

COURSE SYLLABUS

*Philosophy 302: Ethics*

SECTION OL

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY

LANDER UNIVERSITY

GREENWOOD, SC 29649

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# 1 Essential Information

Instructor: <i>Lee C. Archie</i>	Office Hours
Office: <i>LC M33</i>	<i>MWF 8:00—10:00</i>
Telephone: <i>+1 864 388 8383</i>	<i>TTh 8:0—9:30</i>
Email: <i>larchie@philosophy.lander.edu</i>	ICQ: <i>14365150</i>

## 1.1 Supplementary Materials

Philosophy Homepage:

<http://philosophy.lander.edu/>

Ethics Homepage:

<http://philosophy.lander.edu/ethics/>

Ethics FAQ:

<http://philosophy.lander.edu//faq.html>

*Introduction to Ethical Studies: An Open Source Reader:*

<http://philosophy.lander.edu/ethics/ethicsbook/book1.html>

<http://philosophy.lander.edu/ethics/ethicsbook.pdf>

Online Grades:

<http://philosophy.lander.edu/~larchie/grades/phil-pwa>

How to Study:

[http://philosophy.lander.edu/study\\_topics.html](http://philosophy.lander.edu/study_topics.html)

## 1.2 Appointments—Office Hours

I look forward to talking to each of you about our ethics course. You are warmly encouraged to stop by my office to discuss classroom lectures, papers, ideas, or problems.

## 1.3 Email Protocol

If you have a *personal* question, concern, or problem, email your instructor at the first opportunity: [larchie@philosophy.lander.edu](mailto:larchie@philosophy.lander.edu)

## 1.4 General Education Core Requirements

**Note especially:** Although Philosophy 302 fulfills the General Education Core Curriculum Requirement for Humanities for most catalog years and most majors, this course does *not* fulfill the requirement for logic and analytical thought. If you are seeking to fulfill the logic and analytical thought requirement by registering for a philosophy course, you need to enroll in Philosophy 103: Introduction to Logic.

## 2 Course Description

### 2.1 Catalog Course Description

“The moral principles of conduct and the basic principles underlying these principles such as good, evil, right, wrong, justice, value, duty, and obligation. The ethical works of philosophers are analyzed in terms of these concepts. *Three semester hours.*” From the *Lander University Catalog*.

### 2.2 Textbook

Lee Archie and John G. Archie. *Introduction to Ethical Studies: An Open Source Reader*. Version 0.11 GFDL, 2003. Free for use or resale under terms of the GFDL license. (Not available at the Lander Bookstore.)

The textbook is available in these formats: HTML:

<http://philosophy.lander.edu/ethics/ethicsbook/book1.html>

PDF:

<http://philosophy.lander.edu/ethics/ethicsbook.pdf>

MP3:

<http://philosophy.lander.edu/ethics/mp3/> (Under development).

Current Tarball:

<http://philosophy.lander.edu/cgi-bin/viewcvs.cgi/>

CVS Repository:

<http://philosophy.lander.edu/cgi-bin/viewcvs.cgi/ethics-book/>

Booknotes and tutorials for the supplementary readings are available at

<http://philosophy.lander.edu/ethics/notes-topics.html>

### 2.3 Purpose of the Course

The class essentially centers around three topics:

1. What is the nature of the life of excellence?
2. What is the ultimate worth of the goals you seek?
3. How do you rightly obtain your life goals?

Although these questions are simply stated, they prove to be most difficult to clarify. The objective of the course is for you to establish some good answers to these questions in light of a critical analysis of several important theories of ethics, including, among others, the ethics of Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus, Aurelius, Epictetus, Hume, Spinoza, Kant, Mandeville, Bentham, Mill, Bain, Nietzsche, James, Ohiyesa, Ellwood, Westemarck, and Moore.

