

Bergen Community College  
Division of Arts & Humanities  
Department of Philosophy & Religion

**Course Syllabus**

**PHR-105 Professional Ethics**

**Basic Information about Course and Instructor**

Semester and year:  
Section Number:  
Meeting Times and Locations:

Instructor:  
Office Location:  
Phone:  
Departmental Secretary: [optional]  
Office Hours:  
Email Address:

**Course Description**

**PHR-105 Professional Ethics** is an introductory study of major philosophical and moral issues, problems, and questions arising within the healthcare, legal, and business professions. General topics of discussion may include: what counts as a profession; professional codes of conduct; the professional-client relationship; the professional-employer relationship; privacy and confidentiality; informed consent; character, regulation, and training; and collective responsibility.

3 lectures, 3 credits

General Education Course – Humanities Elective

**Student Learning Objectives:** As a result of meeting the requirements in this course, students will be able to:

1. identify and state the primary relationships between ethical theory and the professions;
2. summarize and critically explore the major theories of professional and moral responsibility;
3. use the logical and critical thinking methods of philosophy to clarify the ethical dimension in professional practices;
4. analyze common professional practices from multiple perspectives, e.g., society, business, government, clients, employers, and other stakeholders;
5. identify the various logical and ethical problems in applying moral categories and theories to professions;
6. develop practical strategies for making ethical decisions while on the job and managing conflicts between personal values and professional values;
7. critically analyze and produce a professional code of ethics; and
8. produce an analytical, expository, argumentative essay on applying a moral theory or code of ethics to a specific situation or problem in professional work.

In pursuit of the foregoing objectives, the course is based upon the reading and discussion of primary source materials by philosophers and other writers on professional ethics; the basic principles and methods of logical reasoning are introduced; the techniques of scholarly research and writing are reviewed; and students are required to do a substantial amount of expository and critical writing in response to the materials studied in the course. In addition, students may be required to participate in in-class and/or out-of-class group work. The work may involve constructing a professional ethical code and applying a professional ethical code to specific cases (case studies). The group work will contribute to the student's ability and competence to work with others on ethical matters (e.g., ethics panels, ethics boards, etc.).

The Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) in this course are intended to be aligned with as many of the college's Core Competencies and General Education Goals as possible. They are also correlated with the overall Learning Goals of the Philosophy Program. In addition, student progress in reaching the course's SLOs is to be assessed through a variety of assessment types (tools) and on the basis of a variety of assessment criteria. These alignments and correlations will be [linked here](#) in the near future. [[Back to course listing](#)]

**Special Features of the Course** (if any) [to be designated by the instructor]

E.g., the use of learning technologies in the course (Internet, PowerPoint, etc.); the inclusion of technological literacy and/or information literacy learning in the course; etc.

**Writing and Critical Thinking Requirement(s)**

Because PHR-105 is a General Education course, it requires students to complete a variety of critical thinking and writing assignments. These assignments may include class discussions and debates requiring the application of critical thinking skills, short in-class essays, out-of-class writing projects (journals, research papers, argument-analysis papers, book reviews, etc.), tests and examinations containing essay components, and so forth. Instructors will respond to and comment on students' writing in detail.

**Course Content and Sample Course Topics**

Professional ethics is a broad field, and the instructor may pick from many topics for course content. Individual instructors may choose to emphasize one field/profession (e.g., legal ethics) during a semester; however, general professional ethics material must be covered, and at least two professions must be studied. The instructor has the responsibility for insuring that course objectives as specified earlier are met. Each instructor will include a course calendar of content and due dates for major requirements as part of the Course Syllabus. The following is a set of possible course topics:

Introductory

Introduction to ethics, moral theories, moral reasoning, metaethics  
Distinctions between morality and: the law, prudence, economics, religion, obedience to authority, bias/taste (very important for professional ethics)  
Applying moral theories  
Moral dilemmas, reflective equilibrium, casuistry

General

Professions and professionalization  
Professional-client relationships  
Professional-employer relationships

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Privacy and confidentiality  
Paternalism and authority, expertise  
Social responsibility of professionals  
Character issues in the professions  
Training and regulation of professionals  
Virtues of professionals (honesty, integrity, reliability)  
Professional Codes of Conduct/Code of Ethics and ordinary morality

