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

Philosophy 2720G: Ethics of Professional Relationships

Winter Term
T 10:30-12:30; Th 11:30-12:30
UCC 65

Instructor: Prof. Carolyn McLeod
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Office Hours: TBA

Graduate TA: TBA
Office Hours: TBA

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? Are there special privileges but also duties that go along with being a professional? Are the relationships that professionals have with the people who rely on their expertise unique in some way? These are the sorts of questions we will ask in this course. We will also look at more specific topics in professional ethics, such as client or patient confidentiality, the nature and importance of professional integrity, whether professionals should heed their conscience when it conflicts with their professional duties, and whistleblowing. The type of learning students will engage in will be mostly case-based; we will use cases in professional ethics throughout to improve our understanding of the topics in this area. Overall, the goal will be to prepare students well for grappling with the ethical demands of professional life.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

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

- Discuss what it means to be a professional or part of a profession, and what is distinctive about professional-client (or patient) relationships
- Describe what many philosophers believe to be the special moral duties of professionals
- Think critically about core topics in professional ethics and appreciate their complexity
- Provide ethical analyzes of actual cases involving professionals

In addition, through their assignments (see below under Course Evaluation), students will develop or hone skills like the following:
• Critical analysis and writing
• Thoughtful engagement with others on controversial topics
• Ethical problem-solving
• Synthesis and consolidation of significant amounts of material

COURSE WEBSITE

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

REQUIRED READINGS

• Online readings available on our OWL site

COURSE EVALUATION

1. Class participation: 10%
2. In-class quizzes: 30%
3. Take-home assignment: 20%
4. Written development of a case chosen by the student: 10%
5. Essay morally analyzing the chosen case: 30%

Details about assignments is 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
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:

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:

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.