

**GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY**  
*School of Continuing Studies*

Introduction to Ethics  
Summer 2012  
Course # BLHS-100-40

Professor Lewis

**SYLLABUS**

**Class Information**

Time: Tuesday 6:00pm-10:15pm

Dates: May 22-August 8, 2012<sup>1</sup>

Location: TBA

**Overview**

- Three quotes by Plato, attributed to Socrates, provide the central themes for this class:
  - “For we are debating no trivial question, but the manner in which a man ought to live.” *The Republic* (c. 360 BC).
  - “The unexamined life is not worth living.” *The Apology* (c. 395-380 BC).
  - “[W]e shall be better, braver, and more active men if we believe it right to look for what we don't know than if we believe there is no point in looking because what we don't know we can never discover.” *The Meno* (c. 380 BC).
- Based on my background with the House Ethics Committee, the class also takes a close look at ethics and politics. Plato and Aristotle believed ethics and politics were closely related. We will reflect weekly on President Kennedy's quote (written in 1955 while he was a senator) from *Profiles in Courage*: “A man does what he must – in spite of personal consequences, in spite of obstacles and dangers and pressures – and that is the basis of all human morality.” This theme continues weekly with a reading from *Profiles in Courage* and concludes with selections from *Profiles in Courage For Our Time*, his daughter's continuation of President Kennedy's work. Other key themes include the relationship between ethics, religion, and science, theories of moral education, and theories of knowledge.
- A signature piece of a Jesuit education is the study of ethics. Ethical issues have been debated and discussed throughout history and many of the issues which confronted society in classical times are still with us today. As society grows more complex,

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<sup>1</sup> Note that I have reserved Saturday August 4, 2012 from 9-5 as a day to hold one scheduled regular class and other make-up classes if necessary.

ethical issues also grow more complex. While all core courses in the Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies curriculum explore human values and moral issues in particular historical contexts, in this required core course students are introduced to the classical issues in ethics and are required to think, speak and write critically about the following major ethical theories: 1) virtue ethics, 2) stoicism, 3) religious ethics, 4) the social contract, 5) duty ethics, and 6) utilitarianism. We will also study modern and contemporary interpretations of these traditional theories. Finally, the traditional theories are applied to critical ethical issues confronting society today. Applied ethics topics include social justice, abortion, just war, and ethics and politics.

- Georgetown is a center for the study of ethics:
  - Georgetown is the oldest Jesuit university in the country and remains committed to the tenets of a Jesuit education: passion for quality; study of the humanities and sciences; an emphasis on ethics and values; the importance of religious experience; and a commitment to being person-centered.
  - The School of Continuing Studies offers numerous courses and advanced degrees in ethics and related subjects. The Liberal Studies program offers a concentration in “Ethics and the Professions.” A student may also obtain a masters degree in the same concentration, “Ethics and the Professions.”
  - The Kennedy Institute for Ethics is the world’s oldest and most comprehensive academic bioethics center.
  - Dr. Edmund Pellegrino, emeritus professor of medicine and medical ethics, was the Chairman of the President’s Council on Bioethics from 2005-2009.
  - Georgetown offers many social justice and service opportunities. Please see the university website for additional information. The university has an active Center for Social Justice.
  - Georgetown Law Center has a well-regarded *Journal of Legal Ethics*.

### **Instructor**

**Paul M. Lewis, Esq.**  
**Adjunct Professor of Liberal Studies**

**Minority General Counsel**  
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**U.S. House of Representatives**  
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- My ethics background started with an emphasis on ethics at Notre Dame Law School and continued during eight years on the staff of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct (Ethics Committee) for the U.S. House of Representatives. My final two years with the Committee, I was the counsel to the Chairman. During my time on the Ethics Committee staff, the House expelled a member for the first time in twenty years (Rep. James Traficant (D-OH) and also resolved a controversial complaint against the House Majority Leader, Rep. Tom DeLay (R-TX). I continue to work on Capitol Hill, with ethics an issue on my portfolio as minority general counsel to the Armed Services Committee.
- I am available before and after class for consultation and you may e-mail questions at any time. I am also available by appointment at my office on Capitol Hill. I will answer messages as quickly as I can, usually within one business day after receipt.

### **Learning Objectives**

After completing this course, a student should have a sophisticated understanding regarding the following key issues:

- What is ethics?
- What is your opinion on “the manner in which a man ought to live?”
- What are the major classical ethical theories?
- Are ethics rules objective or subjective?
- What is more important, self or society?
- What is the relationship between ethics, religion, and science?
- What is the relationship between ethics and politics?
- What is the nature of knowledge?
- What are the recommended theories for teaching morality to children?
- Is there an appropriate standard method of analysis for ethical questions?
- What are the main modern and contemporary interpretations of the major ethical theories?

### **Textbooks**

- There are three assigned textbooks. They are available at the Georgetown University bookstore or online. We will read JFK each week, but the Robert Kennedy and Bolt books will not be read until the last two weeks of the class. Pace yourself during the semester
  - Senator John F. Kennedy, *Profiles in Courage* (1955): ISBN-10: 0060854936 or ISBN-13: 978-0060854935 (or any edition)
  - Senator Robert F. Kennedy, *Thirteen Days* (1969) ISBN-10: 0393318346 or ISBN-13: 978-0393318340 (or any edition)
  - Robert Bolt, *A Man For All Seasons* (1960) ISBN-10: 0812417461 or ISBN-13: 978-0812417463 (or any edition)

- Additional assigned readings for each week are listed below and posted on Blackboard. I don't recommend reading these assignments more than a week in advance, as the specific assignments may be changed. If you are looking ahead at the assignments posted on Blackboard, don't worry if they don't correspond with the syllabus, as I may not update Blackboard until the week before class. However, the final assignments will be posted on Blackboard at least one week prior to the class (while I usually update the readings the Sunday two weeks prior to a class, sometimes I am not able to do so until the Thursday prior to class).

## Grading

Grades will be determined as follows:

- A: 93% to 100%
- A-: 90% to 92%
  
- B+: 87% to 89%
- B: 83% to 86%
- B-: 80% to 82%
  
- C+: 77 % to 79 %
- C: 73% to 76%
- C-: 70% to 72%
  
- D+: 67 % to 69 %
- D: 63% to 66%
- F: 62% and below
  
- An "A" constitutes outstanding work; "B" work is good, above what is required by the assignment; "C" is satisfactory, meets basic requirements of the assignment; "D" is a minimal pass; and "F" is failure. Grades are not curved, i.e., you are evaluated based on your own work and not in comparison to your classmates. The grading philosophy for the course and specific requirements for each assignment are described in more detail on Blackboard. I will send an interim evaluation to you after class 6. This is a rigorous and demanding course, with extensive requirements in all phases of the Liberal Studies Program: reading, writing, class participation, and oral presentations.

