

**PHL 379A Ethics & Decision Making: Visions, Values and Virtues for Leadership
Fall 2005**

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Office: Philosophy House 101**

The Philosophy House is on *corner of E. Haggard Street* (across from the Science Building)
and N. Antioch Street (across from the tennis courts).

It is two houses east of the Holland House; one house east of Sociology House.

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesdays: 11:00-12:00; Mondays (but not Wed.) also 3:30-4:30
Tuesdays and Thursdays: 3:00-4:00. Other times by appointment.

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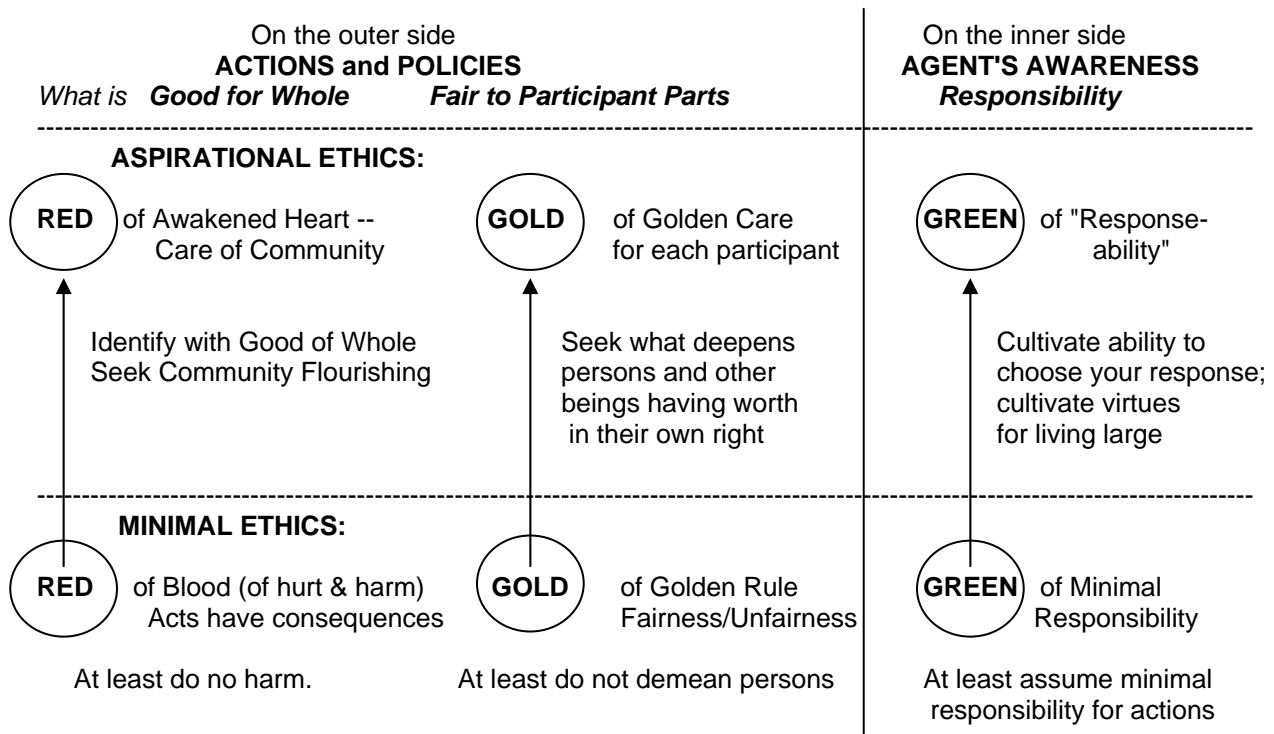
Designed as part of a proposed leadership minor, this course will introduce students to the field of ethics with an emphasis on its application to decision making and leadership. We will explore nested contexts for decision making – interpersonal, institutional and environmental; use criteria for ethical assessment (e.g., what is good for the whole and fair to each participant-part in each context); and provide scope for ethical practice by means of a modest (10 hour) service learning component and case studies.

