Montgomery College-Rockville Campus
Department of RD, ESL, and PL
PL 201-33076 Morality and Contemporary Law

Instructor Information
Prof. Chris Collins
Phone -(240) 567-7427
Email: Do not use Blackboard email! Use christopher.collins@montgomerycollege.edu
Office-MT 405
Office-MT 405 Office Hours-
Tuesday/Thursday 11:00-12:15Tuesday 4:00-5:30
Sunday (Virtual) 7:00-9:00PM

office Hours are available by appointment as well

Classes
Phil140 DL-Web
Phil140 DL-Web
Phil 101 T 6:30-9:25 HUM 207
Phil 101 TR 2:00-3:30 HUM 103
Phil 201 TR 12:30-1:55 SB 210

Catalog
A course in applied ethics, this an examination of some social issues which are of current interest from the legal/ethical viewpoint, e.g., privacy, crime and punishment, civil and human rights, victimless crimes, police and court practice, sexual and medical practice, freedom and authority. An attempt will be made to view these contemporary problems in a historical perspective. The student is encouraged and expected to know facts, think logically, and develop an independent sense of critical judgment. Three hours each week. 3 semester hours

General Objectives
1. to examine controversial issues in law and public policy from the moral perspective
2. in order to engage the material of #1, students will be introduced to the foundations of moral thinking:
   -normative and nonnormative approaches
   -liberal theories: deontology, utility, contract theory
   -virtue theory and communitarian theory

Specific Objectives
1. understand the foundations of moral philosophy :
   -terms and concepts
   -the tasks and interests of moral philosophy
2. examination of the definition of laws and The Law; discussion of the notion of a “good law”
3. discussion of these basic ideas:
   -law and morality
   -justice and law
   -rights, freedom and equality
   -power, authority and obedience
4. consideration of the following:
   a. law and policy issues concerning privacy, speech and religious practices
      - practice and establishment of religion
      - censorship of speech
      - censorship of electronic media
      - journalism and freedom of the press
      - sexual practices and other issues of life-style preferences
   b. law and policy issues concerning issues of criminal justice: punishment; treatment of the
      accused: punishment and prison conditions; capital punishment
   c. law and policy issues concerning life issues: suicide and care for the dying; abortion;
      punishment; quality of life for persons on the edges of society
   d. laws and policy issues concerning war, the nuclear threat; possibility of justified armed
      conflict; law and policy issues concerning ecology and the environment; the animal rights
      movement; obligations for the future

Required Textbooks:
Camp, Julie Van. Ethical Issues in the Courts: 2nd edition Wadsworth/Thompson
Arthur. Morality and Moral Controversies 7th or 8th editions

**our classroom**
Philosophy is, in part, a social process. Philosophy’s development and continuation depends
upon fostering a free and open exchange among individuals. In this spirit, respect for the ideas of
others is the Golden Rule. Speaking and reading in public requires fortitude and courage, so
when a fellow student displays those qualities by sharing his/her work with us, our respect and
admiration must be given to them at all times. At times, the process of philosophy is an
expression of our individual identities and personal beliefs, these qualities should never be taken
lightly. The bottom line, always remember and employ the Golden Rule.

**expectations and grades**
All students are expected to complete all of the assignments required for this course. Failure to
complete all assignments can be considered wasted opportunities. These assignments are merely
opportunities for you to showcase your individual abilities as a scholar and lover of wisdom.
Make certain you take advantage of all of these opportunities! 20% of your course grade will
be dependent upon these assignments. A comprehensive mid-term and final examination will
comprise 40% of your final grade.

Class attendance and participation are an integral part of the philosophy classroom. Attendance
is required and needed of all students. A maximum of three course hours can be missed during
the course of a semester. Anyone who misses more then three course hours will be adversely
affecting his/her grade. If you can not attend all class sessions be certain to make arrangements
beforehand with the professor. Participation is necessary for successfully completing this course.
If an individual chooses not to participate he/she will be wasting all of the resources that surround
that person i.e. peers and instructor. Attendance and Participation comprise 20% of your class
grade.

Grade Break Down
Attendance and Participation 0%
Weekly Response Essays 0%
Final Written Report 20%
Mid-Term and Final Examination 40%
**Grading of Written Work**

An *"A" paper* is substantial, well developed and effectively organized and presented. It demonstrates original or thoughtful engagement with content and sensitivity to diction, tone and style. Its sentences are clear, precise, and well-structured. The paper is appropriately and formatted and virtually error-free.

A *"B" paper* contains a number of the strengths of an A paper, but it typically lacks the thoughtfulness, originality, and sensitivity of the superior paper. It is also virtually error-free.

A *"C" paper* fulfills the assignment and is adequately organized. The writer communicates ideas and develops thesis, although supporting evidence may be minimal and organization rather mechanical. The writing is not marred by habitual or serious grammatical errors. Thought and expression are competent.

A *"D" paper* typically is marked by failure to focus on a thesis, poor organization, lack of development, or recurrent mechanical errors.