## Attendance

**Attendance is mandatory. Students are expected to attend all sessions of the course. Students who miss more than two class sessions, for whatever reason, may be involuntarily dropped from the class. To arrive more than twenty minutes late constitutes a full absence.** Any absence, tardiness, or early excusal must be approved in advance by the professor. If you need to miss a class, it is your responsibility to make sure any assignments are submitted on time unless arrangements are made with the instructor in advance. If a class is missed or a student is late, make-up assignments may be assigned.

- **Note that a time has been scheduled for tentative make-up classes on Saturday August 4, 2012, at the end of the semester to insure we cover all the course material. Hopefully we will not need this time, but please don't schedule other events for this day unless I clear it in advance.**

### Assignments

- Weekly assignments are posted in the course outline at the end of this syllabus. **If the assignment changes from the syllabus, it will be posted on Blackboard and e-mailed approximately one week before the class. Check Blackboard and e-mail regularly for updates.** I often add readings from the newspaper after the syllabus has been posted in an effort to keep the class as up-to-date as possible. I will e-mail these last-minute readings, but also check Blackboard to make sure you don't miss anything.
- Weekly assignments include extensive readings, a written assignment, and class participation. During the course, students read three complete books and extensive additional readings. The readings often require the student to re-read and reflect on the selection. Students will present two formal oral presentations during the semester. Liberal Studies courses engage students in reading, reflection, writing and discussion, all of which are important elements of this course.
- **Class participation is 25% of the course grade.** This is a higher percentage than most undergraduate courses at Georgetown, so plan accordingly. You should be prepared to answer questions during class and to discuss the required reading material in detail. As part of class participation, **students are expected to actively participate in each class discussion. As stated above, class absence, early excusal, or tardiness will have an impact on this grade. See the Course Guidelines document on Blackboard for additional information.**
- **You may expect to be called on at any time to discuss any reading or writing assignment.** Be prepared to discuss the readings, your written assignments, and the discussion topics listed for each class. I often call on a student to summarize required readings. Anticipate that you will have to explain/defend your opinions to both the instructor and other students in the class. If you state an opinion, anticipate the questions you may be asked the instructor or fellow students. **Students are encouraged to ask respectful questions based on the statements of their fellow students or of the instructor. Students are encouraged to actively question each other.**
- **Three Oral Presentations** during class 9 (Social Justice), 11 (Just War), and 13 (Modern Ethics)(25% of the course grade)
- **Weekly Written Assignments: 25%** of the course grade

- **Final Paper:** A final ten page paper (minimum 2500 words) is **25%** of the course grade. Specific questions are listed in the course outline, below.
- Students should note that many of the reading and grading requirements come at the end of the semester and should pace themselves accordingly. This is particularly true this semester, with three weeks in July with classes on Saturday and Monday. Due to the particular nature of this semester, two of the three books will be covered during the final three classes.

### **Submitting Assignments**

- All assignments are due by the start of class on the date specified unless otherwise specified. Written assignments must be submitted electronically by e-mail as described above to my Georgetown account ([pl33@georgetown.edu](mailto:pl33@georgetown.edu)) and my work account ([Paul.Lewis@mail.house.gov](mailto:Paul.Lewis@mail.house.gov)). The written essay corresponding to the oral presentation is due prior to the class at which the oral presentation will be submitted, class 11.
- **Important: no credit will be given for any assignment that is submitted late without the prior approval of the instructor.** “Prior approval” means that the student must communicate with the instructor before the assignment is due. A late assignment will have a least ½ grade deducted (an A paper will be reduced to an A-). Assignments that are significantly late (more than a week) may be reduced a full grade (an A paper will be reduced to a B) or receive no credit, at my discretion. At my discretion, additional work may be assigned instead of reducing the grade.
- **All work for this class should be proofread and spell-checked. Times New Roman font (12 point) and Microsoft Word are required for all written assignments. Each written assignment shall include a statement that the Georgetown Honor Code has been complied with for that paper.**

### **Georgetown Honor System**

- All students are required to follow Georgetown’s honor code unconditionally. Nothing less can be expected in any class, in particular a class on ethics. All students are encouraged to read the honor code material located at [www.georgetown.edu/honor](http://www.georgetown.edu/honor), including the following documents: Georgetown University Undergraduate Honor System, a letter from President DeGioia on academic integrity, and the article, *What is Plagiarism*. Submitting material in fulfillment of the requirements of this course means that you have abided by the Georgetown honor pledge: “In the pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown Honor System: To be honest in any academic endeavor, and to conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown Community, as we live and work together.” **Each student will be required to acknowledge at the end of each written assignment submitted for this class that you have abided by the honor pledge for that assignment.**

## **Plagiarism**

- Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's ideas or work as your own, or without proper acknowledgement. It is not tolerated. The sources for all information and ideas in your papers must be documented. Details regarding proper citation and what constitutes plagiarism are provided on Blackboard and in the article *What is Plagiarism* (additional readings for class 1). In addition, all quotations must be identified as quotations, using quotation marks and documentation of the sources of the quotation. Anything less than these standards is plagiarism and will be treated as such. Plagiarized work will be reported to Georgetown's Honor Council. If the Council finds the work has been plagiarized, the work will receive an "F" for the paper as a first offense; a second plagiarism will earn an "F" for the course.

## **Turnitin.com**

- Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for a Textual Similarity Review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers may be added as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers in the future. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the terms of use agreement posted on the Turnitin.com site.

## **Disabilities**

- If you are a student with a documented disability who requires accommodations or if you think you may have a disability and want to inquire about accommodations, please contact the Academic Resource Center at 202 687-8354 or [arc@georgetown.edu](mailto:arc@georgetown.edu). All such accommodations must be arranged through the Center, not directly with the professor.

## **Religious Observations**

- Georgetown University promotes respect for all religions. Any student who is unable to attend classes or to participate in any examination, presentation, or assignment on a given day because of the observance of a major religious holiday (see below) or related travel shall be excused and provided with the opportunity to make up, without unreasonable burden, any work that has been missed for this reason and shall not in any other way be penalized for the absence or rescheduled work. Students will remain responsible for all assigned work. Students should notify professors in writing at the beginning of the semester of religious observances that conflict with their classes. The Office of the Provost, in consultation with Campus Ministry and the Registrar, will publish, before classes begin for a given term, a list of major religious holidays likely to affect Georgetown students. The Provost and the Main Campus Executive Faculty encourage faculty to accommodate students whose bona fide religious observances in other ways impede normal participation in a course. Students who cannot be accommodated should

discuss the matter with an advising dean.

