

**Montgomery College**  
**Humanities Department**  
**Takoma Park/Silver Spring**  
**PHIL 140**

**TEMPLATE**

**Textbooks and other resources** (*all required*):

Rachels, James, and Stuart Rachels. *Elements of Moral Philosophy*. 8<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: McGraw-Hill Humanities, 2014. Print. ISBN: 9780078119064

Shafer-Landau, Russ ed. *Ethical Theory: An Anthology*. Blackwell Publishing, 2007. ISBN 978-1-4051-3320-3

**Course Description:**

Covers contemporary ethical issues in public policy and personal conduct. Topic areas may include bioethics and medicine; inequality and discrimination; justice and punishment; information ethics; environmental ethics; or other areas. Practical issues in these areas will be discussed in relation to ethical theories. Various ethical perspectives will be critically examined. *Assessment Level(s): ENGL101/ENGL101A, MATH093/MATH096, READ120. Three hours each week. Formerly PL 202.*

**Course Outcomes:** Upon course completion, a student will be able to:

- Demonstrate a comprehension of current moral issues in light of various ethical theories.
- Recognize classical thinkers from around the world as he or she explores normative judgments and foundations for those judgments.
- Distinguish normative and nonnormative ethical theories and the distinction between metaethics and normative ethics.
- Critically evaluate different moral points of view, including altruism, universalism, and self-interest.
- Discuss different schools of ethical thought.

**Grading Policy:** The final grade will be determined as follows:

There are a total of 1000 possible points to earn in the class:

Attendance and Participation	20% of Final Grade (200 points)
Philosophy Journal	20% of Final Grade (200 points)
Test 1	20% of Final Grade (200 points)
Test 2	20% of Final Grade (200 points)
Paper	20% of Final Grade (200 points)

**Grade Scale:**

A	90 – 100%	B	80 – 89%	C	70 – 79%
D	60 – 69%	F	< 60%		

## **Assignments:**

**Paper:** You will write one scholarly academic position paper, worth 200 points. Details will be given later in the semester.

**Tests:** There will be 2 tests in which you will be required to respond in short answer and essay format. Each test is worth 200 points.

**Homework:** All homework is due on the dates marked in your syllabus. You will keep a Philosophy Journal, worth 200 points. You will write 8 entries over the duration of the course (worth 25 points each), and in 1-2 pages (or 300-600 words) per entry, you will address the journal entry topic. Journal entries are designed to get you thinking about the course when you're not in the classroom, and to give you the opportunity to express ideas you may not have had a chance to bring up in class discussion. So, read the journal entry topic, think about the question, and use this occasion to be an original, creative thinker! Please type your journal entries. Although you will write journal entries throughout the course, I will only collect the journal entries twice during the semester; at the time of the midterm exam and during the last week of class. Details to follow.

**Attendance and Class Participation:** Attendance is mandatory. Each day that you attend and participate you will earn 7 points. For each unexcused absence you will thus fail to earn 7 points. Unexcused lateness will result in a 3-point deduction. If you are more than 15 minutes late, or leave more than 15 minutes early you will be counted as absent.

**If you miss more than 3 classes for any reason, you will fail your attendance and participation grade. If you are late or leave early more than 5 times for any reason, you will fail your attendance and participation grade.**

Questions during class discussion are welcomed and encouraged. Be aware that some of the course material can be controversial, and that discussions are discussions of ideas, never attacks on those who hold ideas. You are expected to maintain an attitude of respect to all during class discussions.

## **Grading of Written Work:**

**An "A" paper** is substantial, well developed and effectively organized and presented. It demonstrates original or thoughtful engagement with content and sensitivity to diction, tone, and style. Its sentences are clear, precise, and well-structured. The paper is appropriately and formatted and virtually error-free.

**A "B" paper** contains a number of the strengths of an A paper, but it typically lacks the thoughtfulness, originality, and sensitivity of the superior paper. It is also virtually error-free.

**A "C" paper** fulfills the assignment and is adequately organized. The writer communicates ideas and develops a thesis, although supporting evidence may be minimal and organization rather mechanical. The writing is not marred by habitual or serious grammatical errors. Thought and expression are competent.

**A "D" paper** typically is marked by failure to focus on a thesis, poor organization, lack of development, or recurrent mechanical errors.

**An "F" paper** may ignore the terms of the assignment, or it may be devoid of thesis, support, or organizing principle. Typically it contains numerous mechanical errors that seriously interfere with comprehension; it may also be marred by serious errors in documentation.

