

**CU 2600 Global Ethical Challenges**  
**Critical Thinking Seminar (A&H NL) Global Ethical Challenges: Spring 2014**

Course # : CU 260  
Time & Place : Tues/Thurs 9:30-10:45                      201 Hardin Hall  
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Office Hours : Tues/Thurs 12:15-3:30 (or by appointment) at 216 Hardin

**Critical Thinking**

This course has been specifically designed to be a part of the new *Clemson Thinks2* Critical Thinking program. We'll be considering a wide variety of globally relevant ethical issues while we also seek to both understand the nature of critical thinking and improve our critical thinking abilities. This will involve asking hard questions, both of ourselves and of the texts we will be studying, but I think you'll find it a worthwhile and eye-opening process. You'll find specific learning outcomes related to critical thinking discussed below. *Please read the entire syllabus carefully, as this course differs in some respects from other courses you have taken at Clemson* (both with regard to pre and post testing and the possible collection of artifacts).

**Required Texts**

There are two required texts for this course: *Global Ethics: Seminal Essays*, ed. Thomas Pogge, Paragon House, 2008 and *Contemporary Moral Problems*, ed. James E. White, Thomson Wadsworth, 2006. I strongly encourage you to acquire these books as soon as possible. There will also be additional required readings available on reserve. The schedule that follows is *tentative*, and may be revised depending upon how quickly we get through the material.

**Grading & Assignments**

There will be **three** in-class essay exams for this class, with each worth **15%** of your final grade. There will also be two critical response essays (each worth **15%**), each of which will be submitted in three stages (topic proposal (4%), first draft (4%), final draft (7%)). An additional **15%** of your final grade will be based on your written answers to reading questions that are to be turned in (typed, hardcopy) at the beginning of classes for which they are due. (Consult the schedule to see due dates.) These reading questions will be graded pass/fail, and late assignments will receive half credit. On any given day you may be asked to present your answers to reading questions to the class in order to stimulate discussion. The final **10%** of your course grade will be based on class participation. This will be recorded primarily through the use of **i-Clickers**. Attendance will also be monitored using i-Clickers. Thus, an i-Clicker is a **required purchase** for this class. It must be purchased within the *first week of classes*. *Students can purchase their Clickers at the Clemson University Apple Store*. Not bringing your i-Clicker to class will count as an absence.

**Pre and Post Testing**

In order to continually improve this course and in order to assess your individual improvement in critical thinking skills, you'll be taking the *California Critical Thinking Skills Test* at both the beginning and end of the semester. Your actual scores on these tests will not affect your grade for the course, but taking both exams is a *requirement* for passing the class. (In other words, if you skip one or both exams you will not pass the class.) You can learn more about the test at Insight Assessment's website:

<http://www.insightassessment.com/Products/Critical-Thinking-Skills-Tests/California-Critical-Thinking-Skills-Test-CCTST>

**General Advice**

Critical thinking can be difficult, and this critical thinking seminar will strike many of you as challenging. I hope you will also find it rewarding, but be forewarned that significant effort is required of you in order to benefit from this class. You will be expected to read *all* the required

readings carefully, to pay attention to the lectures, and to think critically about both. I strongly encourage you to come talk to me if you find you are having difficulty following the readings or lectures -- don't just assume it will all become clear to you when you sit down to study for an exam or write a paper. Also, the work you submit should be *your own*, as **plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated**. The use of another student's i-Clicker (without the instructor's permission) also constitutes academic dishonesty.

### **Academic Integrity**

The following is Clemson's official statement on "Academic Integrity":

"As members of the Clemson University community, we have inherited Thomas Green Clemson's vision of this institution as a 'high seminary of learning.' Fundamental to this vision is a mutual commitment to truthfulness, honor, and responsibility, without which we cannot earn the trust and respect of others. Furthermore, we recognize that academic dishonesty detracts from the value of a Clemson degree. Therefore, we shall not tolerate lying, cheating, or stealing in any form. When, in the opinion of a faculty member, there is evidence that a student has committed an act of academic dishonesty, the faculty member shall make a formal written charge of academic dishonesty, including a description of the misconduct, to the Associate Dean for Curriculum in the Office of Undergraduate Studies. At the same time, the faculty member may, but is not required to, inform each involved student privately of the nature of the alleged charge."