### **Other Student Resources**

- There are many health, safety, and wellness services offered to students at Georgetown. Georgetown has a wellness website at <http://wellness.georgetown.edu> that I recommend bookmarking and visiting often. In addition, on the main Georgetown website ([www.georgetown.edu](http://www.georgetown.edu)), under the link for Campus and Community, there are additional links for health services, counseling services, the Academic Resource Center, spirituality, student services, social justice, arts, and culture. Also visit [be.georgetown.edu](http://be.georgetown.edu) and look under the practicalities link.

### **Inclement Weather and Other Emergencies**

- During inclement weather or other emergencies, check <http://preparedness.georgetown.edu> or call (202) 687-7669 for information on whether the university is open. If the university is open, this class will meet. If the university is closed, this class will not meet, **but written assignments will be due as usual**. You may e-mail or call me for additional information. The university recently has acquired the capability to send text messages and recorded messages about emergencies to cell phones and other mobile devices. Sign up at Student Access +.

## **COURSE OUTLINE AND ASSIGNMENTS**

**The course outline is a tentative schedule of assignments, readings, and topics that may be covered during the semester. Check Blackboard and e-mail regularly for updates. If there are any changes to the syllabus, the specific assignment for each class will be posted at least one week in advance of that class. Note that there are reading assignments for the first class.**

### **Class 1 (May 22, 2012): Introduction**

#### **Required Readings**

- Jim Valvano, *Don't Ever Give Up* (1993)<sup>2</sup>(transcript and video)
- Simon Critchley, *What is a Philosopher?*, New York Times, May 16, 2010
- Ruth Marcus, *Decorum? There's No App For That*, Washington Post, December 30, 2010
- Georgetown Honor Pledge
- Checklist of Ethical Theories
- Chart of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943)
- Photo: *Earthrise* (1968)
- Gary Gutting, *Happiness, Philosophy and Science*, New York Times, August 31, 2011
- Will Durant, *What is Wisdom?* (1957)
- Carl Sagan, *Cosmos* (1980)(video selections)

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<sup>2</sup> All readings not in one of the required textbooks are posted on Blackboard.

- President George W. Bush, *Bush Discusses Stem Cell Research* (2001)(transcript and video)
- Recommended Method of Analysis
- See Blackboard for list of additional and background readings (not required)

### Written Assignment

- Student Questionnaire and Basic Moral Orientation (**please complete prior to class and submit by e-mail**)

### Discussion Topics

- Read Maslow's hierarchy of needs and then complete the Student Questionnaire and the Basic Moral Orientation. Think about Valvano's questions: where have you been, where are you now, and where are you going? When you think about your values, think about Durant's broad perspective, the perspective of the sky. Tell the class who you are, what is important to you, and what you want to learn about yourself. I will begin the discussion by asking 1) describe yourself to the class, what do you want your fellow students to know about you and 2) what is the most important thing in the world to you and why, 3) How did you end up in this class today? Finally, I will ask you to describe wisdom in your own words.
- What is the most difficult ethical dilemma you have ever faced?
- What is Ethics?
- Why Study Ethics?
- The Manner in Which a Man Ought to Live?
- Socratic Method and Self-Examination
- Reason
- Classic Virtues
- Virtue of Wisdom
- Perspective

### **Class 2 (May 29, 2012): Socrates and Plato- Wisdom and Justice**

#### Required Readings

- Plato, *Apology* (c. 395-80 BC)
- Plato, *The Republic* (c. 360 BC)(selections)
- Senator John F. Kennedy, *Profiles in Courage* (1956) (Forward, Preface, Chapter 1- *Courage and Politics*)
- President John F. Kennedy (video selections)
- Selected Readings on John F. Kennedy:
  - Thomas C. Reeves, *A Question of Character: A Life of John F. Kennedy* (1991)(selections)
  - Herbert S. Parmet, *Jack: The Struggles of John F. Kennedy* (1980)(selections)

- Theodore Sorenson, *Counselor: A Life at the Edge of History* (2008)(selections)
- Robert Dallek, *JFK: An Unfinished Life* (2003)(selections)
- See Blackboard for list of additional and background readings (not required)

### Written Assignment

- Define wisdom and justice in your own terms (one page maximum). **Submit via email prior to start of class**

### Discussion Topics

- Reflect on last week's class. After one week have your thoughts changed or do they remain the same? How were you influenced by the new readings for this week and the class discussions for class 1? Was Jim Valvano wise?
- Evaluate one decision you make each day this week based on the virtues of Socrates and Plato. Were you just? Were you wise?
- Put yourself in Socrates' situation. What would you do?
- Give your own definition of wisdom as refined by the additional readings.
- Who is wisest person that you know? The wisest person in modern times?
- Was Socrates wise? What are your thoughts on his search for wisdom?
- What is the manner in which a man ought to live?
- Which of Plato's definitions of justice resonates with you? Define justice in your own words.
- Are ethical rules absolute or subjective? Is there one set of rules or are they relative?
- Moral Dilemma: In Book II of the *Republic* Plato relates the famous story of Gyges' ring. Glaucon tells us that Gyges was a simple shepherd, who tended to his flock and stayed out of trouble. One day, he found a skeleton which had a ring on one of its fingers. He took the ring and placed it on his finger. Later, he noticed that when he turned the setting inside his hand, he became invisible. He left the shepherds, went to court, killed the king, seduced the queen, became king in his own right and lived ever after with wealth, fame and power.
  - Would you do the same?
  - Would anybody follow the principles of morality if you could break them without getting punished? Would there be any reason to?

- Cynics would suggest we behave well because we are afraid of being caught and punished?
- Use the recommended method of analysis: 1) what are the key facts, 2) what are the key issues, 3) act impartially, and 4) what is the best solution?

### **Class 3 (June 5, 2012): Aristotle and Virtue Ethics**

#### Required Readings

- Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (c. 350 BC)(selections)
- Chart of Aristotle's Virtues
- Senator John McCain, *In Search of Courage* (2004)
- Plato and Aristotle on Moral Education (selections)
- Thomas Lickona, *Raising Children of Character* (2004)
- Senator John F. Kennedy, *Profiles in Courage* (1956) (The Time and Place and Chapter 2-*John Quincy Adams*)
- Winston Churchill, *We Shall Fight* (1939)(video selection)
- *Black Hawk Down* (2001)(video selection)
- Other video selections: John F. Kennedy, John McCain
- See Blackboard for list of additional and background readings (not required)

#### Written Assignment

- Which of Aristotle's virtues do you think is the most important? List any additional virtues you think should be added to the list (one page maximum).