**Final Exam:** A cumulative final exam will be given on the day scheduled during the exam period. The final exam is mandatory and cannot be rescheduled.

## **Department Policies:**

### ***Important Student Information Link***

*In addition to course requirements and objectives that are in this syllabus, Montgomery College has information on its web site (see link below) to assist you in having a successful experience both inside and outside of the classroom. It is important that you read and understand this information. The link below provides information and other resources to areas that pertain to the following: **student behavior (student code of conduct), student e-mail, the tobacco free policy, withdraw and refund dates, disability support services, veteran services, how to access information on delayed openings and closings, how to register for the Montgomery College alert System, and finally, how closings and delays can impact your classes.** If you have any questions please bring them to your professor. As rules and regulations change they will be updated and you will be able to access them through the link. If any student would like a written copy of these policies and procedures, the professor would be happy to provide them. By registering for this class and staying in this class, you are indicating that you acknowledge and accept these policies.*

<http://cms.montgomerycollege.edu/mcsyllabus/>

**Communication:** The College considers the Montgomery College e-mail account to be the official means of communication between students and faculty. It is recommended that you check this account routinely for official communication or as directed by your professor. Some items you may find there are: course announcements, invoices, important admission/registration information, waitlist status. To check your e-mail, log into your MyMC online account and locate the e-mail icon in the upper right hand corner of the page.

**Academic Honesty:** Montgomery College's policies on academic dishonesty are found in the *Student Handbook* and under *Section VIII* of the *Student Code of Conduct* available at the following link:

[http://cms.montgomerycollege.edu/pnp/#Chapter\\_4](http://cms.montgomerycollege.edu/pnp/#Chapter_4). Each student is expected to do his or her own work. Any student found cheating or plagiarizing will be given an F for the assignment. If the same student is involved in a second incident of cheating, the case may be referred to the Student Discipline Committee, a grade of F for the course may be awarded, and/or the student may be dropped from the course.

**Campus Closure and Delayed Opening:** Please consult the college website and local television and radio programs to hear of weather-related college closings and delays. A message will be placed on the front page of the website in the event of a closure or delayed opening. Do not call security for information on weather-related closings and delays. You may call the Takoma Park/Silver Spring campus main number 240-567-1501, which will be updated with an automated message.

You can register for the "Montgomery College ALERT!" program to receive email and text message notifications about school emergencies, delays, and closings. For more information about the program, including information on how to register, click on the following link:

<http://cms.montgomerycollege.edu/EDU/Plain2.aspx?id=4106>

**Disability Support:** Any student who may need an accommodation due to a disability, please make an appointment to see me during my office hours. In order to receive accommodations, a letter from Disability Support Services (R-CB122; G-SA175; or TP-ST120) will be needed. Any student who may need assistance in the event of an emergency evacuation must identify to the Disability Support Services Office; guidelines for emergency evacuations for individuals with disabilities are found at: [www.montgomerycollege.edu/dss/evacprocedures.htm](http://www.montgomerycollege.edu/dss/evacprocedures.htm).

The Takoma Park/Silver Spring DSS office is located on the first floor of the ST building. Here is contact information for the DSS office, as taken from the DSS website:

- Dr. Cathy Wilson, Counselor: [Cathy.Wilson@montgomerycollege.edu](mailto:Cathy.Wilson@montgomerycollege.edu) Room ST137 240-567-1475 (VOICE or TTY).
- Edward Muchene, Counselor: [Edward.Muchene@montgomerycollege.edu](mailto:Edward.Muchene@montgomerycollege.edu) Room ST138 240-567-1477 (VOICE).
- Renee Gisriel, Student Services Specialist: [Renee.Gisriel@montgomerycollege.edu](mailto:Renee.Gisriel@montgomerycollege.edu) Room ST227 240-567-1610 (VOICE).
- <http://www.montgomerycollege.edu/dss/>

Please note that even if you are entitled to take tests in the testing center, **deadlines still apply**. If you do not take a test by the due date, you will receive a zero for that test. It is your responsibility to schedule appointments at the testing center in a timely fashion. Test dates are available in the course calendar at the end of this syllabus; please schedule your test appointments now. Also, students with disabilities are expected to adhere to the Student Code of Conduct.

