

**WAYLAND BAPTIST UNIVERSITY  
VIRTUAL CAMPUS  
SCHOOL OF RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY**

**Wayland Baptist University Mission Statement**

Wayland Baptist University exists to education students in an academically challenging, learning-focused and distinctively Christian environment for professional success and service to God and humankind.

**Course and Number (PHIL 4319) (VC01)**

***ETHICS***

**Spring 2014**

This document may also be accessed at [www.wbuwf.com](http://www.wbuwf.com).

**Instructor:** J. Jeffrey Tillman-- [Curriculum Vitae](#)

**Instructor Information**

- **Phone:** 940-855-4322
- **Email:** james.tillman@wayland.wbu.edu
- **Office Hours:** 3:00-6:00 PM M-Th
- **Office Location:** 426 5<sup>th</sup> Ave., suite 7, Sheppard AFB, TX 76311

**Class Time and Location:** Virtual Campus

**Catalog Description:** Introduction to the classical and biblical theories of ethics with their application to moral and social problems.

**Prerequisite:** RLGN 1301 and RLGN 1302

**Required Textbooks and Resources**

- Russ Shafer-Landau, *The Fundamentals of Ethics*

**Course Outcome Competencies:**

**Students will**

1. articulate the nature, method, and scope of ethics, as well as how ethics fits within the other subdivisions of philosophy.
2. Understand and articulate the nature and claims of the theories of utilitarianism, Kantian duty theory, social contract theory, natural law, and virtue ethics, and how each of these impinge upon Christian ethics.
3. Understand and articulate the most significant objections to these theories.
4. Understand and articulate the nature and claims of the meta-ethical theories of moral nihilism (both emotivist and error theories), moral relativism, and moral objectivism.
5. Understand and articulate the most powerful objections to these theories.
6. Write clearly argued ethical analysis paper.
7. Clearly identify, analyze, and evaluate their own ethical reasoning as it occurs in their daily lives.

**Attendance Requirements**

Any student absent 25 percent or more of the online course, i.e., non-participatory during 3 or more weeks of an

11 week term, may receive an F for that course. Instructors may also file a Report of Unsatisfactory Progress for students with excessive non-participation. Any student who has not actively participated in an online class prior to the census date for any given term is considered a "no-show" and will be administratively withdrawn from the class without record. To be counted as actively participating, it is not sufficient to log in and view the course. The student must be submitting work as described in the course syllabus.

### **Disability Statement**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), it is the policy of Wayland Baptist University that no otherwise qualified person with a disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any education program or activity in the university. The Coordinator of Counseling Services serves as the coordinator of students with a disability and should be contacted concerning accommodation requests at (806) 291-3765. Documentation of a disability must accompany any request for accommodations.

### **Course Requirements:**

All assignments, unless otherwise stated, are due on the Saturday of the week they are assigned at 11:59 P.M. C.S.T.

**Feedback:** All assignments will be completed/uploaded through Blackboard. Feedback on assignments will be provided through the same platform. To access feedback on any assignment, click on the grade in the grade book and continue following the screens, clicking on the underlined grade till you find feedback entered into a feedback field or a file I have uploaded with comments provided.

**Quizzes:** There will be 11 quizzes over the course of the term. Each will be over the assigned reading for that week. They will each be worth 25 points, and will consist of around 10 questions. These quizzes are non-proctored, and will be available on Blackboard, but there will be a 30 minute time limit on the quiz. The quizzes will be available on Monday of the week they are due, and then close by 11:59 PM on Saturday of the week they are due. I will reopen the quizzes only under exceptional circumstances.

**Chapter Question Blogs:** Each week has a dedicated blog on Blackboard. For each week there are a series of discussion questions. An assignment list will be posted in the Announcements during the first week indicating which students should answer which two questions. Each question should have an answer of at least 200 words, but many questions will require more words for complete credit, and may require follow up submissions in response to comments that I make on the blog. The text of the question being answered should appear before the answer. These answers/responses should be posted by the Wednesday of each week at 6 PM C.S.T. By Saturday at 11:59 P.M. C.S.T. each student should submit at least a 75 word response to another student's response. These should be critical comments regarding the other student's success or failure in addressing the assigned question. These responses should be posted to the other student's blog as well as your own blog. (See this link for an example of how to post the response to the blog: [copyandpaste example](#).) The assignments of what student's question to respond to on what week will also be posted to the Announcements. The posts and the responses should reflect an insightful reading and understanding of the book material. Each group of posts and responses is worth 20 points. The blogs will be available on Monday of the week they are due, and then close by 11:59 PM on Saturday of the week they are due. I will reopen the blogs only under exceptional circumstances.

**Blogs on My Comments on Your Weekly Chapter Blogs:** There are 10 of the blogs which involve each student posting a reaction to my comments on his/her blogs for the previous week. The student should begin with a summary of what my statement is that he/she is responding to. These are due the week after the respective blog is due, and therefore there is

no blog of this type for the reading for the last week. Each blog is worth five points.