#### Discussion Topics

- Reflect on last week's class. After one week have your thoughts changed or do they remain the same? How were you influenced by the new readings for this week and class discussions last week?
- For this week follow a new habit to improve yourself or follow one of Aristotle's virtues. Discuss what happens.
- Which of the classical Greek virtues do you think is most important: wisdom, justice, courage, piety, or temperance?
- Who is the most courageous person you know? The most courageous person in modern times? Was Senator McCain courageous? Define courage in your own words.

- Thomas Lickona lists nine ethical tests for children (page 11). What do you think of these tests? Anything you would add or delete. Is this a practical way to teach ethics to children?
- Moral Education
- Moral Dilemma: You are on your way to an important job interview. You see a child alone and crying.
  - What would you do?
  - Which virtue discussed in class would help you the most in making your decision?
  - Use the recommended method of analysis: 1) what are the key facts, 2) what are the key issues, 3) act impartially, and 4) what is the best solution?

#### **Class 4 (June 12, 2012): Stoicism**

##### Reading Assignments

- Epictetus, *Enchiridion* (c.135 AD)
- Vice Admiral James B. Stockdale, *Courage Under Fire: Testing Epictetus's Doctrines in a Laboratory of Human Behavior* (1993)(transcript and video selections)
- Peter Robinson, *How Ronald Reagan Changed My Life* (2003)(selections)
- Senator John F. Kennedy, *Profiles in Courage* (1956) (The Time and Place and Chapter 3-Daniel Webster)
- William Styron, *Sophie's Choice* (1979)(selections and video)
- See Blackboard for list of additional and background readings (not required)

##### Written Assignment

- Define the virtue of temperance in your own words (one page maximum).

##### Discussion Topics

- Reflect on last week's class. After one week have your thoughts changed or do they remain the same? How were you influenced by the new readings for this week and class discussions last week?
- Be a Stoic for a week. Attempt to imitate Stockdale's indifference to events we cannot control. Be prepared to discuss your thoughts.
- For one day, attempt to give up technology completely: no electronic devices of any kind. Comment on how it went. Is there anything you have that you could not live without?

- Would Epictetus have helped you if you were in Stockdale's situation (POW)?
- Evaluate stoicism as a way of life. It appealed to both slaves and emperors. Does it appeal to you?
- Your thoughts on the power of attitude after reading Robinson's story about Reagan and the pony.
- Moral Dilemma: In the 1979 novel *Sophie's Choice* (see selections in reading assignments), by William Styron, a Polish woman, Sophie Zawistowska, is arrested by the Nazis and sent to Auschwitz. She is given a choice at the camp because she is not Jewish: she can save one of her children but not both. She chooses her older son, hoping he has a better chance to survive. Years later, racked by guilt, she kills herself. Should she have felt guilty? Is she wise? Is her action just? Is she temperate? Would virtue ethics help in making her decision? Use the recommended method of analysis: 1) what are the key facts, 2) what are the key issues, 3) act impartially, and 4) what is the best solution?

### **Class 5 (June 19, 2012): Ethics and Religion**

#### Reading Assignments

- Carl Sagan, *Cosmos* (1980)(video selections)
- Plato, *Euthyphro* (c. 380 BC)(selections)
- *Book of Genesis*, Chapter 22; *Book of Exodus*, Chapter 20:2-12 (Abraham and Isaac)
- *Book of Exodus*, Chapter 20: (Ten Commandments)
- *Gospel of Matthew*, Chapter 5 (Beatitudes and Sermon on the Mount)
- *Gospel of Matthew*, Chapter 7:12; *Gospel of Luke*, Chapter 10:25-37(Golden Rule/Good Samaritan)
- St. Augustine: *Enchiridion (Handbook) on Faith, Hope, and Love* (c. 420 A.D.)(selections)
- St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* (1266-73)(selections)
- C.S. Lewis: *Mere Christianity* (1952)(selections and video selections)
- Rabbi Joseph Telushkin, *Ethics, One Day at a Time* (1999)
- Confucius, *Analects*, (c. 500 BC)(selections)
- Prophet Muhammad, *Farewell Sermon* (632 AD)
- Bertrand Russell, *A Free Man's Worship* (1903)(transcript and video selections)
- James Randerson, *Childish Superstition: Einstein's Letter Makes View of Religion Relatively Clear*, *The Guardian*, May 13, 2008
- Michael Gerson, *Divine Evolution*, *The Washington Post*, December 21, 2007
- Senator John F. Kennedy, *Profiles in Courage* (1956) (Chapter 4-*Thomas Hart Benton*)
- See Blackboard for list of additional and background readings (not required)

#### Written Assignment

- After reading all the assigned selections and reflecting, what is your position on the relationship between ethics and religion? Whose position seems best to you: C.S. Lewis, Russell, or Einstein? Add your quick thoughts on ethics, religion, and science. (one page maximum).

### Discussion Topics

- Reflect on last week's class. After one week have your thoughts changed or do they remain the same? How were you influenced by the new readings for this week and class discussions last week?
- Google "God" and list the top five responses.
- Follow the Golden Rule for a day. Discuss your thoughts.
- Read the article by Father Jim Martin and examine your conscience. If you are not religious, have the same conversation recommended by Father Martin, but with yourself. Tell us your thoughts
- State whether you believe God exists and why. Look at the pictures in the Perspective folder on Blackboard. Do you see anything that proves/disproves the existence of God?
- Define the virtue of piety in your own terms.
- Was Einstein wise? Just? Courageous? Temperate? Stoic? Pious? Does he contradict himself when he says religion is juvenile but then says religion and science need each other?
- Moral Dilemma: Is the religion of a politician relevant? Could you vote for a politician if you disagree with his or her religion? Discuss JFK's handling of religion and politics in his Houston speech. Use the recommended method of analysis: 1) what are the key facts, 2) what are the key issues, 3) act impartially, and 4) what is the best solution?

### **Class 6 (June 26, 2012): Social Contract and Natural Rights**

#### Reading Assignments

- William Golding, *Lord of the Flies* (1954)(selections and video)
- Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (1660) (selections)
- John Locke, *The Second Treatise on Government* (1690)(selections)
- Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract* (1762)(selections)
- UN Universal Declaration on Human Rights (1948)
- Dr. Martin Luther King, *Letter From A Birmingham Jail* (1963)(transcript and video selections)
- George Will, *Rage of the Rights Talkers*, Washington Post, October 11, 2009

- Alex Perry, *Retiring from Public Life, Desmond Tutu Reflects on Good and Evil*, Time Magazine, October 7, 2010
- David Brooks, *Nice Guys Finish First*, New York Times, May 17, 2011
- Senator John F. Kennedy, *Profiles in Courage* (1956) (Chapter 5-Sam Houston)
- See Blackboard for list of additional and background readings (not required)

### Written Assignment

- Write your own social contract and be prepared to discuss with the class (one page maximum).