I. A View of Ethics: We begin our work together with this mission statement for ethics:

**To come to life more fully
so as to act more wisely and more effectively
to reduce suffering and promote possibility for our common life.**

This accents several key features: (a) that ethics has a **positive aim** -- to come to live more fully, to live in large-minded ways; (b) that ethics centers on **both attitude and action** -- to act more wisely and more effectively; (c) that ethics looks beyond self **to promote our common life**; (d) that ethics serves our common life **by reducing unnecessary suffering and promoting creative possibility**.

To think of ethics, consider my model of a **Traffic Light**:



The movement of ethics is from **ego-centered** to **society-centered** to **world-inclusive** -- with a deep understanding of what is good for the whole and fair to the parts.

The movement is also from **minimal ethics** to **aspirational ethics**. This involves two shifts:

- (a) from extrinsic motivators (reward/punishment; praise/blame) to intrinsic guides (based on the nature of communities & the dignity of persons and other life forms within the communities)
- (b) from an outside perspective (how is this effecting ME?) to an expanded inside perspective (a WE perspective -- how is this effecting us – the relational field and those in it).

Ethics demands **commitment**. It looks to **ethical criteria** (class mission; what is good for the whole and fair to the participant parts). It looks to the **facts of the case**. It demands careful thinking about the norms or criteria and about the facts of the case. Hence, such an ethics is capable of ongoing revision.

In simplified form, philosophical ethics demands 4 C's: (a) **commitment**, (b) **ethical criteria**, (c) **case-specific facts** [or the facts of the case], and (d) **careful thinking** [or careful and compassionate thinking].

II. Goals of the Course: To give to student leaders:

- A. a map to appreciate the levels of life –

Largest Worldview includes all forms of life - Planetary Domain:

Here we need to think in terms of worldviews as epochs, specifically

Modern Worldview	moving to	Emerging Ecological Worldview
c. 1500 CE to mid- 20 th century		mid-20 th century on
key theme: co-creating a sustainable world with justice (what is good for the whole and fair to the participant parts) between humans and other species, between humans and humans, between this generation and future generations		

Middle Realm: life in organizations : Institutional Domain:

The Big Four plus One = governmental -- educational -- economic - religious institutions plus the family – each with its “corporate” culture or MVP framework

key theme: to collaborate in fostering sustainable institutions that are good for the whole and fair to their participant parts.

Smallest Realm of life with others: Interpersonal Domain:

my participation in various kinds of one-to-one relationships - friendships, family memberships, colleagueships.

key theme: leadership as sustaining and enlivening partnerships for the sake of the whole and the participant parts.

- B. a way of moving from ego-centered to society-centered to world-inclusive perspectives -- with a growing orientation to **what is good for the whole** and **fair to the participant parts** in each domain.
- C. an beginning overview of ethical theories: **rule-based, rights-based, virtue-based**
- D. practical habits of mind and heart such that students leaders can begin
 - ◆ to live a larger life with attention to their own language and emotional filters
 - ◆ to choose more wisely and effectively to reduce unnecessary suffering and promote creative possibility for our common life, and
 - ◆ to reason by appeal to ethical criteria and the facts of the case, thus allowing principled revision and change.

- Objectives:** At the end of this course, student leaders will be able to
- a) articulate the distinctions involved in the domains outlined above,
 - b) begin to be aware of cultural, corporate and interpersonal conversations that are too small to live in and realize some of the shifts needed to enlarge them,
 - c) at the personal level, begin to have a sense of living large, of choosing more wisely and more effectively, and of reducing suffering and promoting possibility for our common life,
 - d) at the policy level, utilize ethical criteria (e.g. what is good for the whole and fair to each participant part) plus factual evidence to make better judgments concerning what will serve our common life.

REQUIRED READING:

John G. Sullivan, **Living Large: Transformative Work at the Intersection of Ethics and Spirituality** (Laurel, MD: Tai Sophia Institute for the Healing Arts, 2004)
 Peter Senge, C. Otto Scharmer, Joseph Jaworski, Betty Sue Flowers **Presence: Human Purpose and the Field of the Future** (Cambridge, MA: The Society for Organizational Learning, Inc., 2004)
 Rosamund Stone Zander and Benjamin Zander, **The Art of Possibility** (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2000)
 James Rachels, **The Elements of Moral Philosophy** (New York: McGraw Hill College, 4th edition, 2001) plus additional enrichment material.