## 2.4 Objectives of the Course

Some specific aims of our ethics course include these questions:

1. What are the differences among folkways, mores, morals, ethics, and metaethics?
2. What are the distinctions among moral, nonmoral, amoral, and immoral concerns?
3. What are cultural relativism, ethical relativism, ethical absolutism, ethical nihilism, and ethical skepticism?
4. How do we distinguish contributing, necessary, and sufficient conditions for a good life?
5. What are the advantages and disadvantages to various criteria of truth, such as authority, *consensus gentium*, legality, conscience, revelation, intuition, science, and reason?
6. Why be moral?
7. What are the varieties of egoism and hedonism? Are these philosophies mistaken?
8. What are the central tenets of some classical theories of ethics?
9. What are the aims of duty ethics, religious ethics, naturalistic ethics, the ethics of self-realization, and utilitarianism?
10. What are the relations between an individual ethics and a societal ethics?

## 2.5 Specific Skills Achieved

Upon completion of this course, all students should be able to

1. demonstrate basic skills of Internet research, email, and Message Boards,
2. distinguish clearly among factual, attitudinal, and verbal disputes in ethics,
3. construct premisses and conclusions for inductive arguments,
4. identify the common fallacies in ethical reasoning,
5. evaluate various types of ethical theories,
6. identify the differences between a sound ethical theory and a persuasive ethical theory.
7. understand some of the common mistakes made in business, medical, and ecological, and environmental ethics as taught in other disciplines, and
8. understand some of the limitations of current theories of ethics and metaethics.

## 2.6 Course Procedures

The methods used to obtain these ends are

1. to learn to identify ethical arguments, to evaluate and counter them, and to construct good arguments,
2. to obtain the ability to relate arguments to one another and to judge the relative strength of different kinds of arguments,
3. to analyze different techniques of definition and kinds of meaning in ethics,
4. to obtain the ability to identify common mistakes in ethical reasoning and to reconstruct arguments to avoid them,
5. to gain skill in evaluating ethical theories,
6. to recognize the differences between the inductive and deductive sciences and how they relate to ethical theories,
7. to study classic, influential, and abiding methods of experimental inquiry into the nature of ethics,
8. to apply usefully the several methods of inductive reasoning in everyday life and ordinary language.

This course will help you gain skill in asking interesting, productive, and insightful questions and will analyze ethical passages to obtain facility in the clear, complete, and methodological understanding of their content. It will also help you to learn effective methods of analysis and criticism in the evaluation of ethical argumentation.

## 3 Course Requirements

### 3.1 Evaluation

Judgment about the progress of your work is based on the quality and depth of critical and constructive thinking exhibited on three take-home tests. Your course grade is determined by averaging the points you achieve from the following scores:

**Test 1** The Problems of Ethics (33%)

**Test 2** Varieties of Determinism; Religious and Duty Ethics (33%)

**Test 3** The Ethics of Self Interest and Societal Ethics (33%)

Your final course grade is assigned according to your final average.

### 3.2 Tests

Tests are usually a combination of objective, short answer and essay-problems. The subject-matter is primarily based on the reading, lecture notes, and homework assignments. In general, if you understand how to do the homework problems, you will do well on tests.

Even though tests are based on questions from the homework and reading assignments, the tests are neither based exclusively on memorized facts nor based exclusively on objective information derived from memorized arguments. Instead, the emphasis given in tests is on the operation and active transformation or manipulation of the concepts learned. Occasionally, some particularly difficult optional questions are included for extra credit.

On essay-type questions, be sure to answer with complete sentences; answers provided as lists of phrases or the names of concepts, alone, do not reflect an understanding of the subject and usually will be given little, if any, credit. Example tests, quizzes, and lecture notes, are online at

<http://philosophy.lander.edu/ethics/>

### 3.3 Grade Evaluation

Your final course grade is assigned according to your final average as described above in the subsection “**Evaluation.**” If you study only for tests, your doing well in the course is doubtful.