### Discussion Topics

- Reflect on last week's class. After one week have your thoughts changed or do they remain the same? How were you influenced by the new readings for this week and class discussions last week?
- Which definition of the social contract do you believe is the best: Hobbes, Locke or Rousseau?
- List what you believe to be natural rights possessed by all individuals.
- Which is more important, yourself or society? List one example each day of the week in which your individual rights compete with the rights of another person or society and reflect upon how you resolve the situation.
- Ethical Egoism
- Which theory do you favor: social contract, natural rights or ethical egoism?
- Evaluate the UN Universal Declaration of Human rights as an ethical document. Is it practical?
- Does civil disobedience violate the social contract? When does the social contract end or change? Did Martin Luther King violate the social contract? What is the right of people to alter or abolish their government?
- What would you go to jail for?
- Moral Dilemma: Prisoner's Dilemma. You and a friend are arrested by the police. You are held in separate cells and have no contact with each other. The police visit each of you separately and offer the same deal: if one testifies for the prosecution against the other and the other remains silent, the betrayer goes free and the silent accomplice receives a ten-year sentence. If both remain silent, both are sentenced to only six months in jail for a minor charge. If each betrays the other, each receives a five-year sentence. You and your friend must make the choice whether to betray the other or to remain silent.

However, neither of you knows for sure what choice the other will make. So this dilemma invites the question, “How should the prisoners act?” How do the social contract and natural rights theories help you solve this dilemma? Use the recommended method of analysis: 1) what are the key facts, 2) what are the key issues, 3) act impartially, and 4) what is the best solution?

### **Class 7 (July 3, 2012): Kant and Duty Ethics**

#### Reading Assignments

- Will Durant, *The Story of Philosophy, Chapter 6- Kant and German Idealism* (1926)
- Rene Descartes, *Discourse on Method* (1637)(selections)
- Rene Descartes, *Principles of Philosophy* (1644)(selections)
- John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690) (selections)
- David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* (1751) (selections)
- Immanuel Kant, *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785)(selections)
- Immanuel Kant, *On A Supposed Right To Tell Lies From Benevolent Motives* (1797)
- James Rachels, *The Elements of Moral Philosophy: Chapter 9, Are There Absolute Moral Rules?* (2009)
- Sam Wang and Sandra Aamodt, *Your Brain Lies to You*, New York Times, June 27, 2008
- William Egginton, *The Limits of the Coded World*, The New York Times, July 25, 2010
- Marc Kaufman, *A Global Extraterrestrial Pursuit*, Washington Post, November 7, 2010
- Senator John F. Kennedy, *Profiles in Courage* (1956) (The Time and Place and Chapter 6-Edmund G. Ross)
- See Blackboard for list of additional and background readings (not required)

#### Written Assignment

- Are there absolute moral rules? (one page maximum)

#### Discussion Topics

- Reflect on last week’s class. After one week have your thoughts changed or do they remain the same? How were you influenced by the new readings for this week and class discussions last week?
- Don’t lie for a day (or be silent instead of saying what you feel). Discuss your thoughts.
- Summarize what you think Kant is trying to say? What do you think of the categorical imperative and the requirement of universality?
- Kant also defines the categorical imperative in terms of human dignity. Do you agree or disagree this is a better definition? Why?

- What is knowledge? Is it innate do we learn all through experience?
- What is reality? What is the most real thing you know?
- Moral Dilemma: Kant proposed the following scenario of the “Inquisitive Murderer” in *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals* and *On A Supposed Right To Tell Lies From Benevolent Motives*. A person is running from a murderer and hides in your house. The murderer comes to your door and asks if you know where the intended victim is. Is it okay to lie to the murderer in order to save the life of the person? Use the recommended method of analysis: 1) what are the key facts, 2) what are the key issues, 3) act impartially, and 4) what is the best solution?

### **Class 8 (July 10, 2012): Mill and Utilitarianism**

#### Reading Assignments

- Jeremy Bentham: *Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (1780) (selections)
- John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism* (1863)(entire text)
- Bernard Williams, *A Critique on Utilitarianism* (1973)
- Mark Layard, *Happiness is Back*, Prospect (March 2005)
- Senator John F. Kennedy, *Profiles in Courage* (1956) (Chapter 7-*Lucius Quintus Cincinnatus Lamar*)
- See Blackboard for list of additional and background readings (not required)

#### Written Assignment

- Which is better, Kant’s duty ethics or utilitarianism? (one page maximum).

#### Discussion Topics

- Reflect on last week’s class. After one week have your thoughts changed or do they remain the same? How were you influenced by the new readings for this week and class discussions last week?
- Live like a utilitarian for a day. Evaluate all decisions you make based on the Principle of Utility/Greatest Happiness Principle. Define happiness. Discuss your thoughts.
- Compare Bentham’s List of Pleasures to Maslow’s Hierarchy and Aristotle’s Good Life.
- Compare and contrast the different definitions of happiness: Aristotle, Bentham, Mill, and your own. Are there levels of happiness?
- Is it better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied?

- Are consequences the only thing that matters?
- Having now read and discussed each of the classical ethical theories, which one works the best for you? Is there a blend of theories that works better?
- Moral Dilemma: The philosopher Philippa Foot proposed the following problem: Suppose you are the driver of a trolley. It rounds a bend and you see five workmen on the track. If the trolley keeps going it will kill the five workmen. However, you see that you can take a spur and save the five men, but there is also a workman on the spur. Is it morally permissible to turn the trolley onto the spur? What would Mill say? Use the recommended method of analysis: 1) what are the key facts, 2) what are the key issues, 3) act impartially, and 4) what is the best solution?