### I. Medical Ethics/Bioethics

- A. Life and Death
  - i. Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide, Slow Codes, Show Codes, Medical Futility
  - ii. Definitions of Death
  - ii. Abortion
  - iv. Use of Animals in Research
  - v. Advanced Directives, Medical Power of Attorney, Living Wills, DNRs
  - vi. Reproduction
  - vii. Stem Cell Research, Research on Fetuses
- B. Clinical Ethics
- C. Health Care Professionals (including nursing)
- D. Health Care
  - i. Insurance, Managed Care, and Health Care Business
  - ii. Rights to Health Care: Legal, Statutory, Moral, Political
  - iii. Distribution and Access to Health Care
  - iv. Preventive Care: Obligatory?
  - v. Hospital Ownership, Pharmaceutical and Medical Device Firms
    - a. The Profit Motive and Social Responsibility
    - b. Quality Assurance
    - c. Dealing with the FDA
    - d. Pharmaceutical Firms and Developing Nations
    - e. Drug Samples, Perks to Physicians
    - f. Biopatenting Human Genome Sequences
    - g. Disclosure
  - vi. Sale of Tissues and Organs
  - vii. Vaccination Issues
  - viii. Tobacco and Food Industry Litigation and Responsibility
- E. Research Ethics (on Human Subjects) and Medical Experimentation
  - i. Informed Consent
  - ii. Deception
  - iii. Use of Placebos
- F. Genetics
- G. Special Cases
  - i. HIV and AIDS
  - ii. Psychiatric Care and Diagnosis, Forensic Psychiatry
  - iii. Psychopharmaceuticals
  - iv. Diagnosis and Classification of Children (ADHD, ODD)
- H. Health Care Education

### II. Legal Ethics

- A. Who? Attorneys/lawyers, legal assistants, judges, court officers
- B. The Client-Lawyer Relationship
- C. Conflicts of Interest
- D. Ethics in Advocacy
- E. Lawyers for Entities
  - i. Conflicts and Confidentiality in Entity Representation
  - ii. Retaliatory Discharge and Whistle-blowing

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- F. Ethics in Negotiation and Transactional Matters
- G. Judges
- H. Avoiding and Redressing Professional Failure
- I. Lay Participation in Law Business (And Law Firm Ancillary Services)
- J. First Amendment Rights of Lawyers
- K. Marketing Legal Services
- L. Advertising
- M. Special Legal Assistant (Paralegal) Issues

### III. Business Ethics

- A. The Social Responsibilities of Business and Firms
  - i. Classical View
  - ii. Social Contract Model
  - iii. Stakeholder Model
- B. The Moral Responsibilities of Corporations
  - i. Individual Moral Accountability
  - ii. Employee Moral Accountability
  - iii. Corporate Moral Accountability
  - iv. Are Corporations Agents?
- C. Economic Justice
  - i. Distributive Justice and Utilitarianism
  - ii. Libertarian Theories
  - iii. Egalitarian Theories
  - iv. Liberal Theories
- D. Philosophy of Work Issues
  - i. Whistle-blowing
  - ii. Bribery
  - iii. Preferential Practices in Hiring and Promotion
  - iv. Employee/Employer Rights and Obligations
  - v. Sexual Harassment
  - vi. Unions, Guilds, Associations
- E. Advertising and Public Relations
- F. Government Regulation of Business
- G. Ethics of Finance (Investment and Banking)
- H. Accounting Ethics

### **Grading Policy**

Students' final grades for this course will be based upon their performance on the required work for the course (writing assignments, journals, examinations, class presentations, et cetera). Students' class participation may also be evaluated, and the grade used as one factor in determining final averages; however, class participation may count for no more than 15% of a student's final course grade.

### **Attendance Policy**

#### **BCC Attendance Policy:**

All students are expected to attend punctually every scheduled meeting of each course in which they are registered. Attendance and lateness policies and sanctions are to be determined by the instructor for each section of each course. These will be established in writing on the individual course outline. Attendance will be kept by the instructor for administrative and counseling purposes.

