)

Day 26: Environmental Ethics

Reading: Katie McShane, “Environmental Ethics: An Overview”

Day 27: Preservation of Natural Environments

Reading: Thomas Hill, “Ideals of Human Excellence and Preserving Natural Environments”

Day 28: Preservation of Endangered Species

Reading: Holmes Rolston III, “Duties to Endangered Species”

Day 29: Climate Change

Reading: Stephen Gardiner, “A Perfect Moral Storm”

Day 30: Audience Analysis

Reading: *The Art of Public Speaking* (Chapter 5)