### **Class 9 (July 17, 2012): Social Justice**

#### **Assignments (required)**

- Carol Gilligan, *Commencement Address at Mt. Holyoke College* (2008)
- Mother Teresa, *Nobel Lecture* (1979)(transcript and video selections)
- Ruth Marcus, *The Nobel for Brisket Goes To*, Washington Post, October 28, 2009
- Senator Robert F. Kennedy, *Day of Affirmation Address* (1966)(transcript and video selections)
- Pope Benedict XVI, *Speech to the UN on Human Rights* (2008)(transcript and video selections)
- Peter Singer, *The Singer Solution to World Poverty*, 60-63 New York Times Magazine (September 9, 1999)
- UN Millennium Development Goals and Targets (2000)
- Jonathan Rauch, *Can Markets Cure Malaria?* National Journal, October 11, 2008
- Nicholas Kristof, *Triumph of a Dreamer*, New York Times, November 14, 2009
- Senator John F. Kennedy, *Profiles in Courage* (1956) (Chapter 7-*Lucius Quintus Cincinnatus Lamar*)
- Review Blackboard folder on public speaking, including my checklist on public speaking
- See Blackboard for list of additional and background readings (not required)

#### **Oral Presentation**

- Winston Churchill noted in 1897: “Of all the talents bestowed upon men, none is so precious as the gift of oratory. He who enjoys it wields a power more durable than that of a great king. He is an independent force in the world. Abandoned by his party, betrayed by his friends, stripped of his offices, whoever can command this power is still formidable.” James Humes, a biographer of Churchill, stated: “Churchill was hardly destined to be an orator. He had little of the God-given talents for forensic brilliance. He was born with a congenital lisp and stammer. His voice lacked the rich resonance of the platform speaker and his five-foot hunched frame was hardly an

imposing presence.” It is my firm belief everyone can become a good public speaker if they work hard enough.

- Topic of presentation: Which of the UN Millennium Development Goals do you think is the most important? Should the UN concentrate on any other goals? Do you think these goals are practical? Should there be a world tax by the United Nations to support these goals?
  - In preparing, review Blackboard folder on public speaking, including my checklist on public speaking. Reflect on previous times you have spoken in public. Draft written outline of your presentation
  - Discuss the moral and ethical issues involved in eradicating your development goal.
  - Which ethical theory discussed in the class best helps resolve this dilemma?
- I grade based on three criteria: 1) Do you know the material (have you done the research); 2) Have you prepared the oral presentation (practice, practice, practice), 3) Uniqueness (be yourself. Mankind has discussed ethical issues for thousands of years, I want to hear what **you** have to say).
- An example of an outline will be provided on Blackboard.

#### Written Assignments

- No written assignment

#### Discussion Topics

- Reflect on last week’s class. After one week have your thoughts changed or do they remain the same? How were you influenced by the new readings for this week and class discussions last week?
- Take a “financial fast” for the weekend. Only buy necessities. List all the money you wanted to spend for the week that is not for necessities (food, medicine, personal hygiene, gas, rent, essential school and home items, essential bills, etc.). Define what you consider to be a necessity.<sup>3</sup> List the chances you have to give money to another person or to donate to charity during the week. Is there room in your budget to give more to charity? What would Singer think of your list of necessities? Can you save less short term if you promise to do more later?

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<sup>3</sup> See Michelle Singletary, *Sink Your Teeth Into a Fast*, Washington Post, January 3, 2010 (posted on additional readings for this week in Blackboard) for a definition of necessity.

- Are men and women equal?
- What is our most important social justice issue?
- Evaluate Pope Benedict's speech. What would your reaction be if you were a delegate representing a Third World Country? Would it be different if you were the US representative? Why? If you were the Pope, what would you say to the UN on this issue?
- Which of the UN Millennium Development Goals do you think is the most important? Should the UN concentrate on any other goals? Do you think these goals are practical? Should there be a world tax by the United Nations to support these goals?
- Discuss the most moral person that you know personally? Who is the moral leader in the United States today? Who is the moral leader in the world today?
- Discuss your thoughts on the Singer reading in detail. Discuss whether you think you have a moral obligation to give any of your income to others? Has Singer changed your thinking?
- Is there any moral justification for a hungry child in this world?
- Environmental Rights
- Father Jim Martin stated in *How to Become a Saint (In Fifteen Minutes)*(2007) that the real goal for all of us is to become who we are. How are you doing on self-examination and his goal of becoming who you are? Not all of us are going to be Mother Teresa, and apparently from some of your comments, not all of you want to be
- Moral Dilemma: You inherit \$2 million you did not anticipate receiving. You have a comfortable income and don't need the money. Should you spend the extra money on your own personal luxury box at Yankee Stadium or use the money to feed the poor? Is this a different situation than that described by Singer, above? Use the recommended method of analysis: 1) what are the key facts, 2) what are the key issues, 3) act impartially, and 4) what is the best solution? Also analyze this dilemma under each of the major theories discussed in class: virtue ethics, stoicism, Divine Command Theory, Natural Law, Kant's duty ethics, utilitarianism, the social contract, and natural rights. Which is most useful?

## **Class 10 (July 24, 2012): Abortion and Bioethics**

### Reading Assignments

- *Roe v. Wade*, 410 US 113 (1973)(entire text)
- *Doe v. Bolton*, 410 U.S. 179 (selections)
- Bob Woodward, *The Abortion Papers*, The Washington Post (1989)

- Linda Greenhouse, *The Evolution of a Justice*, New York Times Magazine (April 10, 2005)
- Norma McCorvey, *Testimony Before Subcommittee on the Constitution; Senate Judiciary Committee* (June 23, 2005)(transcript and video selections)
- Maureen Condit, *When Does Life Begin?*(October 2008)
- Denise Grady, *Parents Torn Over Fate of Frozen Embryos*, New York Times, December 4, 2008
- Senator John F. Kennedy, *Profiles in Courage* (1956) (The Time and Place and Chapter 8-George Norris)
- See Blackboard for list of additional and background readings (not required)

### Written Assignment

- If you were a Supreme Court Justice in 1973, how would you have decided *Roe*? (one page maximum).

### Discussion Topics

- Reflect on last week's class. After one week have your thoughts changed or do they remain the same? How were you influenced by the new readings for this week and class discussions last week?
- What is human life? What makes us different than other animals? What is unique about being human?
- What is the most important bioethics issue?
- Public Speaking: after reading my checklist on public speaking, what do you think the most important issue is for you regarding this skill? If you are concerned about the oral presentation, give me a draft outline of your presentation and I will review it.
- Moral Dilemma: It is estimated there are as many as 500,000 frozen embryos in the United States? What are our moral obligations to the embryos? Are they human? Do they have rights? How long are we obligated to preserve them? Who owns them? Use the recommended method of analysis: 1) what are the key facts, 2) what are the key issues, 3) act impartially, and 4) what is the best solution? Also analyze this dilemma under each of the major theories discussed in class: virtue ethics, stoicism, Divine Command Theory, Natural Law, Kant's duty ethics, utilitarianism, the social contract, and natural rights. Which is most useful?