**Philosophy and Religion Departmental Attendance Policy:**

Students are expected to attend class regularly and punctually. Attendance will be taken at each class session. It is expected that class will be conducted such that students will benefit in their written work by the lectures and class discussion. If students occasionally arrive late, they should be encouraged to enter quietly, not disturbing the class. If students miss class, they should be encouraged to use the course calendar to stay abreast of material. It is probably a good idea for students to find study partners and to exchange telephone numbers. Make-ups for examinations should be allowed by the instructor if, in the instructor's judgment, the student has presented a good excuse for missing the work. Instructors may penalize work which is late; however, the instructor's policies for make-ups and late work must be clearly specified on the student guide.

**Attendance Policy in this Course:**

[To be designated by the instructor]

**Course Texts and/or Other Study Materials**

Professional Codes of Ethics for Study

ACA Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice  
Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct  
NASW Code of Ethics  
Ethical Standards of Human Service Professionals  
AAMFT Code of Ethics  
ABA Standards for the Defense Function  
ABA Standards for the Prosecution Function  
ABA Model Rules of Professional Responsibility  
ABA Guidelines for the Utilization of Legal Assistant Services  
Ethical Codes of the two major paralegal associations  
AMA Principles of Medical Ethics  
International Code of Medical Ethics  
World Medical Association Declaration of Helsinki  
Declaration of Geneva  
The Hippocratic Oath (many versions)  
The Nuremberg Code  
Examples of Patients' Bill of Rights  
Code for Nurses  
International Code for Nurses  
ACM/IEEE Software Engineering Code of Ethics and Professional Practice  
Examples of Appropriate Use Regulations and Policies  
Code of Ethics for Child Welfare Professionals  
American Society of Criminology (ASC) Code of Ethics  
Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS) Code of Ethics  
American Psychological Association Code of Ethics  
International Association of Police Chiefs Code of Ethics

See Also: Code of Ethics Library and Code of Ethics Toolbox

<http://www.iit.edu/departments/csep/PublicWWW/codes/>

[http://www.chowan.edu/acadp/ethics/ethics\\_toolbox.htm](http://www.chowan.edu/acadp/ethics/ethics_toolbox.htm)

Case studies should be used to help students understand theoretical issues within the actual context of professional practices. Most of the texts listed below contain relevant case studies.

## Recommended Texts

### General

- Brincat, Cynthia A., and Victoria S. Wike. *Morality and the Professional Life: Values at Work*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2000.
- Callahan, Joan C, ed. *Ethical Issues in Professional Life*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1988.
- Rowan, John R., and Samuel Zinaih, Jr. *Ethics for the Professions*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2003.

### Health Care

- Beauchamp, Tom L. and LeRoy Walters. 2003. *Contemporary Issues in Bioethics*. Belmont, CA: Thomson/Wadsworth, 2003.
- Bishop, Ann E., and John R. Scudder. *Nursing Ethics: Therapeutic Caring Presence*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1996.
- Garrett, Thomas M., Harold W. Baillie, and Rosellen M. Garrett. *Health Care Ethics : Principles and Problems*. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1998.
- Harris, John. *Bioethics*. Oxford Readings in Philosophy Series. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Horn, Peter. *Clinical Ethics Casebook*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1999.
- Munson, Ronald. *Intervention and Reflection: Basic Issues in Medical Ethics*. Sixth Edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2000.
- Teays, Wanda and Laura Martha Purdy. *Bioethics, Justice, and Health Care*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson, 2001.
- Veatch, Robert M. *The Basics of Bioethics*. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 2003.
- Kuhse, Helga and Peter Singer. *A Companion to Bioethics*. Blackwell Companions to Philosophy. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1998.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1999. *Bioethics : An Anthology*. Blackwell Philosophy Anthologies Series. Volume 9. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1999.

### Legal and Criminal Justice Ethics

- Close, Darryl, and Nicholas Meier. *Morality in Criminal Justice*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1995.
- Leighton, Paul, and Jeffrey Reiman. *Criminal Justice Ethics*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2000.
- Pollock, Jocelyn M. *Ethics in Crime and Justice: Dilemmas and Decisions*. Third Edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1998.

