

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
Undergraduate Course Outline 2019-20

Philosophy 2720G: Ethics and Professionalism

Times and Locations:

T 10:30-12:30 FNB 2210

Th 10:30-11:30 FNB 1240

Instructor: Prof. Carolyn McLeod

Office: 2150G Stevenson Hall

Office Hours: Th. 2:30-3:30, F 11:30-12:30

Email: cmcleod2@uwo.ca

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Many students at Western hope to become some kind of professional, such as a lawyer, doctor, teacher, engineer, or journalist. But what does it mean to be a *professional*? What does it mean to have a *profession* as opposed to a job that isn't a profession? What are the ethical duties of professionals, duties that could inform our understanding of *professionalism*? How should we characterize the moral relationships that professionals have with the people who rely on their expertise? These are the sorts of questions we will ask in this course. We will also look at more specific topics having to do with ethics and professionalism, such as client (or patient) confidentiality, avoiding conflicts of interest, the nature and importance of professional integrity, and whistleblowing. The type of learning students will engage in will be active and case-based. We will analyze cases describing moral dilemmas that professionals commonly face, and do so with the aim of improving students' understanding of the ethical demands of professional life and their ability to grapple with these demands.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, students will be able to,

- Understand what it means to be a professional, what is distinctive about moral relationships that professionals have with their clients (or patients) and the public, and what moral duties professionals have in general
- Understand ethical frameworks or theories in professional ethics, how to apply them to cases, and how to think critically about them
- Appreciate the moral complexities of professional life

In addition, through their assignments (see below under Course Evaluation), students will develop or hone skills like the following:

- Interpreting and applying theoretical frameworks
- Problem-solving in ethics
- Critical analysis and writing
- Thoughtful engagement with others on controversial moral issues

COURSE WEBSITE

All course information, including assignments, are posted on our OWL site at <https://owl.uwo.ca/portal>.

REQUIRED READINGS

All readings are available online on our OWL site.

COURSE EVALUATION

- 1) Class participation: 10%
- 2) In-class tests applying ethical frameworks to cases: 20%
- 3) Written development of a case chosen by the student: 10%
- 4) Critical summary of an ethical framework relevant to the case chosen in 3): 10%
- 5) Essay that morally analyzes the case in 3): 30%
- 6) End of term take-home assignment (with the option of being assessed orally): 20%

Details about assignments are available on our OWL website under Resources and will be provided in class.

AUDIT

Students wishing to audit the course should consult with the instructor prior to or during the first week of classes.

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY POLICIES

The **Department of Philosophy Policies** which govern the conduct, standards, and expectations for student participation in Philosophy courses is available in the Undergraduate section of the Department of Philosophy website at <http://uwo.ca/philosophy/undergraduate/policies.html>. It is your responsibility to understand the policies set out by the Senate and the Department of Philosophy, and thus ignorance of these policies cannot be used as grounds of appeal.

ACCOMMODATION

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of

registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at

http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

SELF-REPORTED ABSENCE FORM

Students who experience an unexpected illness or injury or an extenuating circumstance (48 hours or less) that is sufficiently severe to temporarily render them unable to meet academic requirements (e.g., attending lectures or labs, writing tests or midterm exams, completing and submitting assignments, participating in presentations) should self-declare using the online Self-Reported Absence portal. This option should be used in situations where the student expects to resume academic responsibilities within 48 hours or less.

The following conditions are in place for self-reporting of medical or extenuating circumstances:

http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#SubHeading_322

EVALUATION OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

At least three days prior to the deadline for withdrawal from a course without academic penalty, students will receive assessment of work accounting for at least 15% of their final grade. For 3000- or 4000-level courses in which such a graded assessment is impracticable, the instructor(s) must obtain an exemption from this policy from the Dean and this exemption must be noted on the corresponding course syllabus. In rare instances and at the Dean's discretion, other courses could receive a similar exemption, which also must be noted in the course syllabus.

COURSE ASSIGNMENT

The last day of scheduled classes in any course will be the last day on which course assignments will be accepted for credit in a course. Instructors will be required to return assignments to students as promptly as possible with reasonable explanations of the instructor's assessment of the assignment.

ACADEMIC OFFENCES

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

PLAGIARISM CHECKING

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help. Immediate help in the event of a crisis can be had by phoning 519.661.3030 (during class hours) or 519.433.2023 after class hours and on weekends.