### Class 11 (July 31, 2012): Just War

#### Reading Assignments

- **Senator Robert F. Kennedy, *Thirteen Days* (1969)(entire text)**
- *Thirteen Days* (2000)(video selections)

- St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, (1265-74)(selections)
- James Turner Johnson, *Just War, As it Was and Is*, First Things (January 2005)
- President John F. Kennedy, *Address to the Nation* (October 22, 1962)(transcript and video)
- U.S. Catholic Bishops Pastoral Letter on War and Peace (1983)
- Stanley Haeurwas, *No, This War Would Not be Moral*, Time Magazine, March 3, 2003
- Andrew Sullivan, *Yes, A War Would be Moral*, Time Magazine, March 3, 2003
- *Jesuit Rector Takes Philosophical, Religious Views of War in Class*, October 22, 2007
- Walter Pincus, *In Obama's Defense Strategy, Echoes of Bush's 'Preemption'*, Washington Post, January 10, 2012
- Review Blackboard folder on public speaking, including my checklist on public speaking
- See Blackboard for list of additional and background readings (not required)

### **Oral Presentation**

- Years after the Cuban Missile Crisis, Kennedy's counsel, Theodore Sorenson, wrote that he was once asked the question, "By what moral right did the President of the United State threaten to incinerate the world because of Soviet Missiles in Cuba?" At the end of the text of *Thirteen Days*, Sorensen, who helped edit the text after the death of Robert Kennedy, included the following note, "It was Senator Kennedy's intention to add a discussion of the basic ethical question involved: what, if any, circumstance or justification gives this government or any government the moral right to bring its people and possibly all people under the shadow of nuclear destruction? He wrote this book in the summer and fall of 1967 on the basis of his personal diaries and recollections, but never had an opportunity to rewrite or complete it." (*Thirteen Days* at 128). Students will go in alphabetical order. No handouts, PowerPoint, or audiovisuals. Use an outline, not notes. The outline will be collected at the end of your presentation.
  - In preparing, review Blackboard folder on public speaking, including my checklist on public speaking. Reflect on your first oral presentation. Draft written outline of your presentation.
  - Discuss the moral and ethical issues involved in the Cuban Missile Crisis.
  - Which ethical theory discussed in the class best helps resolve this dilemma?
  - What would the Catholic bishops say to President Kennedy?
  - What would Aquinas say?

### **Written Assignments**

- No written assignment

### Discussion Topics

- Reflect on the previous class. Have your thoughts changed or do they remain the same? How were you influenced by the new readings for the last week and the class discussions?
- Just War
- Just Conduct of War
- Was the use of the Atomic Bomb at Hiroshima and Nagasaki moral?

### **Class 12 (August 1, 2012): Ethics and Politics**

#### Reading Assignments

- Senator Paul Douglas, *Ethics in Government* (1952)(selections)
- Senator John F. Kennedy, *Remarks on the Saint Lawrence Seaway*, January 14, 1954 (transcript and video selections)
- U.S. House of Representatives Code of Official Conduct (1968)
- House Ethics Committee, *In the Matter of Representative James Traficant* (2002)(Floor proceedings, video selections)
- Representative Joel Hefley, *Ethics in the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress* (December 7, 2006)
- David Broder, *Byrd Understood National Interest*, Washington Post, July 1, 2010
- Michael Kinsley, *Being Accurate is the Least of It*, Politico, October 4, 2010
- Michael Walzer, *Political Action: The Problem of Dirty Hands* (1973)
- Senator John F. Kennedy, *Profiles in Courage* (1956) (Chapter 9-Robert A. Taft)
- Senator John F. Kennedy, *Profiles in Courage* (1956) (Chapter 10-Additional Men of Courage)
- Senator John F. Kennedy, *Profiles in Courage* (1955)(Chapter 11-The Meaning of Courage)
- See Blackboard for list of additional and background readings (not required)

#### Written Assignment

- Which of the senators evaluated by JFK in *Profiles in Courage* do you find to be the most moral (not most courageous) and why? (one page maximum)

### Discussion Topics

- Reflect on the previous class. Have your thoughts changed or do they remain the same? How were you influenced by the new readings for the last week and the class discussions?

- Reflect on your oral presentation. What did you learn from your presentation? What did you learn from watching the other students?
- Evaluate the arguments JFK makes in the final chapter of his book. What would Walzer say?
- Senator Douglas gives an extensive list of issues necessary to reform the political process. Add necessary reforms you believe should be added to his list.
- Do you think we have made progress in political ethics since the time of Paul Douglas?
- Discuss Douglas' ideas about three key ethical problems faced by legislators: 1) the high cost of running for office, 2) dealings with administrative agencies, and 3) the conduct of congressional investigations and treatment of witnesses before congressional committees. (Chapter 3)
- Why don't men follow the Golden Rule and the Sermon on the Mount, as Douglas suggests they do? Is the House Code of Conduct sufficient to provide the guide Douglas suggests? If you were the chairman of the House Ethics Committee, how would you revise the House Code of Conduct? How would JFK revise it? Douglas?
- Discuss the comment near the final page of the text by Senator Douglas that we need deeper moral values in politics (at 101-02).
- Evaluate the House Code of Conduct through the lens of each theory taught in the class. Would Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Epictetus, Hobbes, Kant, or Mill add anything? Would Thomas More add anything? Would Jesus or any other religious leader add anything?
- What do you think of the House ethics process?
- Do Representative Hefley's suggestions for reform go far enough?
- Who would JFK consider the most courageous senator today? The most courageous public servant?
- Moral Dilemma: JFK and St. Lawrence Seaway. Do you represent your state or the nation? Use the recommended method of analysis: 1) what are the key facts, 2) what are the key issues, 3) act impartially, and 4) what is the best solution? Also analyze this dilemma under each of the major theories discussed in class: virtue ethics, stoicism, Divine Command Theory, Natural Law, Kant's duty ethics, utilitarianism, the social contract, and natural rights. Which is most useful?
- Moral Dilemma: Do you want a politician who learns "how not to be good" or one who refuses to dirty his hands? Use the recommended method of analysis: 1) what are the key facts, 2) what are the key issues, 3) act impartially, and 4) what is the best solution?

## **Class 13 (August 4, 2012): Modern Ethics and Tentative Make-Up Classes<sup>4</sup>**

### **Reading Assignments**

- Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra* (1909)(selections)
- Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Lecture on Ethics* (1929)
- Dr. Albert Schweitzer, *Nobel Lecture* (1954)(transcript and video)
- G.E.M. “Elizabeth” Anscombe, *Modern Moral Philosophy* (1958)
- John Hick, *On Doing Philosophy of Religion* (2001)
- Pontifical Council for Social Communications, *Ethics in Internet* (2002)
- Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion* (2006)(selections)
- Avery Cardinal Dulles, *God and Evolution* (2007)
- Reverend Jim Martin, SJ, *How to Become a Saint (In Fifteen Minutes)* (2007)
- Robert Wright, *Can Machines Think?*, Time Magazine, March 25, 1996
- David Brooks, *The Neural Buddhists*, New York Times, May 13, 2008
- See Blackboard for list of additional and background readings (not required)

### **Written Assignment**

- Can machines think? Do they have rights? (one page maximum).