A *"F" paper* may ignore the terms of the assignment, or it may be devoid of thesis, support, or organizing principle. Typically it contains numerous mechanical errors that seriously interfere with comprehension; it may also be marred by serious errors in documentation.

**Submission of Work**

All assignment listed on the syllabus are due on the dates prescribed. Failure to turn in work on time will result in one letter grade drop for every day late. Special accommodations can be made with me if you are unable to complete the work on time.

[ PL 140 ] satisfies a General Education Humanities Distribution requirement. Montgomery College’s General Education Program is designed to ensure that students have the skills, knowledge and attitudes to carry them successfully through their work and their personal lives. This course provides multiple opportunities to develop competency in *Written and oral communication* and *Critical analysis and reasoning*. For more information on the General Education Program, go to [www.montgomerycollege.edu/gened](http://www.montgomerycollege.edu/gened).

**Disabilities**

If you have a disability which will require accommodations, please see me after class or during my office hour. I am reasonably sure we can work out whatever arrangements are necessary, be it special seating, testing or other accommodations. If you have not already contacted the Disability Support Services office, please do so to obtain a letter authorizing your accommodations.

**Academic Integrity**

As students participating in higher level learning, plagiarism, cheating and any other form of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this learning environment. When an individual participates in any type of academic dishonesty she/he is simply expressing his/her lack of belief in her/his own abilities to excel in the pursuit of knowledge. In this course, plagiarism is the most severe offense. If you are not certain what qualifies as plagiarism, please discuss your questions
with me, so that any problems can be avoided. If you have any further questions regarding academic dishonesty please refer to the Student Handbook.

**Inclement Weather**
Occasionally it becomes necessary to delay the opening of school, send students home early, or close the College entirely because of bad weather. Please check the college Website for any closings or delays.

**Important Links for Students**
(Updated April 2, 2015)

**Academic calendar.** When is Spring break? When are midterm exams? When does the Spring semester begin? [http://cms.montgomerycollege.edu/edu/department2.aspx?id=16456](http://cms.montgomerycollege.edu/edu/department2.aspx?id=16456)

**ADA Information and Compliance:**

**Alert Montgomery System.** Sign up for Alert Montgomery the official emergency communications service for Montgomery County, MD. During a major crisis, emergency or severe weather event, Montgomery County officials can send event updates, warnings and instructions directly to you on any of your devices.
[https://member.everbridge.net/index/1332612387832009#/login](https://member.everbridge.net/index/1332612387832009#/login)

**Code of Conduct.** If you have questions regarding behavioral expectations:

**Counseling & Advising.** Academic advising and short term counseling.

**Disability Support Services.** If you are requesting a reasonable accommodation related to a disability:

**Forms:** graduation, involuntary withdraw, change of major, appeals.

**Learning Centers and Academic Support Centers.** If you are a student who would benefit from tutoring and/or support in reading, writing languages, mathematics, Science, and Technology:  [http://cms.montgomerycollege.edu/learningcenters/](http://cms.montgomerycollege.edu/learningcenters/)


**Sexual Harassment or Discrimination.** Office of Equity and Diversity.
**Calendar**—subject to adjustment—more specifics to be presented day-by-day in class.

**Essays**—below are the tentative dates for turning in the essays that are required for PL 201. Specifics regarding each essay will be discussed in detail regarding, so do not feel overwhelmed when examining this calendar.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>IN CLASS</th>
<th>PREPARATION—to be done prior to class</th>
<th>DUE DATES</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>day one</td>
<td>Class Introduction—discuss basic requirements.</td>
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<tr>
<td>week two 2/1</td>
<td>Virtue and the Law: The Nature of Law</td>
<td>Chapter one. Van Camp</td>
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<tr>
<td>week three 2/8</td>
<td>The formation of the Law. Does religion and God play a part in the law and Punishment</td>
<td>Chapter 1 Arthur. Review questions</td>
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<td>week four 2/15</td>
<td>The rule of law—What is the relationship between law and morality?</td>
<td>Chapter 2. Arthur Review questions</td>
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<td>week five 2/22</td>
<td>Egoism and the Law Spectacles</td>
<td>Chapter 2 Van Camp</td>
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<td>week six 2/29</td>
<td>The right to vote and Utilitarianism</td>
<td>Response Essay</td>
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<td>week seven 3/7</td>
<td>Kantianism and Liberty.</td>
<td>Read pgs. 39-56, Van Camp</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Reading Material</td>
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<td>Week eight 3/21</td>
<td>Pragmatism and Religion</td>
<td>Read Arthur 5</td>
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<td>Week eleven 4/11</td>
<td>Private Law Guest Speaker</td>
<td>Read Van Camp . Privacy cases</td>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Week twelve 4/18</td>
<td>Pornography, Love and Sex</td>
<td>Read pgs. 361-375 in Arthur</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week thirteen 4/25</td>
<td>Equality and the Law</td>
<td>Equality . van Camp</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week fourteen 5/2</td>
<td>Bring Everything Together Class Presentations</td>
<td>Read Handout on philosophy and writing the law</td>
<td>Final Paper Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week fifteen 5/9</td>
<td>Final Examination</td>
<td>Study for the final examination!!!!</td>
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