- A** (90 points or above) reflects a great deal of time, thought, and effort; and mastery of the subject.
- B** (80 or above but below 90 points) reflects approximately above average time, thought and effort; and superior achievement.
- C** (70 or above but below 80 points) reflects average time, thought, and effort; and average achievement.
- D** (60 or above but below 70 points) reflects cramming for examinations; minimum time, thought, and effort; below college level work; a less than adequate grasp of the course content; and less than satisfactory achievement.
- F** (below 60 points) reflects little or no understanding of course content and unsatisfactory achievement.
- INC** can only be given in cases of sudden illness or emergency beyond the student’s control.

### 3.4 Grades Online

You may access your grades online at any time on the philosophy server (not Lander WebCT or Bearcat) with a username and password from this course (not your WebCT username and password).

**Username:** Your username for the course on the philosophy server is the first letter of your first name followed by your *complete* last name in lowercase letters without spaces. For example “Lauren Bouchett Satterfield” would have the login username of “lsatterfield” with no limitation of number of letters (as with some email programs or your WebCT username).

**Password:** Your password is your Lander L-number (without hyphen). Type a capital L followed by your eight digits.

**Where to Log In:** From the Philosophy Homepage, under the gray heading entitled “Class Grades,” click on the link “Current Grades Online” as shown in *Figure 9*. When the Grades Login page loads do the following:

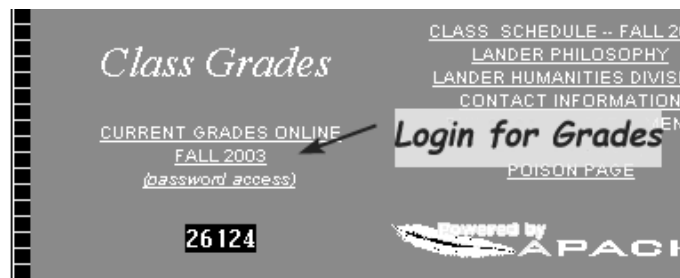
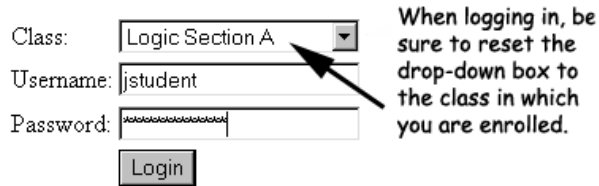


Figure 1: Where to Find Grades Online

1. Choose the class “Ethics” from the drop-down box. *Note:* If you log in incorrectly, be sure to *re-select* your class from the drop-down box because an incorrect login will re-set the class to a default philosophy course. See *Figure 10*.
2. Enter your username for grades *exactly* as described above..
3. The login process is case-sensitive—be sure to match the case of the letters—capital or lower case. If you obtain the result of “bad login,” check to see if the Caps Lock key is on, or you have confused the letter “l” with the number “1” or with the capital letter “I.” Occasionally, the number “0” can be confused with the capital letter “O.”



## Philosophy Grades Login



Class:    
Username:   
Password:

When logging in, be sure to reset the drop-down box to the class in which you are enrolled.

Figure 2: How to Log in for Grades

### 3.5 Your Job

Our course is not difficult if you keep up with the assigned work. At the very beginning of the course, you need to ask yourself if you can spend a minimum of three hours a week studying just for Ethics. If work or family responsibilities interfere with this minimum number of study hours, you should not attempt this course.

In this regard, a good place to see how to study in our course is the “Notes on How to Study” on the Web at <http://philosophy.lander.edu/study.html>. In past semesters, many students have found these study tips helpful.

- Take notes on the important points of the assigned reading.
- Do all homework problems. If you cannot find time for doing homework, you cannot benefit from this course of study.
- Make extensive use of the available online lectures, sample problems, quizzes, and tests.

### 3.6 My Job

We will find that ethics is quite essential in most fields of endeavor.

- I will attempt to create the conditions under which you can exercise your native curiosity.
- I will show practical applications for all the methods employed.
- I will provide handouts and Web-based instructions for additional problem-solving support.