### **Oral Presentation**

- Choose a subject from the readings above or from the lists of modern philosophers/modern moral leaders on Blackboard.
- Tell us about your philosopher/moral leader.
- Describe the moral issue that was most important to your subject.
- What would they add/subtract from this syllabus?
- How would they evaluate the moral/ethical climate in the world today?
- Would they say machines think? If so, would they think machines have rights?
- Would they say the internet is ethical?

### **Written Assignment**

- No written assignment

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<sup>4</sup> Saturday class. Please reserve the entire day from 9-5 for the Modern Ethics class and possible make-up classes

## Discussion Topics

- What are the important ethical issues we face today?
- How will ethics change over the course of the 21<sup>st</sup> century?
- What will be the ethical issues of the 22<sup>nd</sup> century?

## **Class 14 (August 8, 2012): Course Conclusion**

### Reading Assignments

- Robert Bolt, *A Man For All Seasons* (1960)(entire text and video selections)
- John McCain with Mark Salter, *Character is Destiny* (2007)(Chapter on Thomas More)
- Rachels, Chapter 13, *What Would a Satisfactory Moral Theory Be Like?*(2009)
- Will Durant, *We Have a Right to Be Happy Today* (1958)
- Carl Sagan, *Cosmos* (1980)(video selections)
- *Is Torture Ever Justified?*, *Economist*, September 20, 2007
- Jane Brody, *Advice From Life's Graying Edge on Finishing With No Regrets*, *New York Times*, January 9, 2012

### Written Assignment

- What would you do in More's situation? (one page maximum).

## Discussion Topics

- Reflect on the previous class. Have your thoughts changed or do they remain the same? How were you influenced by the new readings for this week and class discussions?
- **Prior to class you will each be assigned the role of one of the characters from the play, *A Man For All Seasons*: Thomas More, the King, Cromwell, Rich, Roper, Norfolk, Cranmer, Cardinal Wolsey, Alice More, Margaret More, the Common Man, Chapuys, the Attendant, the Woman, etc. Briefly summarize the point of view expressed by this character in the play (one to two minutes). State your opinion of this point of view (do you think the character was ethical?). What was the moral dilemma for your character? Be prepared to debate the morality of your character with your classmates.**
- How would you answer Robert Bolt's question in the preface to *A Man For All Seasons*, "What am I?" These are similar to Valvano's questions: where have you been, where are you now, and where going?
- Bolt states that More had a "sense of his own self." Do you have a sense of yourself?

- Have you found something “without which life “is valueless? Is there something you cannot bring yourself to do? What are your limits?
- What is your opinion on Richard Rich’s statement, “But every man has his price!” (at page 4). Is there a cause for which you would sacrifice your life?
- Was Thomas More Wise? Just? Courageous? Temperate? Stoic?
- Who is wiser, Socrates or More?
- **Pick who you think is most ethical person in modern times and why? If you met them, what would you ask them? A list of possible candidates for this position is provided on Blackboard (moral leaders and modern ethical philosophers).**
- Reflect on Schweitzer’s concern in his *Nobel Lecture* that “the superman suffers from a fatal flaw. He has failed to rise to the level of superhuman reason which should match that of his superhuman strength.” If has been over fifty years since this speech. What do you think he would say now?
- When is civil disobedience permissible?
- Debate the merits of the ethical theories discussed during the course.
- What do you think Durant means in *We Have a Right to Be Happy Today*, when he states “these infinite spaces” that frighten him? Comment on this statement by Durant: “Don't expect to reform the government before you reform human nature, or your own. Corruption is natural in government because it is natural in man.” Is “Man wiser than man?” Finally, do you agree with his statement about reading the wise individuals he lists, “I shall not consider you educated unless you make many of these geniuses your friends. Cultivate them, and you will be molded by the company you keep.”
- What is the most important thing you have learned about yourself in this class?
- Moral Dilemma: Is torture ever justified? If torturing a suspect could provide information that might stop a ticking bomb, is the torture ever justified?

### **Final Paper (Date TBA)**

- Write a ten page paper (minimum 2500 words) critically analyzing the ethical theories discussed in this course **(25% of course grade)**.
- **I focus on proofreading, omitting unnecessary words (Strunk & White) and providing a source for any factual material.**

- “Literature is not mere Science, to be studied; but an Art, to be practiced.”<sup>5</sup> Writing is an important part of the Liberal Studies program and is emphasized in all courses, particularly in a core course such as Introduction to Ethics. All students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the resources offered by the Georgetown Writing Center, located at 217A Lauinger Library. Tutors are available. Liberal Studies students may also contact the Liberal Studies Writing Services Coordinator.
- Students should consult *The Elements of Style* by William Strunk, Jr. and E.B. White, 3rd ed. (New York: MacMillan, 1979)(or a later edition). An earlier version is available online at the Georgetown Writing Center (1918 Strunk version).
- Citation and sourcing tells the reader how to find your source. List the specific page of a reference, don't just cite the book or article. Cite the year or date of the source and if on the internet, the date you last checked it. Examples:
  - John F. Kennedy, *Profiles in Courage* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956, pages 100-102).
  - Second cite of same source: Kennedy at 1100-102.
  - Third cite of same source: *Id.* (Latin “idem” for “the same”).
  - Newspaper or magazine citation: Shakur Vedantam, *C'mon, Get Happy? It's Easier Said Than Done*, Washington Post, January 7, 2008; page A10.
  - Electronic citation: See the examples in the additional reading for the first class, “*What is Plagiarism?*” Always include the title of the work, year or date of publication, author if known, URL, and the date of the last time you visited the web page. For example: *What is Plagiarism?*, Georgetown University Honor Council (1999); <http://www.georgetown.edu/honor/plagiarism.html> (last visited: September 1, 2008).
  - Weekly class outlines: Lewis, “Class Notes on Plato, September 9, 2010, page 10. However, it is preferable to cite the source if refer to in my notes, not my outline.
- Your writing must be factually accurate. Errors, even seemingly minor ones, will have a severe impact on the grade. Similarly, your writing must conform to academic standards (don't use slang, etc). Consult *Guidelines on Writing a Philosophy Paper* in the writing folder on Blackboard.
- I focus on “**SOP**” in grading papers: 1) Source (proper citation to sources), 2) Omit (omit unnecessary words, see Strunk), and 3) Proofread (written assignments should not contain grammatical or spelling errors).

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<sup>5</sup> Arthur Quiller-Coach (1915).

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