Course Description
All human beings and human cultures hold fundamental beliefs about right and wrong and good and bad. Philosophers throughout the centuries have endeavored to place these beliefs into a systematic theoretical framework in order to better understand the nature of right and wrong, to more clearly distinguish what is good from what is bad, and to provide a reasoned account of why certain actions are right or wrong. Thus Ethics is the practical science: a rigorous rational inquiry into the principles that govern human life and human action. It seeks to answer a set of related questions: What is the good life? What are the purposes and ends of human life? What is good, and how is it to be pursued?

Typical Ethics courses in US universities often survey a variety of theories that attempt to answer the question of the good life. However, a common effect of such an approach is to suggest that ethical reflection is something like an intellectual cafeteria, in which a student shops for the theory that seems most agreeable and then puts that theory to work to justify what he or she already intends to do. In this course we will seek to counter this impression of ethics. We will first think about what ethics is and how it has been shaped by an important set of historical shifts. Secondly, we will focus our attention on the classic text of virtue or character ethics, Aristotle’s Nicomachean Ethics. As we complete Aristotle, we will briefly look at a children’s book, C. S. Lewis’s Voyage of the Dawn Treader, to consider how character and issues of character formation are depicted in works of narrative fiction. We will then turn to a longer fictional illustration of character, Jane Austen’s Pride and Prejudice, which shows questions of character and virtue placed in a nineteenth-century family context. At the end of the course we will briefly consider several alternatives to the character or virtue approach to ethics.

An additional theme of the course will be reflection on the activity of tourism. What ethical considerations are involved in visiting a culture other than one’s own? What are various motivations people have for tourism? Are there better and worse ways to visit other cultures? How might reflection on the activity of tourism affect our experience in Florence, and our understanding of ourselves?

Course Learning Outcomes
This course supports the Learning Outcomes specified for Ethics courses in the new Gonzaga Core Curriculum. As a result of work in this course, students will be able to:

- argue persuasively why each of us is responsible for having ethical concerns about and commitments to the good of others.
- resolve moral problems consistently drawing on resources (e.g., conceptions of human nature and the human community) of one of the ethical theories or traditions studied.
- respectfully advocate for their critically assessed moral commitments and perspective within a diverse community.

As a result of completing this particular PHIL 301 Ethics course, students also will be able to:

- appreciate that ethics can be understood as a systematic and rigorous form of rational inquiry.
- develop a deep understanding of the virtue or character ethics tradition by working carefully through the magisterial systematic articulation of it in Aristotle’s.

PHIL 301 Ethics
Spring 2017 Gonzaga in Florence David H. Calhoun calhoun@gem.gonzaga.edu
Section 1 MTTh 9:25-10:25 AM (time slot B)
Section 3 MTTh 11:35-12:35 PM (time slot D)
Nicomachean Ethics, and through secondary treatments of virtue and character in fictional works.

- describe the basic differences in approach and theory of virtue ethics and the two most important competing ethical theories in the history of philosophy, deontology and utilitarianism.
- read, understand, analyze, and discuss philosophical texts more closely and carefully.
- express their own philosophical and ethical positions more clearly both verbally and in writing.

Course Requirements

1. **Class attendance and participation** (10%). Since philosophy is a dialogic discipline that is best studied by reading and discussing, students must be prepared for class each day and participate in class discussions. Good participation will help your grade, while absences and poor participation will lower your grade. The Gonzaga in Florence attendance policy will be enforced (see below); any absences beyond one week will result in a grade penalty; six absences will result in a grade of F for the course. See “Classroom Decorum / Expectations” below for more detail regarding my expectations for class participation.

2. **Reading assignment quizzes** (15%). Because the reading assignments are such an integral part of this course, I will give very basic quizzes on the reading assignments periodically throughout the course. The quizzes will be multiple choice or short-answer format, and will take place at the beginning of the class meeting. The lowest quiz grade will be dropped. **No make-ups will be allowed for missed quizzes.** If you miss a quiz, the zero grade will be counted as your dropped quiz grade.

3. **Midterm Exam** (25%). An exam covering topics from the first half of the course. The exam will include multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions.

