

Eastern Illinois University
Revised Course Proposal
**PHI 2500G, The Good Life: An
Introduction to Ethics**

Please check one: New course Revised course

PART I: CATALOG DESCRIPTION

1. **Course prefix and number, such as ART 1000:** PHI 2500G
2. **Title (may not exceed 30 characters, including spaces):** The Good Life: An Introduction to Ethics
3. **Long title, if any (may not exceed 100 characters, including spaces):**
4. **Class hours per week, lab hours per week, and credit [e.g., (3-0-3)]:** (3-0-3)

5. **Term(s) to be offered:** Fall Spring Summer On demand

6. **Initial term of offering:** Fall Spring Summer **Year:** 2013

7. **Course description:**

This course offers a critical examination of a variety of contemporary issues such as abortion, euthanasia, animal welfare and capital punishment. Ethical theories such as Utilitarianism, Kantianism, Relativism, Egoism and Natural Law are also examined. On-campus students are excluded from online versions of this course.

8. **Registration restrictions:**

a. **Equivalent Courses**

- **Identify any equivalent courses** (e.g., cross-listed course, non-honors version of an honors course).
- Indicate whether coding should be added to Banner to restrict students from registering for the equivalent course(s) of this course. Yes No

b. **Prerequisite(s)**

- **Identify the prerequisite(s)**, including required test scores, courses, grades in courses, and technical skills. Indicate whether any prerequisite course(s) MAY be taken concurrently with the proposed/revised course.
- Indicate whether coding should be added to Banner to prevent students from registering for this course if they haven't successfully completed the prerequisite course(s). Yes No

If yes, identify the minimum grade requirement and any equivalent courses for each prerequisite course:

c. **Who can waive the prerequisite(s)?** N/A

No one Chair Instructor Advisor Other (Please specify)

d. **Co-requisites** (course(s) which MUST be taken concurrently with this one): None

e. **Repeat status:** Course may not be repeated.

Course may be repeated once with credit.

Please also specify the limit (if any) on hours which may be applied to a major or minor.

- f. **Degree, college, major(s), level, or class** to which registration in the course is restricted, if any: None
- g. **Degree, college, major(s), level, or class** to be excluded from the course, if any: None
9. **Special course attributes** [cultural diversity, general education (indicate component), honors, remedial, writing centered or writing intensive] General Education, Social and Behavioral Sciences – Cultural Diversity
10. **Grading methods** (check all that apply): Standard letter CR/NC Audit ABC/NC
 (“Standard letter”—i.e., ABCDF—is assumed to be the default grading method unless the course description indicates otherwise.)

Please check any special grading provision that applies to this course:

- The grade for this course will not count in a student’s grade point average.
- The credit for this course will not count in hours towards graduation.

If the student already has credit for or is registered in an equivalent or mutually exclusive course, check any that apply:

- The grade for this course will be removed from the student’s grade point average if he/she already has credit for or is registered in _____ (insert course prefix and number).
- Credit hours for this course will be removed from a student’s hours towards graduation if he/she already has credit for or is registered in _____ (insert course prefix and number).

11. Instructional delivery method: (Check all that apply.)

- lecture lab lecture/lab combined independent study/research
 internship performance practicum or clinical study abroad
 Internet hybrid other (Please specify)

PART II: ASSURANCE OF STUDENT LEARNING

1. List the student learning objectives of this course:

1. Identify and distinguish major moral theories
2. Analyze and evaluate major moral theories
3. Identify major contemporary and historical figures in ethical theories
4. Analyze and evaluate arguments concerning contemporary moral problems
5. Develop responsible citizenship through a consideration of the implications of ethical arguments from various multi-cultural, gender, racial, and class perspectives

- a. **If this is a general education course, indicate which objectives are designed to help students achieve one or more of the following goals of general education and university-wide assessment:**

- **EIU graduates will write and speak effectively.**

Students are required to make careful distinctions when analyzing and evaluating arguments, both on exams and in class/group discussion board topics. They must carefully articulate arguments and address the position of their opponent. 2, 4,

- **EIU graduates will think critically.**

Students are required to provide reasons for accepting or rejecting arguments that concern both ethical theories and contemporary moral problems such as abortion, capital punishment and euthanasia. They must determine the strength of the connection between the premises and conclusion and provide reasons for thinking the premises are true or false. Finally, they construct their own arguments for moral positions they adopt which involves addressing the opponent's position. 1, 2, 4, 5

- **EIU graduates will function as responsible citizens.**

This course requires students to think critically about their individual ethical responsibilities. Both Ethical Relativism and Cultural Relativism are examined and ethical issues include poverty, homosexuality, affirmative action, and animal rights thus preparing them to function in a global and diverse world. An ungraded community service component is also required. 5

