

Ethics in Modern Life

Grades: 8th – 10th
Day of Week: Thursday
Time of Class: 1:00 - 2:30 pm ET
Length of Class: 10 weeks
Semester: Winter 2023
Tuition: \$250.00

High School Credit: .5 social science or elective

Class Dates:

Week 1 – Week of January 9
Week 2 – Week of January 16
Week 3 – Week of January 23
Week 4 – Week of January 30
Week 5 – Week of February 6
Week 6 – Week of February 13

Mid Semester Break: Week of February 20 – President's Day

Week 7 – Week of February 27
Week 8 – Week of March 6
Week 9 – Week of March 13
Week 10 – Week of March 20
Make Up Week – Week of March 27

Instructor's Name: Sarah Rosenson
Instructor's Email: sarah@SarahsClass.net

Description of Class:

Studying ethics is incredibly fun, and it also develops critical thinking and logical reasoning skills. But most importantly, studying ethics helps people develop their own moral codes.

In this class we will discuss a wide variety of ethical issues that come up in daily life and in the news and current events. Topics will include:

How can various GPS trackers be used unethically, and are there ethical uses for them?

Is there a concern that some people have one set of ethical standards in the real world, and a different, lower, set of ethical standards in the virtual world?

Is it ethical for a boss to fire an employee because of a viral video taken of the employee behaving offensively in public when they are not at work?

What are the many ethical issues involved in trying to address climate change?

If a terrorist group takes an American journalist or aid worker hostage, should the American government pay the ransom, or not? What are the strongest arguments on both sides?

Do animals have rights? What is it ethical or unethical for people to do to animals?

Please note that I am also teaching a class called “Ethics Thought Experiments: The Trolley Problem and Beyond” in the fall term on Open Tent Academy, if you are interested in 20 weeks on these topics. Each course stands on its own, so you can take either one alone, or both.

Class Approach:

This is a discussion class--there will not be any lectures. We will explore a different ethical issue each week. Students should come to class prepared to actively participate.

Additional Supplies/Resources Needed:

Students will be provided with a resource booklet of quotations we will use during the course.

Requirements:

Students will be required to participate in class discussions, and to do all assignments in a timely manner.

Weekly Homework:

Approximately one to two hours per week. Assignments will include short writing assignments in response to our discussions.

Homework Policy:

Assignments will be given at the end of each class, and will be due by the beginning of the next class.

Anticipated Weekly Course Schedule:

Week	Topic
Week 1	Ethical and unethical uses of GPS trackers
Week 2	Plagiarism and cheating in the digital world, including a cheating scandal at West Point Military Academy
Week 3	The ethics of firing employees for viral videos having nothing to do with their jobs
Week 4	Ethical issues around what we eat and drink
Week 5	The Tragedy of the Commons thought experiment and modern ethical issues
Week 6	Ethics and climate change
Week 7	Ethics and whether to pay the ransom for kidnapped hostages
Week 8	The ethics of stockpiling hand sanitizer and selling it at inflated prices in a pandemic
Week 9	More ethical issues, guided by student interest
Week 10	Wrap up