### Business Ethics

- Boatright, John Raymond. *Ethics and the Conduct of Business*. Fourth Edition. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 2003.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Ethics in Finance*. Foundations of Business Ethics Series, Volume 1. Malden, MA.: Blackwell, 1999.
- Bowie, Norman E. *Business Ethics : A Kantian Perspective*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1999.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Blackwell Guide to Business Ethics*. Blackwell Philosophy Guides. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002.
- Boylan, Michael. *Ethical Issues in Business*. Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1995.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Business ethics*. Basic Ethics in Action Series. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2001.
- Frederick, Robert. *A Companion to Business Ethics*. Blackwell Companions to Philosophy Series, Volume 17. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1999.
- Jackson, Jennifer C. *An Introduction to Business Ethics*. Introducing Philosophy Series. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1996.
- Steidlmeier, Paul. *People and Profits: The Ethics of Capitalism*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1992.
- Shaw, William. *Business Ethics*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1991.
- Werhane, Patricia Hogue and R. Edward Freeman. *The Blackwell Encyclopedic Dictionary of Business Ethics*. The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Management Series. Malden, MA: Blackwell Business, 1998.

**Other College, Divisional, and/or Departmental Policy Statements** [optional but recommended]

<p><u>Examples:</u> Statement on plagiarism and/or academic dishonesty. ADA statement. Sexual Harassment statement. Statement on acceptable use of BCC technology. Statement on the purpose and value of faculty office hours.</p>
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**Student and Faculty Support Services** [optional but recommended]

List support services, e.g., the Writing Center, the Math Lab, the Tutorial Center, Online Writing Lab (OWL), Office of Specialized Services, etc. Include information on the BCC Library.

Example:

**Student and Faculty Support Services**

The Distance Learning Office – for any problems you may have accessing your online courses	Room C-334	201-612-5581 <a href="mailto:psimms@bergen.edu">psimms@bergen.edu</a>
Smarthinking Tutorial Service	On Line at:	<a href="http://www.bergen.edu/library/learning/tutor/smart/index.asp">www.bergen.edu/library/learning/tutor/smart/index.asp</a>
The Tutoring Center	Room S-118	201-447-7908
The Technology Assisted Learning Lab (Math and English)	Room C-110	201-447-7988
The Writing Center	Room C-110	201-447-7136
The Online Writing Lab (OWL)		<a href="http://www.bergen.edu/owl">www.bergen.edu/owl</a>
The Office of Specialized Services (for Students with Disabilities)	Room S-153	201-612-5270
The Sidney Silverman Library – Reference Desk	Room L-226	201-447-7436

**Include the following statement on Logos – The BCC Philosophy Club**

**Logos – The BCC Philosophy Club**

Logos usually meets on Tuesdays during the Activities Period, 12:30-1:25 PM, in Room L-342. I encourage you to join the club. Since you are interested in the study of philosophy, you should find the meetings and other activities of the philosophy club very interesting. For further information, check the Philosophy & Religion bulletin board adjacent to Room L-325A or contact LOGOS Advisor, Dr. Vanda Bozicevic (L-331, 201-493-7528, [vbozicevic@bergen.edu](mailto:vbozicevic@bergen.edu)). (LOGOS does not hold regular meetings during the summer.)

**Include a Course Outline and Calendar** [can be combined in a single syllabus section]

The Course Outline and Calendar must include all of the following elements:

- A daily or (at least) weekly schedule of topics to be covered.
- Dates for exams, quizzes, or other means of assessment. (This does not mean that all evaluation of students must be in groups and at the same time. Exams and other means of assessment can be listed as "to be scheduled individually.")

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- Due dates for major assignments – e.g., when is a paper due; if the topic has to be approved, when; if an outline or draft is an interim step, when it is due.
- Any required special events must be included in the outline/calendar, e.g., a lecture by a visiting speaker, a dramatic or musical performance, a field trip.
- Designation of Student Learning Objectives – by number – for each topic (see sample below).
- A note to students stating that the course outline and calendar is tentative and subject to change, depending upon the progress of the class.

**Sample Format for Combined Course Outline and Calendar**

**Note to Students:** The following Course Outline and Calendar is tentative and subject to change, depending upon the progress of the class.

<b>Week(s)</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>	<b>Topic/Activity</b>	<b>Learning Objectives</b>	<b>Assignments/Events</b>
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				

**SAMPLE COURSE OUTLINE AND CALENDAR**

**Note:** This section of the departmental syllabus is under revision in order to bring it into conformity with the (relatively new) BCC policy on the layout and content of syllabi for general education courses.