

ETHICS CORE AREA

INTRODUCTION

Ethics concerns how people ought to live and why they ought to live that way. It approaches such issues from a normative point of view; it is concerned with how moral agents should treat persons and other entities with moral status and with what it means to live a good life. In dealing with such matters, ethics examines justifications for normative claims and articulates the theories, traditions, and ideas that shape such claims.

OVERALL LEARNING GOAL OF COURSE IN THE ETHICS CORE AREA

Students should be able to reason ethically about the world and about their lives. They should accomplish this by engaging in a normative assessment of individual and institutional decisions, policies, and ways of living a good life and by personally engaging these.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR COURSES IN THE ETHICS CORE AREA

- 1.1 Reason ethically by drawing on major ethical theories and traditions (e.g., virtue ethics, feminist ethics, deontological or consequentialist theories); by normatively assessing individual, professional, and institutional decisions; and by articulating their personal engagement with the meaning of the right and the good. (Arts & Humanities, Critical Thinking, Ethical Reasoning)
- 1.2 Analyze, critically evaluate, and apply major ethical theories and traditions to significant personal, professional, and institutional decisions. As part of such efforts, students will be able to articulate that they understand some central ethical concepts such as justice, happiness, the good, virtue, dignity, rights and equality. (Arts & Humanities, Critical Thinking, Ethical Reasoning)
- 1.3 Demonstrate appreciation of nuance and ambiguity, as well as clarity and precision, in their thinking and writing about moral problems, concepts, and ideals. (Critical Thinking, Complexity)
- 1.4 Reflect on their own ethical decisions and actions, on their roles as morally responsible members of the human community, and on what it means to be a good person. (Critical Thinking, Complexity)

QUALIFYING CRITERIA FOR COURSES IN THE ETHICS CORE AREA

- 1 Courses should have a normative orientation; they should focus on what ought to be the case, never just on what is the case.
- 2 Courses should give serious consideration to one or more major ethical theories and

traditions and their applications.

3 Courses should assume that the defensibility of any perspective must be open to rational evaluation.

4 Courses should foster students' inclination and ability to identify, reflect upon, evaluate, integrate, and apply different moral perspectives and concepts in order to form moral judgments, to defend them with good reasons, and to articulate how those judgments may fit into a larger framework of, for example, right actions and good lives.

5 Courses should be, broadly understood, a rational inquiry into moral issues and reflect an understanding that emotions, attitudes, and traits of character may be integral aspects of ethical decision-making and ethical reflection.

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