**General Discussion Blogs:** These are blog entries regarding three classes of ethical argument that will be used on the final essay for the course. Students should post arguments of the three classes in application to the two scenarios listed, formulating one argument in support of the action and one argument in judgment of the action. Then the student should make a case for one argument being superior to the other. Each of these are worth 25 points, and are due according to the entry on the schedule grid.

**Critique of General Discussion Blogs:** On this blog, each student will be assigned to look at each of the three General Discussion Blogs of another student, and compile a detailed critique of that student's effort on the assignment. This is worth 25 points. A portion of this 25 points (8 points) will involve each student's rebuttal/response to the other student's critique of his/her General Discussion Blogs. This rebuttal/response should be posted not just to the other student's blog but to his/her own blog so I am able to track it easily. These posts are due by the assigned dates on the schedule, and in regard to the follow up, I would encourage students to post early so that there is time for some back and forth between the students regarding the postings.

**Essay—First Draft:** Read the story section of the article by Anita Catlin at

<http://www.sonoma.edu/users/c/catlin/Jehovah's%20Witnesses%20Children%20who%20Need%20Blood%20to%20Survive.pdf>

In terms of the event described in this article consider the question of whether the hospital did the ethically appropriate thing in administering the blood transfusion. In your answer, be sure to do the following: (The following is given as a guide. I'm looking for a flowing analysis; not one that merely and routinely answers the questions below.)

- A.** Begin with a paragraph introducing the problem and establishing what you plan on doing in the rest of the essay.
- B.** Explain how a utilitarian would answer the question.
  1. Define utilitarianism-both act-utilitarianism and rule based utilitarianism. Note the importance and distinction between individual utility and social utility.
  2. Construct a utilitarian argument as applied to the case that supports the hospital. (This will likely require an argument as to why emphasis upon saving physical life (as opposed to spiritual life) best serves not only individual utility but social utility.
  3. Construct another utilitarian argument as applied to the case that supports the parents. (This will require an argument indicating how an emphasis on preserving spiritual life/values preserves social utility.)
  4. Choose one of the arguments as superior and explain why it is superior. (This needs to be carefully argued and reasoned. Try to avoid choosing in terms of unstated biases.)
- C.** Explain how a duty theorist (Kant and Ross are examples) would answer the question.
  1. Define duty theory
  2. Construct one argument for duty theory as applied to the case that supports the hospital. (Emphasize universalizability and the principle of humanity)
  3. Construct another argument for duty theory as applied to the case that supports the parents. (Emphasize duties that are universalizable and involve the principle of humanity)
  4. Choose one of the arguments as superior and explain why it is superior. (This needs to be carefully argued and reasoned. Try to avoid choosing in terms of unstated biases.)
- D.** Describe how a social contract theory would approach the case question.
  1. Define social contract theory.
  2. Give one argument for social contract theory as applied to the case that supports the hospital. (From the standpoint of the Constitution (as a social contract) or an implied social contract involved in the importance of deliver of public health to a society)

3. Give one argument for social contract theory as applied to the case that supports the parents. (From the standpoint of the Constitution (as a social contract) or an implied social contract involved in the importance of deliver of public health to a society)
  4. Choose one of the arguments as superior and explain why it is superior. (This needs to be carefully argued and reasoned. Try to avoid choosing in terms of unstated biases.)
- E.** Provide a section in which you discuss the difficulties of choosing from among these three argument classes, the strengths of each and the weaknesses of each, and what you think they all may be missing. (For example, what are the difficulties in calculating social utility? Do the goods of the many outweigh the goods of the few? Is that just? What are the difficulties involved in deontology? Can universalizable values be calculated without becoming stilted? How does one choose between competing duties? What are the difficulties with social contract approaches? Are these inherently artificial because they are contrived conventions? Given the qualitative differences between these three broad approaches, how does one compare them? )
- F.** Provide a concluding paragraph which states what you did in the essay, and your general observations about the exercise.
- G.** Follow Turabian style and general rules of form, syntax, and grammar.

This assignment is worth 100 points. It should be at least 1500 words, and assembled in Turabian style according to the instructions at these university links: [Link 1](#) and [Link 2](#). The observance of rules of grammar and clear writing are important in the assessment of this assignment. Students should avoid cutting and pasting material from the book or other sources without clear documentation. This is plagiarism and should be avoided at all costs. Those who have questions about plagiarism should consult this tutorial link: [plagiarism link](#). This assignment should be uploaded to the safe assignment tab on the blackboard page. Here is the [grading rubric](#) for this assignment.