GRADING:

1) HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS ----- a possible 30 points

DOING HOMEWORK FAITHFULLY IS A DISCIPLINE. Homework questions are the basis for class discussion. The homework assignments will be collected on EACH CLASS DAY. **There are 20 assignments each worth 1 1/2 points each.** The homework adds up to 30 points. Except for cases where a student has missed class with a valid excuse, ASSIGNMENTS HANDED IN LATE WILL GAIN NO CREDIT. ALL HOMEWORK SHOULD BE TYPED. For homework assignments, go to <http://www.elon.edu/sullivan> and scroll down to Ethical Practice. Click on course and a menu page will come up for this semester's Ethical Practice. Syllabus and assignments and enrichment material may be accessed via this menu page.

Please hand in **hard copies** of the homework. Only in BIG emergencies will I accept homework as email attachments. Our department budget does not support printing out large quantities of email attachments.

2) One Mid-term Exam ----- worth 18 points

The exam will be given on **Monday, October 3rd**. PLEASE NOTE: THERE WILL BE NO MAKE-UP IF THIS TEST IS MISSED. For very serious reasons, permission will be given for an 8-10 page typed paper to be written in place of the missed test.

3) Service Learning Component -- ten hours of service -----worth 10 points

Ethics is meant to move you to live a larger life -- to move you **from a Pre-Copernican stance** (the world revolves around you) to a **Copernican stance** (you are a part of larger units than yourself). And you can make a difference to those larger units! The Elon Office of Service Learning will provide a list of venues and you will be able to choose among them. The purpose of this requirement is (a) to move you outside your own world and (b) to put you in contact with some whom you would not ordinarily interact with -- broadening your horizon. It is also a hands-on testing of the ethical worldview and practices we are learning.

4) A Reflective Paper on your Service Learning (minimum six typed page) ----- worth 10 points

I will give you instructions on the form of this paper. It will ask you to report on the interpersonal experiences you had. Then it will ask you to "pull back the camera" and look at the institutional aspects of this problem-area and the cultural aspects as well. Why in one of the richest nations on the planet do we have these pressing human needs that are often unmet? **The paper is due on Monday, Nov. 14th.**

(3) One Group Presentation on a case study ----- worth 8 points

Each group presentation will explore a case study in ethical decision making. Presentations are scheduled as follows: the Red and Orange groups on Wed. Nov. 16; the Yellow and Green groups on Mon. Nov. 21; the Blue and Indigo Groups on Mon. Nov. 28; and the Violet and Ultra-Violet groups on Wed. Nov. 30. Cases and instructions for the group presentations will be given separately.

(4) Cumulative Final Examination --- given in Final Exam period ----- worth 24 points

The Grading System at a Glance

Homework - 20 assignments @ 1 1/2 points each = a possible	30 points
Mid-term Exam (Oct. 3rd) = a possible	18 points
Service Learning -- ten hours -- worth	10 points
Service Learning Reflective Paper (min. 6 pages) -- due Nov. 14	10 points
Group Presentation = a possible	8 points
Final Examination in exam period = a possible	<u>24 points</u>
TOTAL	100 POINTS

IV. Attendance, Preparation, Participation:

FAITHFUL ATTENDANCE IS ESSENTIAL. UNEXCUSED ABSENCES WILL BE PENALIZED AT THE RATE OF ONE POINT OFF FOR EACH. For absences to be excused, please report them to me within a day on either side of a missed class. Otherwise you will be penalized. You may phone me and leave message on my office phone 278-5697 or contact me via my e-mail address: sullivan@elon.edu This is an elementary courtesy that adults are expected to show to one another when engaged in collaborative work. **NOTE: Absences the day before or the day after a break will be penalized, even if you call in. Elon policy speaks strongly against such absences.**

Be responsible -- both for your presence and absence. **Ethics is collaborative in nature; your presence and participation matter!** Show up, be prepared and deepen your life.