4. **Short essays** (25%). Each student must write two short essays, each of which is to be 4 double-spaced typed pages, selected from topics specified by the instructor. Papers are due in class on the dates specified in the course schedule. **Essays submitted late will receive a grade penalty.**

5. **Final Exam** (25%). The format for the final exam will follow the pattern of the midterm exam. The content of the final will focus on the second half of the course, but some questions will involve review of or comparison to material from the first half.

Gonzaga in Florence Attendance Policy

Attendance is taken at the beginning of class from the first day of the semester. The student entering class after attendance is taken has to contact the professor at the end and announce his/her presence. However, this does not mean that coming late is accepted. Two late arrivals may be excused, three turn automatically into an absence and will affect the attendance and participation part of the final grade.

**Students can miss one week’s work, irrespective of the course formula (three sessions, two sessions, one session).** It is their responsibility to make up for the missed work. If they miss a quiz or a report they are not allowed to have it at another time, unless the absence is for certified medical reasons and the professor and Dean agree.

More than one week’s work missed is going to be penalized as follows:

- One extra absence: by lowering the attendance and participation grade
- Two extra absences: by lowering the final grade by a whole letter grade
- Three extra absences: by grading the whole course F

Classroom Expectations / Decorum

Philosophical inquiry is a dialogic enterprise, and a difficult one at that. If we care about exploring what is true, and critically examining our ideas and arguments, we must cultivate concentration, focus, and rigorous thinking, and must pay careful attention to one another in
discussion. To achieve these objectives, I find it important to foster the most suitable possible environment for philosophical inquiry. I also expect that students will conscientiously and responsibly prepare for class by reading, reviewing, and thinking about the assigned reading material for each class meeting. Students must bring texts to class and be prepared to use and refer to them during lecture and discussion.

These requirements for a successful classroom have specific implications for classroom use of technology. A further consideration in the matter is that empirical research regarding use of technology has generated strong evidence supporting several important conclusions: (1) use of laptops for classroom note-taking is generally less effective for comprehension and retention of material than hand-written notes; (2) availability of non-course related technology resources (email, social media, and so forth) is often distracting to students; and (3) student use of technology distracts students seated nearby and impedes their learning. For these reasons, I generally discourage the use of laptops in class, and do not allow cell phones or texting at all. Students who wish to use laptops in class must discuss this with me outside of class and receive express permission in order to do so. The one exception to this general policy is that students may use laptops or e-readers to access handout readings during class while those particular readings are the subject of discussion, only for the purpose of accessing those readings.

**Academic Honesty**
Academic integrity is essential to genuine education. The instructor assumes that all work submitted for this course is the work of the student in whose name it is submitted, that all sources for written work are properly acknowledged, and that no improper aid is given or received on quizzes and tests. If you are unsure about any aspect of academic honesty, ask your instructor! A grade of "0" (zero) will be the typical penalty for any assignment on which academic dishonesty has occurred. In some cases, a more severe penalty (as discussed in the University's "Academic Honesty Policy") may be imposed. The instructor reserves the right to submit copies of student written work to a plagiarism detection site such as TurnItIn.com.

**Required Course Texts**
C. S. Lewis, *Voyage of the Dawn Treader* (HarperCollins)
Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* (Norton Critical Edition, 4th ed; NOTE: students may be able to find older versions of the Norton Critical Edition of *P&P* that are cheaper; such editions are acceptable for use in this class)
handout readings distributed by the instructor

**Tentative Course Schedule**
This schedule is tentative and therefore may be adjusted during the semester by announcement in class. Readings must be completed before class on the day assigned.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>M 1/9</th>
<th>What is Ethics? What will this course be like?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T 1/10</td>
<td>Logic, Truth, and Relativism; Ethics of Tourism 1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>READ: Clayton, &quot;Truth, Relativism, and Philosophy&quot; (handout)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>What is truth? What can we conclude from the fact that people disagree about what is true? What is relativism, what different forms does it take, and how plausible are those forms?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>READ: Tourism handout 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Th 1/12</td>
<td>Ethics and Relativism</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>READ: Rachels, &quot;The Challenge of Cultural Relativism&quot; (handout)</td>
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PHIL 301 Ethics / Gonzaga in Florence

What is Cultural Relativism? Why is it plausible? In the end, what should we think about relativism in the ethical sphere?

