Instructor: Dr. Williams  
Office: Daniel 208  
Office Phone: 597-4907  
Office Hours: MW 1:30-2:30 and TR 2:30-3:30 or by appt.  
Email: WilliamsNM@wofford.edu  
Class Time and Location: TR 1:00-2:20/Daniel 218

Course Description  
In this course we will examine the ethical theories and arguments that have shaped Western thought. This discussion-based course will be devoted mostly to the critical analysis of metaethics, value theory, and normative ethics; however, we will focus on specific moral problems (i.e., applied ethics) the last four weeks of class.

Required Texts  
● The Fundamentals of Ethics, Russ Shafer-Landau (OUP 2010)  
● The Ethical Life, Russ Shafer-Landau (OUP 2010)  

Learning Outcomes  
By the end of the semester, students will be able to:  
● recognize and apply basic patterns of logical reasoning within ethical contexts;  
● identify certain ethical theories as well as selected arguments for and against those theories;  
● effectively communicate, in both oral and written form, specific moral arguments.

Methods of Evaluation  
● Two in-class essay exams: a comprehensive study guide will be given one week prior to the exam. All essay questions stem from our assigned readings and class discussions.  
● Short Writing Assignments: a short writing assignment (about 300 words) will be due at the beginning of every class, unless otherwise noted. These assignments ask that you respond to some reading questions most of which will come from the end of the assigned chapters in The Ethical Life text. On occasion, however, I will provide the reading questions. All work must be typed and turned in at the beginning of class. They will be graded on the basis of completeness, thoughtfulness, and clarity.  
● Argumentative Essay: this will be a 7-10 page paper due at the end of the semester. The topic must deal with some contentious issue associated with metaethics, value theory, or normative ethics. There are three stages to this project. First, you will choose a topic that you find interesting. Second, you will turn in a one-page outline where you clearly state your position (central thesis), supporting reasons, objections to your supporting reasons and your responses to those objections. Third, you will present your outline to the class. These brief presentations will utilize your oral presentation skills and provide you with critical feedback from classmates. Outlines and presentations are not graded; however, they must be approved by me before you are eligible to turn in your paper.  
● Class participation: see rubric

Distribution of Graded Work  
● Two in-class exams @ 25% each

Principles of Ethics
● Final argumentative essay = 25%
● Short writing assignments = 15%
● Participation = 10%

Grading Scale* (percentage): A = 100-94; A- = 93-90; B+ = 89-87; B = 86-84; B- = 83-80; C+ = 79-77; C = 76-74; C- = 73-70; D = 69-60; F = below 60

*Grades in this course are based on academic achievement and competence.

Missed Tests/Late Work
If you know in advance that you will not be attending class when an exam is scheduled, you must see me as soon as possible so that we can make necessary arrangements. If I don’t hear from you by the next class period you will have forfeited the exam grade. All work is due at the beginning of class. For every hour an assignment is late, half a letter grade will be deducted.

Attendance
Attendance is required in this class. You are allowed two absences with no grade reduction, thereafter three points off your final grade for every unexcused absence. I will record attendance at every class meeting. You are required to arrive at class on time and remain for the entire period in order to be counted as present. I have the right to drop you from the course in the event of excessive absences.

Honor Code
Academic dishonesty will be handed in accordance to Wofford’s honor code, which can be found at http://www.wofford.edu/studentlife/honor_code.pdf

Disability
If you have a disability that requires my attention please let me know as soon as possible so that I may accommodate you.

Reading schedule

Text abbreviations
Moral Relativism: A Dialogue = MR
The Ethical Life = EL
The Fundamentals of Ethics = FE

Week 1 --- Metaethics: The Status of Morality
● Intro (video)
● MR: chaps. 1, 2, 3

Week 2 --- Ethical Relativism
● MR: chaps. 4, 5 and 6
● FE: chap. 19 (Ethical Relativism) and chapter 21 (Ten Arguments against Moral Objectivity)

Week 3 --- Ethical Objectivity
● EL: chap. 14 (Moral Distinctions) and chap. 15 (Subjectivity of Values)
● EL: chap. 17 (Trying Out One’s New Sword) and chap. 18 (Realism)

Week 4 --- The Good Life
● FE: chap. 1 (Hedonism: Its Powerful Appeal), chap. 2 (Is happiness all that matters?) and EL: chapter 2 (Hedonism)
● Exam #1

Week 5
● FE: chap. 3 (Getting what you want) and EL: chaps. 3 (Brave New World) and 4 (The Experience Machine)
● FE: chap. 4 (Problems for the Desire Theory) and EL: chap. 5 (The Meaning of Life)

Week 6 --- Doing the Right Thing
● FE: Part Two: chaps. 5 and 6 (Religion and Natural Law)
● FE: chaps. 7 and 8 (Psychological and Ethical Egoism)

Week 7
● FE: chaps. 9 and 10 (Utilitarianism)
● EL: chap. 8 (The Good Will and the Categorical Imperative)

Week 8
● FE: chaps. 11 and 12 (Kantian ethics)
● FE: chap. 17 (Virtue ethics) and EL: chap. 11 (Nicomachean Ethics)

Week 9
● FE: chap. 18 (Feminist Ethics) and EL: chap. 13 (What is Feminist Ethics?)
Catch up day

Week 10
● Exam #2
● EL: Part 4---Moral Problems
Student selections

Weeks 11, 12, 13--- Moral Problems (student selections)

Week 14
Student presentations (final paper outlines)

Final paper due: TBA
Participation Grading Rubric

A-level participation: Come prepared to class every day. (To be prepared, you must not only complete the reading assignment but also think about what questions, concerns, critiques, possible interpretations, or related points or stories you may want to bring into discussion.) Contribute to discussion nearly every class session by asking questions or making observations. Listen and respond to peers’ comments with respect. Actively help peers learn in cooperative learning activities by taking a leading role and contributing your own original ideas.

B-level participation: Come prepared to class 90% of class sessions. (To be prepared, you must not only complete the reading assignment but also think about what questions, concerns, critiques, possible interpretations, or related points or stories you may want to bring into discussion.) Contribute to discussion 75% of class sessions by asking questions or making observations. Listen to peers’ comments with respect. Actively help peers learn in cooperative learning activities by contributing your own original ideas.

C-level participation: Come prepared to class 80% of class sessions. (To be prepared, you must not only complete the reading assignment but also think about what questions, concerns, critiques, possible interpretations, or related points or stories you may want to bring into discussion.) Contribute to discussion 60% of class sessions by asking questions or making observations. OR Contribute to more than 60% of class sessions, but cause distractions through tardiness or cell phone disruptions. Take part in cooperative learning activities without contributing many of your own ideas.

D-level participation: Come prepared to class 70% of class sessions. (To be prepared, you must not only complete the reading assignment but also think about what questions, concerns, critiques, possible interpretations, or related points or stories you may want to bring into discussion.) Contribute to discussion 40% of class sessions by asking questions or making observations. OR Contribute to more than 40% of class sessions, but cause distractions through tardiness or cell phone disruptions. Contribute little to cooperative learning activities, providing few of your own ideas.