This course deals with fascinating and controversial moral issues. We will investigate the best arguments on issues such as wealth and poverty, affirmative action, competition, drug legalization, and organ donation and sales.

We will also discuss theoretical issues in ethics—for example, the debates over egoism and altruism, relativism and universalism, rights, virtue, and justice. Understanding those is crucial to evaluating arguments on applied issues such as affirmative action and organ sales.

Course Resources (required)

Stephen Hicks, *Ethics Course Modules*. At my website.
Jason Hill, *Becoming Cosmopolitan*. Available at Amazon, the RU Bookstore, and other places.
Bartley Madden, *Value-Creation Thinking*. Available only at Amazon.

This semester we will have seven guest speakers. Your course assignments will make central their writings and their visits to Rockford University.

- Dr. Jennifer Dirmeyer, Assistant Professor of Economics, Ferris State University, Michigan (Jan 29)
- Zach Meiborg, CEO, Silver-Arrow Corporation, Illinois (Feb 7)
- Bartley Madden, VP (retired), Credit Suisse (Feb 16)
- Dr. Shawn Klein, Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Arizona State University (Feb 21)
- Dr. Peter Jaworski, Assistant Professor of Business Ethics, Georgetown University, Washington, DC (Mar 16)
- Dr. Jason Hill, Professor of Philosophy, DePaul University, Illinois (Apr 4)
- Dr. Marta Podemska-Mikluch, Assistant Professor of Economics, Gustavus Adolphus College, Minnesota (Apr 25 or 27)

Goals of the Course

To improve your Knowledge, Skills, and Habits.

*Knowledge*: Major issues and major thinkers in Ethics.

*Skills*: Listening, Note-taking, Reading, Interpretation, Argument, Speaking, Writing, Technology-use, Sociability.

*Habits*: Commitment, Perseverance, Self-reliance, Dependability, Timely completion.

Four Principles of Respect

1. As your professor, I am a *resource* and not your boss, father, or an enforcer. I will not make you do anything. Rather, I will help you achieve your course goals and register how much you accomplish.
2. If I have not read the material and prepared, I will not come to class. If you have not read the material and prepared, you will not come to class.
3. If I do not have the reading material with me, I will not come to class. If you do not have the reading material with you, you will not come to class.
4. I will use electronic devices only for course-relevant purposes in class. You will use electronic devices only for course-relevant purposes in class.

Evaluation

In this course, we will cover seven broad topics. You will do one assignment for each topics plus an integrated final portfolio.

You will have much discretion in what you read, how much research you do, and the type of assignments you submit for evaluation.

Types of assignments: (1) 15-minute live speaker discussion/interview and transcription, or (2) argumentative essays, or (3) in-class debate and transcription. Each assignment will be due the class day following the speaker’s visit.

On the two speaker interview/discussions: You’ll do at least two of these. You will be part of a two- or three-person team that prepares, conducts, records, and transcribes the interview.

On the argumentative essays: These will be 750-word essays. About 250 words arguing one side of the issue, 250 words arguing the/an other side of the issue, and 250 words of your informed opinion.

On the in-class debates: If you and your partner would like to prepare and present a formal, 15-minute debate on a topic, we will arrange class time for that, typically the day before the speaker arrives.

We will not have a final exam. Instead, for your final assignment, you will integrate your seven items into one portfolio. Submit your integrated portfolio to me on the date assigned by the Registrar for our final exam. (“Integrated” is a loaded concept here, so be sure to ask.)

Email your assignments to my dedicated Gmail account: PHIL122.Writings@gmail.com. Note: Do not attach your writings to your email. Instead cut-and-paste them into the body of your email. The email filter will automatically delete emails with attachments.

Weighting: Each assignment is worth 12%. Your final portfolio is worth 16%. I use the standard grading scale: 90-100% is the A range, 80-89% is the B range, and so on.

Schedule and Resources (subject to change)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Resources</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 17</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Are You Rich or Poor? items at Ethics Course Modules.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 22</td>
<td>Wealth and poverty</td>
<td>Why Are Some Wealthy and Some Not? items at Ethics Course Modules</td>
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<td>Jan 29</td>
<td>Guest speaker Jennifer Dirmeyer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 31</td>
<td>Technology, robotics, and their implications for human values</td>
<td>What Does Automation Imply for Your Life? items at Ethics Course Modules</td>
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<td>Feb 5</td>
<td>Independent work</td>
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<td>Feb 7</td>
<td>Guest speaker Zach Meiborg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 9</td>
<td>Moral principles of production and distribution</td>
<td>Egoism, Predation, or Altruism? items at Ethics Course Modules</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 16</td>
<td>Guest speaker Bartley Madden</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 19</td>
<td>Competition and cooperation</td>
<td>Competition and/or Cooperation? items at Ethics Course Modules</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 21</td>
<td>Guest speaker Shawn Klein</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 23</td>
<td>Independent work</td>
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Feb 26 | Ethics of freedom and self-control | Freedom and Self-ownership [items at Ethics Course Modules]
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Mar 5 | Spring Break | 
Mar 12 | Ethics of freedom and self-control, continued | Freedom and Self-ownership [items at Ethics Course Modules]
| Mar 16: Guest speaker Peter Jaworski | 
Mar 19 | Moral individualism, collectivism, and identity | Individualism and Collectivism [items at Ethics Course Modules]
| Mar 28: Independent work | 
| Apr 4: Guest speaker Jason Hill | 
Apr 6 | On legalizing drugs | Drug Legalizing [items at Ethics Course Modules]
Apr 16 | Personal health, business, and government ethics | Health Care [items at Ethics Course Modules]
| Apr 25 or 27: Guest speaker Marta Podemska-Mikluch | 
Apr 30 | May 2 and 4: Independent work on integrated portfolio. | 
May ? | Final assignment due on the date for our final exam. Consult the university’s Exam Week Schedule. | 

A copy of this syllabus and schedule can also be found at [www.StephenHicks.org](http://www.StephenHicks.org).
For Honor Code and Disability issues, consult the University’s website.

“The measure of a man’s real character is what he would do if he knew he would never be found out.”
(Thomas Macaulay)

**Syllabus Statements Mandated by Administrators and Accreditation Agency**

Accommodations Statement: If you believe you are eligible to receive any type of academic accommodation, through such federal laws as the ADA, please contact the Lang Center for Health, Wellness, Counseling and Disabilities Services at 815-226-4083. The Lang staff manages disability services for Rockford University.

Academic Honor Code Statement: In this course, the policies and procedures concerning the Honor Code, including the definitions of cheating and plagiarism as they appear in the current Rockford University Handbook, will be applicable.

Senior Day Policy Statement: All students are excused from class for “senior day.”

Academic Concern with this Course: From the Provost’s office: “Meet with the course professor to discuss your concern. If the issue is not resolved, then you may follow the chain-of-command: Department Chair, the Dean of your College, and the University Provost, in that order. To appeal a final course grade, complete the grade appeal form (located on the Portal under forms/undergraduate student documents or graduate student documents). A description of the grade appeal process is included on p. 55 of the Academic Catalog.”

Workload Expectations: This 3-credit course will meet for 50 minutes per session three times a week throughout the semester. A minimum of 2-3 hours of student preparation time outside of class is expected for each credit hour. Thus, please be prepared to devote 9-12 hours per week to this course (range includes in- and outside-class time).