**Student Learning Outcomes & Competency Areas:** This course should help prepare you to meet the general education competency requirements in *Arts and Humanities*, *Critical Thinking*, and *Ethical Judgment*. Both your homework assignments and your exams could be suitable as artifacts for these areas, but this will depend on how complete and comprehensive your answers/essays are. Your critical response essays will be best suited for use as artifacts. I'm happy to meet with you individually to discuss the possibility of using artifacts deriving from this class.

In addition to providing artifacts for your eportfolio, this course is designed to allow you to craft artifacts that are specifically intended for the demonstration of critical thinking skills. (On a voluntary basis, these may be collected and used by Clemson to help further evaluate our Critical Thinking program.) Again, your critical response essays will be ideal for this purpose. They will be graded on a traditional scale, but also graded utilizing a detailed rubric designed to give you a more comprehensive sense of how and where your work succeeds in demonstrating critical thinking skills.

As with all CU courses, CU 260 is designed to bring about the following Student Learning Outcomes:

1. *Explore complex challenges.* [In this context the challenges you will explore will be primarily ethical in nature and will concern topical and pressing issues.]
2. *Analyze multi-dimensional problems.* [In this context you will be considering both the analytical puzzles that arise from moral theory as well as more specific problems and challenges when theoretical frameworks are applied to concrete cases of moral conflict and ethical dilemmas.]
3. *Extrapolate from on conceptual context to others* [This course involves learning various theoretical approaches to ethical thought and extrapolating the principles and insights from these theories to a wide variety of global contexts.]
4. *Synthesize alternative solutions to multi-dimensional challenges.* [This course will spur you to consider novel and unfamiliar ethical outlooks and to critically evaluate the degree to which such outlooks are plausible responses to global ethical challenges.]
5. *Communicate complex ideas effectively.* [This course involves a strong writing component that emphasizes revision. Your goal will be to produce an essay which will combine sophisticated analytical reasoning as well as clear, effective prose.]

In addition to the standard SLOs for a critical thinking seminar, upon completion students enrolled in this course will have:

- \* gained knowledge of basic arguments types and common argumentative fallacies
- \* a basic understanding of the difference between inductive and deductive inference
- \* learned to employ the tools mentioned above in order to evaluate arguments critically and analytically
- \* familiarity with leading moral theories and the objections and challenges facing such theories

A variety of different strategies will be used to help bring about the desired SLOs. A sampling of strategies we will be pursuing is listed below:

- The technique of *contrasting cases* will be utilized in both homework writing assignments and i-clicker-based class activities. (SLO 1,2,3, and 4)
- There will be an emphasis on *metacognition* in assignments and classroom exercises. (SLO 2,3, and 4)
- The course will encourage students to engage in *self-regulated learning* through writing projects that involves significant revision, peer evaluation, and self evaluation. (SLO 1,4,5)
- The course will involve the instructor *modeling* critical thinking in a variety of contexts (in lecture, discussion, and in feedback provided to the student on assignments). (SLO 3, 4)

## **Schedule of Readings**

### **Section One: A primer on logic and critical thinking**

Week One: *The nature of argumentation and common fallacies in reasoning*

Assignment: You will be taking the “California” critical thinking exam in this first week of classes.