#### Essay-Second Draft

This will be a resubmission of the essay after reviewing the instructor's comments on the returned copy of the first draft. These comments should be seriously, and may require a significant revision or in fact a total rewriting of the first draft. This final draft will be graded more rigidly than the first. This assignment should be submitted as a word document attachment to the upload link on Blackboard. 100 points.

#### Course Evaluation (Method of Determining Grade)

##### Total points

Quizzes-275 points

Blog posts-220 points

General Blog Posts-100

Blog reactions to my blog comments-50

Essays-200 points

Total- 845 points

A—760-845 B—676-759 C 591-675 D—507-590 F—0-506

##### • University Grading System

| Symbol | Percentage |
|--------|------------|
| A      | 90-100     |
| B      | 80-89      |
| C      | 70-79      |
| D      | 60-69      |

F Below 60

Other symbols used for grading include:

|     |                  |   |
|-----|------------------|---|
| CR  | Credit           | Satisfactory, but without qualitative grading.  |
| NCR | No Credit        | Unsatisfactory, but without qualitative grading.  |
| I** | Incomplete       | May be given to a student who is passing, but has not completed a term paper, examination, or other required for work reasons beyond the student's control.         |
| IP  | In progress      | Assigned to a course indicating that at the conclusion of a term the course will still be in progress.  |
| X   | No grade         | No grade has been submitted by the instructor. The course grade which will replace the X must be submitted within 30 days from the beginning of the next full term. |
| W   | Withdrawal       | Course dropped or withdrawal from the University.   |
| WP  | Withdraw passing | Course dropped or withdrawal from the University after deadline to withdraw with a W and prior deadline to withdraw with a WP or WF.                                |
| WF  | Withdraw failing | Course dropped or withdrawal from the University after deadline to withdraw with a W and prior to deadline to withdraw with a WP or WF.                             |

\*\*A grade of incomplete is changed if the deficiency is made up by midterm of the next regular semester; otherwise, it becomes "F". This grade is given only if circumstances beyond the student's control prevented completion of work during the semester enrolled and attendance requirements have been met.

**Tentative Schedule:** Fill in – include the order in which material/textbook chapters will be covered, plus any other information the instructor wants to add for the semester. Also includes dates that assignments are due and dates of exams. A suggested structure for listing these is given below

**Date**                      **Subject**                      **Assignment**

| Dates               | Reading in Shafer-Landau, Chapters    | Assignments Due  |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| February 24-March 1 | Introduction, and 1-2                 | Quiz 1 due, Blog 1 Post Due  |
| March 3-8           | 3-4                                   | Quiz 2 due, Blog 2 Post Due<br>Blog on My Comments on Your Chapter Blog for Week 1                                       |
| March 17-22         | 5-6; <a href="#">Christian Ethics</a> | Quiz 3 due, Blog 3 Post Due<br>Blog on My Comments on Your Chapter Blog for week 2                                       |
| March 24-29         | 7-8                                   | Quiz 4 due, Blog 4 Post Due<br>Blog on My Comments on Your Chapter Blog for Week 3                                       |
| March 31-April 5    | 9-10                                  | Quiz 5 due, Blog 5 Post Due<br>General Blog Post (Utilitarianism)<br>Blog on My Comments on Your Chapter Blog for Week 4 |
|                     |                                       |  |

|                |       |  |
|----------------|-------|--|
| April 7-12     | 11-12 | Quiz 6 due, Blog 6 Post Due<br>General Blog Post (Deontology)<br>Blog on My Comments on Your<br>Chapter Blog for Week 5                |
| April 14-19    | 13-14 | Quiz 7 due, Blog 7 Post Due<br>General Blog Post (Social Contract<br>Theory)<br>Blog on My Comments on Your<br>Chapter Blog for Week 6 |
| April 21-26    | 15-16 | Quiz 8 due; Blog 8 Post Due, First<br>Draft of Essay<br>Blog on My Comments on Your<br>Chapter Blog for Week 7                         |
| April 28-May 3 | 17-18 | Quiz 9 due, Blog 9 Post Due<br>General Blog Post Critique<br>Blog on My Comments on Your<br>Chapter Blog for Week 8                    |
| May 5-10       | 19-20 | Quiz 10 due, Blog 10 Post Due<br>General Blog Post Critique follow<br>up<br>Blog on My Comments on Your<br>Chapter Blog for Week 9     |
| May 12-17      | 21    | Quiz 11 due, Blog 11 Post Due;<br>Final Draft of Essay<br>Blog on My Comments on Your<br>Chapter Blog for Week 10                      |

**Academic Honesty (Plagiarism):** University students are expected to conduct themselves according to the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, forgery, or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one's own work.) It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with penalties associates with plagiarism stated in the catalog on page 88.

### **Classroom Disruption**

Students who disrupt a class will be directed to leave immediately and report to the external campus executive director/dean or dean of students, who will discuss with the student the cause of the disruption. The student will return to the class only with permission of the executive director/campus dean or dean of students and faculty member involved.