- b. If this is a graduate-level course, indicate which objectives are designed to help students achieve established goals for learning at the graduate level: N/A**

- **Depth of content knowledge**
- **Effective critical thinking and problem solving**
- **Effective oral and written communication**
- **Advanced scholarship through research or creative activity**
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- 2. Identify the assignments/activities the instructor will use to determine how well students attained the learning objectives:** Weekly Discussion Board Assignments, Weekly Quizzes, Midterm, Final, Community Service

- 3. Explain how the instructor will determine students' grades for the course:**

Learning Objectives	Quizzes (30% total)	Weekly Discussion Board Assignments (30%)	Midterm (20%)	Final Exam (20%)	Ungraded Community Service and Reflective Paper (0%)
Responsible Citizenship through the lens of the ethical implications of various multi-cultural, gender, racial and class perspectives	X	X	X	X	X
Identify major	X	X	X	X	

Historical Figures					
Analyze and Evaluate theories and Issues	X	X	X	X	
Identify and Distinguish theories	X	X	X	X	
Evaluate arguments concerning contemporary moral problems	X	X	X	X	

4. For technology-delivered and other nontraditional-delivered courses/sections, address the following:

a. Describe how the format/technology will be used to support and assess students' achievement of the specified learning objectives:

The electronic version of PHI 2500G will be delivered via EIU's online course delivery system, currently D2L. The course includes some video-streamed lectures, online weekly quizzes, a midterm and a final, and posts to the discussion board.

b. Describe how the integrity of student work will be assured:

The integrity of student work will be assured through a large test bank where questions are rotated each semester. Essay exams will be submitted to plagiarism software such as Turnitin.com

c. Describe provisions for and requirements of instructor-student and student-student interaction, including the kinds of technologies that will be used to support the interaction (e.g., e-mail, web-based discussions, computer conferences, etc.):

Email, web-based discussions and web-conferencing

5. For courses numbered 4750-4999, specify additional or more stringent requirements for students enrolling for graduate credit. These include:

- a. course objectives;
- b. projects that require application and analysis of the course content; and
- c. separate methods of evaluation for undergraduate and graduate students.

6. If applicable, indicate whether this course is writing-active, writing-intensive, or writing-centered, and describe how the course satisfies the criteria for the type of writing course identified. (See Appendix *.)

PHI 2500G is a writing-active course. The course requires weekly writing activities and includes essay exams and discussion board posts.

PART III: OUTLINE OF THE COURSE

Provide a week-by-week outline of the course's content. Specify units of time (e.g., for a 3-0-3 course, 45 fifty-minute class periods over 15 weeks) for each major topic in the outline. Provide clear and sufficient

details about content and procedures so that possible questions of overlap with other courses can be addressed. For technology-delivered or other nontraditional-delivered courses/sections, explain how the course content “units” are sufficiently equivalent to the traditional on-campus semester hour units of time described above.

PHI 2500G is divided into 15 units, to be distributed evenly during a 15-week/50 minute course (45 classes) or a 15-week/75 minute course (30 classes). The course is divided into two parts: Theory and Practice. The sample outline included here separates those two parts as one example of how the course may look. However, it is also possible to present particular issues when the theories are introduced as an alternate way of illustrating their practical consequences and examining their differences.

Part I – Theories – The following is a list of sample theories and topics:

- 1 Introduction to the course. Introduction to the notion of argument. Discussion of classical conception of the “good life” and its relations to happiness, pleasure, leisure, education, virtue, etc.
- 2 Religion. Discussion of Divine Command Theory and Natural Law and their relation to belief in God’s existence and the moral life.
- 3 Relativism. Discussion of Cultural Relativism and Ethical Relativism and the significance of the difference between the two theories.
- 4 Psychological Egoism and Ethical Egoism. Investigation of egoism both as theory of human motivation and as a theory of ethics. Examination of the possibility of acting against one’s interest as well as the obligation to do so.
- 5 Utilitarianism. Discussion of the difference between happiness and pleasure, the relation of happiness to the “good life” and the obligation to “maximize happiness.”
- 6 Kantianism. Introduction to Kant’s Categorical Imperative and the notion of absolute moral rules. Distinction between consequentialist and deontological theories. Relation between reason and morality.
- 7 Virtue ethics. What traits of character make one a good person? Discussion of virtues as found in Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Role of virtues in living the “good life.” Distinction between virtue ethics and theories of right action.