If I do my job correctly, our ethics course will be one of the *most valuable* in your university career.

### 3.7 Class Policies

The following policies are explicitly stated here because these policies help protect fairness for the administration of the course for the class as a whole. Some of these policies are generally assumed in most classes at Lander University.

**Plagiarism:** Students are expected to do their own work in this course. To use another writer's or speaker's ideas without giving credit by means of standard documentation is plagiarism. All cases of academic dishonesty on tests or written work are handled in accordance with the Academic Honor Code as presented in the *Lander University Student Handbook*. Normally the grade of "0" is assigned for academically dishonest papers. If you plagiarize from any work, you will receive a "0" on the test. Almost every semester since this course has been taught, some students do not pass because they copy work from the Web without proper citation. Computer logs clearly show dates documents are processed, saved, and emailed. Any such academic dishonest results in a "0" assigned to the work.

**Learning Disabilities:** If you have a physical or learning disability and you require special accommodations, be sure to contact Mr. Lafayette Harrison (Learning Center 345, telephone (864) 388-8814) and provide him with appropriate documentation. When Mr. Harrison is made aware of your disability, he will inform your instructors every semester unless you ask him in writing not to do so. For additional information, see the "Disabled Student Information" on the Lander University Website at

[http://www.lander.edu/instructional\\\_services/disabled.htm](http://www.lander.edu/instructional\_services/disabled.htm).

**Closing of the University:** If hazardous weather conditions or any other state of emergency necessitate University closing, the information will be available from the Lander automated information system (telephone (864) 388 8400) or most major radio and television stations in this area. Usually, however, the Internet and Lander's Web Server are available during inclement weather or other emergency. If Lander's Web service is down, the philosophy server will probably also be down. If access to the Lander domain is not possible immediately prior to a due date for a test or a post, additional time will be allowed for the completion of the assignment.

## A Test Review Sheets

### A.1 Test 1: The Problems of Ethics

**Important Concepts:** be able to characterize and give examples.

morals (descriptive ethics)	ethics (prescriptive)
metaethics	analytical ethics
normative ethics	moral
nonmoral	immoral
amoral	cultural relativism
ethical relativism	ethical absolutism
ethical nihilism	ethical skepticism
ethical subjectivism	necessary condition
sufficient condition	contributing condition

**Important Distinctions:** Be able to list differences and give examples.

1. morals and ethics
2. psychological and ethical relativism
3. ethical relativism and ethical absolutism
4. necessary and sufficient conditions
5. ethics and social practice

**Important Essays:** Be able to explain in depth.

1. What are the central questions of ethics?
2. What is an ethical or moral issue?
3. What are the advantages and disadvantages to the various criteria of truth in ethical matters: authority, *consensus gentium*, legality, conscience, revelation, intuition, reason?
4. Why be moral? What are the advantages and disadvantages of the purported justification: “it pays,” common interest, and “it’s right.”
5. What are the main objections to ethical relativism?

## A.2 Test 2: Determinism, Religion, Duty

**Important Concepts:** be able to characterize and give examples.

scientific (hard) determinism	soft determinism
predeterminism	fatalism
predestination	indeterminism
<i>á priori</i> chance	<i>á posteriori</i> chance
reason	faith
free will	Pascal's Wager
duty ethics	religious ethics
good will	intrinsic good
instrumental good	means and ends
categorical imperative	practical imperative
teleological suspension of ethical	maxim

**Important Distinctions:** be able to list differences and give examples.

1. Comte's three stages of progress: theological, metaphysical and scientific
2. free will and determinism
3. means and ends *vs.* instrumental and intrinsic goods
4. duty ethics and religious ethics
5. actions in accordance with duty and actions for the sake of duty
6. maxim and universal law
7. Kierkegaard's stages on life's way: æsthetic, ethical, and religious

**Important Essays:** Be able to explain in depth.

1. What are the four major discoveries in science according to Engels? How do these discoveries suggest scientific determinism?
2. Explain why Mill and Venn believe that human actions cannot be predicted. How do their philosophies of determinism differ?
3. What are Spinoza's objections to the doctrine of free will? Do these objections apply to James' genuine option theory of free will? Explain.
4. Explain by citing examples the relation between the practice of morals and the ethics of the Souix as described by Ohiyesa.
5. What does Kant mean by universalizing my maxim? Give an example of a maxim which cannot be universalized, and explain why it cannot be universalized.