Reading: “Introduction [to *Knowledge, Nature, Norms*]” (Mark Timmons & David Shoemaker, on reserve)

Week Two: *Deduction (Validity, Soundness), Induction (Strong, Weak)*

Reading: “A little bit of logic” (online)

First Exam

### **Section Two: An introduction to moral theory**

Week Three: *Introduction to Moral Theory and Normative Ethics*

Readings: “Right and Wrong” (Thomas Nagel, on reserve); “What is Morality” (James Rachels, on reserve); “Introduction” (Russ Shafer-Landau, on reserve)

Week Four: *Moral Skepticism Evaluated*

Readings: “The Challenge of Cultural Relativism” (James Rachels, on reserve); “The Truth in Relativism” (Bernard Williams, on reserve); Excerpt from *The Last Word* (Thomas Nagel, on reserve)

First paper topic due

Week Five: *Consequentialist Ethics*

Readings: John Stuart Mill, "Utilitarianism" (in *White*); Bernard Williams, "Against Utilitarianism" (on reserve); Peter Railton, "Alienation, Consequentialism, and the Demands of Morality" (on reserve)

Week Six: *Deontological Ethics*

Readings: Immanuel Kant, "The Categorical Imperative" (in *White*); Christine Korsgaard, "Introduction [to The Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals]" (on reserve); "Kantian Ethics" (Julia Driver, on reserve)

Rough draft of first paper due

Week Seven: *Virtue-based Ethics*

Readings: Aristotle, "Happiness and Virtue" (in *White*); "Virtue and Happiness in *Groundhog Day*" (Kupfer, on reserve)

Second Exam

### **Section Three: Global Ethical Challenges Evaluated**

Week Eight: *Global Poverty and Duties to the Poor*

Readings: Peter Singer "Famine, Affluence, and Morality" (in *Pogge*), Peter Unger, "Living High and Letting Die" (in *Pogge*), Frances Kamm, "Harming People in Peter Unger's *Living High and Letting Die*" (on reserve); Onora O'Neill "Rights, Obligations, and World Hunger" (in *Pogge*)

Week Nine: *Global Warming and Environmental Ethics*

Readings: Robert Hood, "Global Warming" (in *White*); Bjorn Lomborg, "The Cost of Global Warming" (in *White*); Andrew Light, "Pragmatism and Climate Change" (on reserve)

Week Ten: *Nationalism and Cosmopolitanism*

Readings: Alasdair MacIntyre, "Is Patriotism a Virtue?" (in *Pogge*); Avishai Margalit & Joseph Raz, "National Self-Determination" (in *Pogge*); Thomas Hurka, "The Justification of National Partiality" (in *Pogge*); Jeff McMahan, "The Limits of National Partiality" (on reserve)

Final draft of first paper due / Topic for second paper due

Week Eleven: *Global Justice and Sexual Ethics*

Readings: Susan Moller Okin, "Gender Inequality and Cultural Differences" (in *Pogge*); Alison M. Jaggar, "'Saving Anima': Global Justice for Women and Intercultural

Dialogue” (in *Pogge*); Martha Nussbaum, “Women and Human Development (excerpt)” (on reserve)

Week Twelve: *War and Terrorism*

Readings: Thomas Nagel, “War and Massacre” (on reserve); David Luban, “Just War and Human Rights” (in *Pogge*); Michael Walzer, “The Moral Standing of States: A Response to Four Critics” (in *Pogge*); Jeff McMahan, “Rethinking Just War” (online)

Rough draft of second paper due

Week Thirteen: *Freedom of Speech and Censorship*

Readings: Plato, “The Republic (excerpts)” (on reserve); John Stuart Mill, “On Liberty” (on reserve); Rae Langton, “Beyond Belief: Pragmatics in Hate Speech and Pornography” (on reserve); David van Mill, “Freedom of Speech” (SEP, online)

Week Fourteen: *Religious Toleration*

Readings: Rainer Forst, “Religious Toleration” (SEP, online); Joseph Raz, “Autonomy, Toleration, and the Harm Principle” (on reserve); Philip L. Quinn, “Religious Diversity and Religious Toleration” (on reserve)

Assignment: You will once again be taking the “California” critical thinking exam in this final week of classes.

Final draft of second paper due

Third (Final) Exam