M 1/16 Putting the Study of Ethics into a Historical Context
READ: Fortin, "Recovery Movement" (handout); MacIntyre, "Disquieting Suggestion" (handout)
How do the approaches to ethics taken by pre-modern and modern philosophers and social theorists differ? What different conceptions do they have of rights and obligations? What, according to MacIntyre, is the result of the shift from pre-modern to modern ethical theories? What does this suggest about how we should go about studying ethics?

T 1/17 The Motivation for Ethical Action
READ: Plato, excerpt from Republic Book 2 (handout)
How do Socrates and his friends classify justice? What do they seem to be talking about by referring to "justice"? Why does Socrates think that we should be willing to do right? What contrary view do Glauc on and Adeimantus articulate? What does the story of the Ring of Gyges illustrate? (Note the parallel to Tolkien's Ring of Power!) What motivation do you have for doing what is "right"? Think of these concrete examples: obeying the speed limit, shoplifting, being disloyal to your friends, internet music piracy.

Th 1/19 Ethics, Happiness, and Human Nature
READ: Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics Book 1, chapters 1-5 and 7-13
Why does Aristotle think we should (and in fact do) care about ethics? What are the common conceptions of happiness? With which does Aristotle agree, and why? What is virtue, and how is it related to happiness and ethics?

M 1/23 Virtues as Excellences of Character I
READ: Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics Book 2
What sort of thing is a "virtue"? How do people become virtuous or vicious? In what sense is virtue a "mean"?

T 1/24 Virtues as Excellences of Character
REVIEW: Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics Book 2
What is Aristotle's technical definition of virtue? What are examples of specific virtues of character?

Th 1/26 Virtue, Action, and Intention
READ: Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics Book 3, chapters 1-5
Why is the concept of voluntary action important to Aristotle's account? What conditions make an action genuinely voluntary? What is the role of deliberation in action?

M 1/30 Bravery and Temperance
READ: Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics Book 3, chapters 6-12
How do the virtues of bravery and temperance fit into the general account of virtue that Aristotle has developed? What do they concern, and how are they developed?

T 1/31 Social Virtues I
READ: Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics Book 4, chapters 1-5
What social virtues does Aristotle add to the catalogue of virtues in this section? What scope do they have, and in what ways can we fail to have them? Do you think these virtues are peculiar to ancient Greek culture, or do they apply to our social situation as well?

Th 2/2 Social Virtues II
READ: Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics Book 4, chapters 6-9
What virtues does Aristotle consider in this section? What are their correlative vices? Do you think that Aristotle's conception of wittiness is too narrow? Would the sorts of humor common to contemporary Americans count as vicious on his standard? Does shame have a place in exercise or cultivation of virtue?

Short Essay #1 due in class

M 2/6 Justice
READ: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* Book 5, chapters 1-7 and 10-11
What is the nature of justice? Is justice a matter of character like other virtues, or is it a set of rules for interpersonal conduct? In what specific contexts is justice important?

**T 2/7**
*Intellectual Virtues*
READ: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* Book 6, chapters 1-8 and 12-13
What are the intellectual virtues? How are they similar to and different from virtues of character? How are they cultivated? Do you think that your formal education helped you to cultivate these virtues?

**Th 2/9**
*Incontinence and Related Problems*
READ: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* Book 7, chapters 1-10
What is incontinence? How is it similar to but different from intemperance and from vice in a general sense? What is the central problem for the incontinent person? Do you think that incontinence is generally regarded as vicious by modern Americans?

**M 2/13**
*Friendship I*
READ: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* Book 8, chapters 1-9
What is friendship, according to Aristotle? What varieties does it take, and how do they differ? Is Aristotle’s analysis of friendship exhaustive? Is it applicable to modern relationships?

**T 2/14**
*Friendship II*
READ: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* Book 8, chapters 10-14 and Book 9, chapters 1-3
What are key features of friendship according to Aristotle? How do friendships differ in different social contexts? How do problems arise in friendships? Must friends be equals?

**Th 2/16**
*Friendship III*
READ: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* Book 9, chapters 4-12
How is friendship related to self-love? Is self-love a good or bad thing? What is goodwill and what role does it play in genuine friendship? What are best sorts of friendships like?