Ethics & Decision Making—first two Homework Assignments --- Fall 2005

(A) Homework answers should be **brief essays** -- no less than 1/2 page single-spaced/ no more than one page for each question. If you double-space, think of each answer to be about a page.

[Thus, writing three essays will require more than one page!]

ALL HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE TYPED AND THE PAGES STAPLED TOGETHER. Please invest in a small stapler.

You are free to do constructive critique, comparisons, applications to your own experience, creative extensions of the ideas, etc. You may write in 3rd person or 1st person. Extend yourself; write beyond your first stopping point. Use all that you know and more. Be creative and insightful and interesting!

(B) The homework answers will be **collected at the end of each class.** Each day's homework is worth 1 1/2 points; the 2 assignments for a week are worth THREE points. Over the course of the semester you can earn 30 points -- a full three letter grades! -- just by faithfully doing your daily work. **ASSIGNMENTS HANDED IN LATE WILL GAIN NO CREDIT, unless you have called within 24 hours of missing a class to report that you will be or were absent.** Please hand in **hard copies** of the homework. Only in BIG emergencies will I accept homework as email attachments.

(C) If something is bubbling up in your life that has relevance to our work, you may substitute a "Wild Card" for **one only** of the three questions on a particular homework. Some of the best learning results from such reflection on what you are facing in the moment.

(D) Please title each set of homework questions as below: Assignment 1 (for Wed. August 31st).

Assignment 1: Given Wed. August 31st for Mon. Sept. 5th: Read Living Large, Introduction, pp. 1-24 plus Appendix 17 (XVII) and Appendix 16 (XVI) in that order. Reflect on the material and answer the three questions below:

1. The Introduction suggests a renewed ethics along the horizontal axis of time unfolding through epochs and an expanded spirituality along a vertical axis of contact with the timeless source. What is your view of ethics? How would you explain it to a friend? How might your view of ethics be challenged and renewed by the view presented here? What is your view of spirituality? How is this like and unlike the view presented here? Discuss.
2. On page 19, I introduce three nested or concentric domains and on page 273 – Appendix 16, I summarize differences between the Modern Worldview and the Emerging Ecological Worldview. [Appendix 17 provides a still wider view.] Pick one of the domains (a relationship or an institution or the planetary web of life) and explain what it would be like to think of that domain first in light of the modern worldview and then in the light of the emerging ecological worldview. Be concrete and specific. Don't just repeat what is in the book!
3. Write a personal essay on the Frederick Buechner quote at the beginning of the introductory chapter (p.13). How might that threshold involve ethics and spirituality? Answer creatively.

Assignment 2: Given Mon. Sept. 5th for Wed. Sept. 7th. Read Living Large, chapters 1-3, pp. 27-64. Answer three of the questions below:

1. Discuss the story of the slave who became king. How are you and others enslaved day-by-day? What is needed, day-by-day, to become free? Discuss.
2. Explain the fundamental distinction and the four steps that aid us to move from small mind-and-heart to larger mind-and-heart.
3. Answer either 3a or 3b: (3a) Explain how each domain (and the conversation or MVP aspect of that domain) can be approach in small mind or in large mind. Give concrete examples for each domain. OR (3b) Suppose each domain is thought of as a lake. Show how the analogy of the lake might apply to each domain – from surface to midpoint to depth and back up again.

FOR FURTHER HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS, SEE <http://www.elon.edu/sullivan> and scroll down to Ethics and Decision Making. Clicking on the course will take you to the course Menu Page and from there to Assignments.

May Our Time Together Enlighten Our Minds and Enkindle Our Hearts
For The Good Of All Beings.

To find our calling is to find the intersection
between our own deep gladness
and the world's deep hunger. Frederick Buechner

The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality. The last is to say thank you. In between the two, the leader must become a servant and a debtor. That sums up the progress of an artful leader.

The signs of outstanding leadership appear primarily among the followers. Are the followers reaching their potential? Are they learning? Serving? Do they achieve the required results? Do they change with grace? Manage conflict?

Max DePree, Leadership is an Art