**Classroom Behavior:** Please review the *Standards of College Behavior* in the *Student Handbook* or *Section VII* of the *Student Code of Conduct* available at the following link: [http://cms.montgomerycollege.edu/pnp/#Chapter\\_4](http://cms.montgomerycollege.edu/pnp/#Chapter_4). The college seeks to provide an environment where discussion and expression of all views relevant to the subject matter of the class are recognized and necessary to the educational process. However, students do not have the right to obstruct the faculty member's ability to teach nor the ability of other students to learn. The instructor has the right to determine appropriate conduct in the classroom, and it is expected that students will conduct themselves at all times in a manner that is respectful of their instructor and their peers.

Inappropriate behaviors include (but are not limited to) the following:

1. Socializing with other students once class has begun.
2. Refusing to complete assigned tasks in the class or labs.
3. Sleeping in class, arguing with the professor or other students, showing disrespect towards the professor or other students, or disrupting the class in any way.
4. Using cell phones or texting during class.

Students who do not adhere to these policies will be asked to leave by the professor; if they do not comply, Security will be called. If a student repeatedly refuses to comply with classroom regulations, s/he will be referred to the Dean of Student Development.

**FERPA.** The *Family Education Rights and Privacy Act* prohibits the instructor from discussing a student's grade and performance in the course with anyone but that student. All exceptions/allowances must be submitted in writing by the student.

**PHIL 140 satisfies a General Education Humanities Distribution requirement.** Montgomery College's General Education Program is designed to ensure that students have the skills, knowledge and attitudes to carry them successfully through their work and their personal lives. This course provides multiple opportunities to develop competency in oral and written communication and critical analysis and reasoning. For more information on the General Education Program, go to [www.montgomerycollege.edu/gened](http://www.montgomerycollege.edu/gened).

**Course Schedule (subject to revision):**

<u>Week</u>	<u>Class Topic</u>	<u>Assignment Due Dates</u>	<u>Test Dates</u>
1	Introductions, Syllabus; What is Ethics?		
2	Psychological Egoism		
3	Relativism		
4	Subjectivism		Test 1
5	Divine Command Theory		
6	Plato		
7	Aristotle	5 journal entries due Thu. 3/7	
8	<i>No Class -- Spring Break</i>		
9	Bentham, Writing your term paper		
10	Mill		
11	Kant		Test 2
12	Hobbes		
13	Rawls		
14	Locke	Rough draft due Thu. 4/25	
15	Ethics of Care	3 journal entries due Thu. 5/2	
16		Final Paper Due	

*Due Date Summary*

Test 1	Midterm	Journal	Rough Draft	Journal	Final Paper

*Reading Detail*

<b>Week</b>	<b>Selections/Pages</b>
<b>1</b>	Rachels: entire chapter, pp. 1-15. Shafer-Landau: The Subject-Matter of Ethics, pp. 51-57; What Things are Good?, pp. 324-328; What Makes Someone's Life Go Best, pp. 329-333.
<b>2</b>	Rachels: entire chapter, pp. 68-88. Shafer-Landau: Psychological Egoism, pp. 183-195.
<b>3</b>	Rachels: entire chapter, pp. 16-34. Shafer-Landau: Moral Relativism Defended, pp. 41-50; Realism, pp. 72-76.
<b>4</b>	Rachels: entire chapter, pp. 35-51. Shafer-Landau: The Subjectivity of Values, pp. 25-35.
<b>5</b>	Rachels: entire chapter, pp. 52-67. A&S: Shafer-Landau: God and Morality, pp. 267-278.
<b>6</b>	Shafer-Landau: The Immoralist's Challenge, pp. 146-152.
<b>7</b>	Rachels: entire chapter, pp. 173-190. Shafer-Landau: The Nature of Virtue, pp. 667-683.
<b>8</b>	
<b>9</b>	Rachels, entire chapter, pp. 89- 99.
<b>10</b>	Rachels: entire chapter, pp. 100-116. Shafer-Landau: Utilitarianism, pp. 457-462.
<b>11</b>	Rachels: entire chapters, pp. 117-140. Shafer-Landau: Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals, pp. 525-539.
<b>12</b>	Rachels: entire chapter, pp. 141-159. Shafer-Landau: Leviathan, pp. 606-619.
<b>13</b>	Shafer-Landau: A Theory of Justice, pp. 631-643.
<b>14</b>	Handouts available in Blackboard.
<b>15</b>	Handouts available in Blackboard.

Check MyMC for details on specific dates for dropping, adding, refund, and related information.