**Midterm Exam distributed via email**

**M 2/20**
*Pleasure*
READ: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* Book 7, chapters 11-14 and Book 10, chapters 1-5
What does Aristotle think pleasure is? Is pleasure morally good or bad? Is the pursuit of pleasure a legitimate moral goal? What role does pleasure play in genuine moral activity?

**T 2/21**
*Happiness and Contemplation, Moral Education, and Enforcement of Morality*
How does the human capacity for abstract rationality complicate the conception of happiness Aristotle has developed thus far in the *Ethics*? What role does study play in human happiness? What does Aristotle think should be done to help people develop morally in a social context? What should be done about bad people? What role does story, including children’s fiction, play in moral development? What virtues and vices do the characters in Lewis’s *Dawn Treader* exhibit?

**Th 2/23**
*Ethics of Tourism*

**2/27 Ñ 3/3**
*GIF Spring Break*

**M 3/6**
*Moral Education, Character Formation*
READ: Lewis, *Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, chapters 6-10
Do you find Eustace’s moral transformation realistic? What links do you see between Lewis’s account of his transformation and Aristotle’s account of
character? How do the dangers and adventures that the *Dawn Treader* party faces illustrate virtues of character and intellect?

**T 3/7**

Moral Education, Character Formation

READ: Lewis, *Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, chapters 11-16

Does Reepicheep’s attitude toward the mysterious Darkness count as bravery or rashness? What does the story end tell us about the characters? What purpose (or purposes) do you think that Lewis had in writing the book? Is the book an example of Aristotelian moral education? If so, how; if not, why do you think not?

**Th 3/9**

Austen on Character and Virtue Part 1


Reading/study questions for Austen are available on the Blackboard course site.

**M 3/13**

Austen on Character and Virtue Part 2


**T 3/14**

Austen on Character and Virtue Part 3


**Th 3/16**

Austen on Character and Virtue Part 4

READ: Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* Vol. II, chapters 14-19; MacIntyre, excerpt from *After Virtue* about the novels of Jane Austen (handout)

How, according to MacIntyre, does Austen address a particular social and economic situation? In what way does he think that Austen is a Christian Aristotelian in her attention to character? Do you think MacIntyre is right in his analysis?

**M 3/20**

Austen on Character and Virtue Part 5


What is *undeception* and why does Lewis think it is a central focus of Austen’s writing? What instances of *undeception* appear in *Pride and Prejudice*? How is *undeception* critical to the development of character?

**T 3/21**

Austen on Character and Virtue Part 6


According to Bloom, irony is at the heart of Austen’s treatment of characters and relationships. What does Bloom mean by this claim? On Bloom’s view, what are the strengths and weaknesses of the characters? What are the moral messages communicated by *Pride and Prejudice*?

**Th 3/23**

Ethics of Tourism

**M 3/27**

Kant’s Philosophical Project and the Place of Ethics

READ: Kant, *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*, Preface (1-5)

How does Kant divide the different spheres of scientific and philosophical inquiry? Where does ethics fit into his system, and what sort of inquiry is it? Does Kant think that ethics can be scientific in the way that other forms of rational inquiry are?

**Short Essay #2 due in class**

**T 3/28**

Will, Inclination, and Duty

READ: Kant, *Grounding*, First Section (7-17)

What is Kant’s standard for moral goodness? How are moral law and duty related to one another? Is the pursuit of happiness the criterion of morality?

**Th 3/30**

Imperatives and the Categorical Imperative

READ: Kant, *Grounding*, first half of Second Section (19-33)

What is a *metaphysics of morals* and why does Kant think it is necessary? Why must ethics be understood in terms of imperatives, and particularly in terms of categorical imperatives? What is the basic formula for the categorical imperative?

**M 3/3**

Justifying the Categorical Imperative

READ: Kant, *Grounding*, second half of Second Section (33-48)
Can the categorical imperative be philosophically justified? If so, how? What other formulations of the categorical imperative can be given? What is autonomy, and how is it a helpful lens for understanding what moral goodness consists in?

**T 3/4** Utilitarianism
READ: Mill, excerpt from *Utilitarianism* (handout)
How does the stance taken by utilitarianism involve a different view of pleasure than that of Aristotle or Kant? What theory of human nature seems to be the basis for this view?

**Th 3/6** Course conclusion; Ethics of Tourism

**Final Exam**, time and date TBA