Part II – Practical Applications – The following is a list of sample topics:

- 8 Poverty
- 9 Capital Punishment
- 10 Homosexuality
- 11 Affirmative Action
- 12 Abortion
- 13 Suicide/Euthanasia
- 14 Animal Rights/Environmental Ethics
- 15 Review and Reflection

PART IV: PURPOSE AND NEED

1. Explain the department's rationale for developing and proposing the course.

- a. If this is a general education course, you also must indicate the segment of the general education program into which it will be placed, and describe how the course meets the requirements of that segment.**

PHI 2500G is part of the **Social and Behavioral Sciences** segment of the General Education Curriculum. In this course students examine a variety of competing ethical theories in different historical and cultural contexts and critically evaluate these theories. By fostering a dissatisfaction with facile answers to fundamental questions of human existence, students come to understand what it means to have ethical obligations and to appreciate the implications of such obligations for their own lives as students and as members of the community in which they live and as part of the larger global community of which they are a part.

- b. If the course or some sections of the course may be technology delivered, explain why.**

The technology-delivered version of PHI 2500G fills the needs of online Social and Behavioral Sciences General Education courses and is the only online lower level ethics course. This is well suited to meet the needs of nontraditional students such as people pursuing degrees in nursing, business, medical and legal fields, etc.

2. Justify the level of the course and any course prerequisites, co-requisites, or registration restrictions.

PHI 2500G is a lower level general education course with no prerequisites.

3. If the course is similar to an existing course or courses, justify its development and offering.

- a. If the contents substantially duplicate those of an existing course, the new proposal should be discussed with the appropriate chairpersons, deans, or curriculum committees and their responses noted in the proposal.** This course does not duplicate any existing course.
- b. Cite course(s) to be deleted if the new course is approved. If no deletions are planned, note the exceptional need to be met or the curricular gap to be filled.** This is simply a minor revision of an existing course and the addition of an online version of the course.

4. Impact on Program(s):

- a. For undergraduate programs, specify whether this course will be required for a major or minor or used as an approved elective.**

PHI 2500G counts as an elective toward the philosophy major.

- b. For graduate programs, specify whether this course will be a core requirement for all candidates in a degree or certificate program or an approved elective.**

If the proposed course changes a major, minor, or certificate program in or outside of the department, you must submit a separate proposal requesting that change along with the course proposal. Provide a copy of the existing program in the current catalog with the requested changes noted.

PART V: IMPLEMENTATION

- 1. Faculty member(s) to whom the course may be assigned:** Jonelle DePetro, Jason Waller, Phil Thompson, Teresa Britton and other qualified Philosophy faculty

If this is a graduate course and the department does not currently offer a graduate program, it must document that it employs faculty qualified to teach graduate courses.

- 2. Additional costs to students:** None

Include those for supplemental packets, hardware/software, or any other additional instructional, technical, or technological requirements. (Course fees must be approved by the President's Council.)

- 3. Text and supplementary materials to be used (Include publication dates):**

Rachels, Stuart. *The Elements of Moral Philosophy* 7th ed. 2007
Vaughn, Lewis. *Doing Ethics* 3rd ed. 2013

PART VI: COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRANSFER

If the proposed course is a 1000- or 2000-level course, state either, "A community college course may be judged equivalent to this course" OR "A community college course will not be judged equivalent to this course." A community college course will not be judged equivalent to a 3000- or 4000-level course but may be accepted as a substitute; however, upper-division credit will not be awarded.

"A community college course may be judged equivalent to this course"

PART VII: APPROVALS

Date approved by the department or school: 2/22/2013

Date approved by the college curriculum committee: 3/06/2013

Date approved by the Honors Council (*if this is an honors course*):

Date approved by CAA: 4/04/2013 CGS: Not Applicable

*In **writing-active courses**, frequent, brief writing activities and assignments are required. Such activities -- some of which are to be graded -- might include five-minute in-class writing assignments, journal keeping, lab reports, essay examinations, short papers, longer papers, or a variety of other writing-to-learn activities of the instructor's invention. Writing assignments and activities in writing-active courses are designed primarily to assist students in mastering course content, secondarily to strengthen students' writing skills. In **writing-intensive courses**, several writing assignments and writing activities are required. These assignments and activities, which are to be spread over the course of the semester, serve the dual purpose of strengthening writing skills and deepening understanding of course content. At least one writing assignment is to be revised by the student after it has been read and commented on by the instructor. In writing-intensive courses, students' writing should constitute no less than 35% of the final course grade. In **writing-centered courses** (English 1001G, English 1002G, and their honors equivalents), students learn the principles and the process of writing in all of its stages,

from inception to completion. The quality of students' writing is the principal determinant of the course grade. The minimum writing requirement is 20 pages (5,000 words).

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