### A.3 Test 3: Self-Interest and Society

**Important Concepts:** be able to characterize and give examples.

*eudaimonia*

doctrine of the mean

higher pleasure

*apatheia*

egoism

ethical egoism

universal ethical egoism

Socratic Paradox

active awareness

utilitarianism

*árete*

lower pleasure

soft determinism

hedonism

psychological egoism

personal ethical egoism

egotism

cynicism

social contract

principle of asceticism

**Important Distinctions:** be able to list differences and give examples.

1. pleasure and happiness
2. Epicureanism and hedonism
3. Egoism and hedonism
4. psychological and ethical egoism
5. lower pleasure and higher pleasure
6. principles of sympathy and antipathy
7. master and slave morality

**Important Essays:** Be able to explain in depth.

1. What is the Socratic Paradox? What is paradoxical about it? How are the distinctions between instrumental and intrinsic goods and means and ends related to the paradox?
2. What are the main points of, and objections to, Epicureanism? What is the role of pleasure in Epicureanism?
3. What are the main points of and objections to Stoicism? What rôle does active awareness play in Stoic philosophy?
4. Explain some of the common confusions with examples concerning the use of the terms “self-interest,” “selfishness,” and “other-regarding motives.”
5. What are the main points of and criticisms of Aristotle’s ethics? What is the rôle of pleasure in Aristotle’s ethics?
6. Explain Bentham’s hedonistic calculus.
7. Contrast the social contract accounts of Plato, Mandeville, and Nietzsche

## A Other Readings

### A.1 Recommended Reference Books

The following works are recommended for help with ethics research. Most are available in the stacks of the Larry A. Jackson Library.

Angeles, Peter A. *A Dictionary of Philosophy*. London: Harper and Row, 1981.

Blackburn, Simon, *The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*. New York: Oxford, 1994.

Edwards, Paul, ed. *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. 8 vols. New York: Macmillan, 1967.

Flew, Antony, ed. *A Dictionary of Philosophy*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979.

Lacy, A. R. *A Dictionary of Philosophy*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1976.

Magill, Frank N., ed. *Masterpieces of World Philosophy in Summary Form*. London: George Allen, 1963.

O'Connor, D., ed. *A Critical History of Western Philosophy*. Glencoe: Free Press, 1964.

Urmson, J. O., ed. *Concise Encyclopedia of Western Philosophy and Philosophers*. New York: Hawthorne, 1960.

Good online sources for this course are updated on a regular basis on the Philosophy Web Site:

<http://philosophy.lander.edu/ethics/links.html>

General philosophical links can be found at

[http://philosophy.lander.edu/gen\\\_phil\\\_links.html](http://philosophy.lander.edu/gen\_phil\_links.html)

### A.2 Periodicals in Philosophy

If you find time during the semester to browse in the Larry A. Jackson Library, there are a few journals which show some of the technical applications of philosophy. These include the following publications.

*The American Philosophical Quarterly*

*The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*

*Ethics*

*International Philosophical Quarterly*

*Mind*

## B How to Calculate Your Semester Grade

- Test 1 is “The Problems of Ethics.”
- Test 2 is “Determinism, Religion, Duty.”
- Test 3 is “Self-Interest and Society.”

**Semester Average** is determined by adding the grades received on the class tests and dividing by three. Your grade for the course is based upon this average in accordance with the corresponding letter grade in the table given above under the heading of “**Grades**” in “**Class Policies**” in this *Syllabus*.

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