This course will familiarize students with the historical development of many of the major moral philosophies of the world so that those students will have a more knowledgeable foundation for their own ethical convictions. The Western tradition is examined extensively, as well as other moral systems such as the Hindu, Buddhist, Confucian, African and Islamic traditions. May be taken as Humanities credit for General Education requirements. Prerequisite: READ 1213 or equivalent.
Outline for Remainder of Syllabus:

Rationale:
Ethics is perhaps the most practical application of philosophy a person can study. Focusing on the question "How should one live?" compels those who study ethics to consider how their philosophical perspective will actually be put into practice through the actions of their lives. To do this well, it is imperative that students have an understanding of how their own moral philosophy has been shaped by events in the tradition of Western intellectual history. Also, in the postmodern world, students' lives are enmeshed with other cultures. Thus, it is necessary for them to understand the major ethical traditions of other people in the world in order that they may interact more intelligently and humanely in their global community.

Expected Outcomes:
Upon completion of this course, the student should:
1. Understand the fundamental questions and concerns addressed by moral philosophy.
2. Be familiar with major movements in the history of Western moral philosophy from the Socratic tradition through the postmodern, the ideas presented by the major philosophers of that tradition, and the cultural contexts out of which they emerged.
3. Be familiar with the core beliefs of at least four of the major non-Western moral philosophies, and how those compare to the core beliefs in Western moral philosophy.
4. Be aided and encouraged in further developing one's own moral reasoning abilities and in applying that reasoning to both theoretical positions and specific moral dilemmas.

Methods of Instruction:
Lecture and Discussion
Internet or Computer Based Instruction
Individualized Approach: There is a serious effort made to understand the level of logical thinking on the part of each student as s/he enters the class, and an attempt is made to develop each student's skill in logical thinking.

Assessment (including critical thinking measurements):
Students will be required to demonstrate their knowledge of the course content, as identified in the learning goals, on written examinations, oral presentations or projects. The grades of the students will be assigned based on a predetermined scale.
Suggested:
60% Written analyses over the development, principles, and application of individual ethical systems
20% Identification of and analytic responses arguing for resolutions of specific moral dilemmas
20% Final exam synthesizing all major components of the course

Learning Objectives:
Unit 1: Understanding the fundamental questions and concerns addressed by moral philosophy and the moral reasoning techniques used to address those questions and issues (outcomes 1 & 4)
In a written analysis of approximately 500 words, students will demonstrate that they can do the following:
1. Distinguish between ethical absolutism and ethical relativism.
2. Explain the core value issues of both meta-ethics and normative ethics.
3. Identify a moral dilemma in their own personal lives or larger society and use moral reasoning to analyze that dilemma, including identification of the facts, perspectives, moral issues, relevant factors, possible resolutions, and ultimately argue for the best moral solution.

Unit 2: Understanding the Ancient Western Moral Traditions (outcomes 1, 2, 4)
1. In a 150-250 word writing, explain the core principles of Virtue Ethics, and the cultural contexts out of which they emerged, including the Homeric Tradition, the Sophists, Socrates, and Plato–with particular focus on Aristotle.
2. In a 150-250 word writing, apply the principles of Virtue Ethics to a specific moral dilemma.
3. In a 150-250 word writing, analyze the ways in which the principles of Virtue Ethics do and do not agree with the student's own ethical principles, and argue logically for the value of the student's position.

Unit 3: Understanding the Medieval Christian Traditions (outcomes 1, 2, 4)
1. In a 150-250 word writing, explain the core principles of Natural Law Ethics, and the cultural contexts out of which they emerged, including the Stoics, Neoplatonists, Epicureans, Hedonists, and Augustine–with particular focus on Aquinas.
2. In a 150-250 word writing, apply the principles of Natural Law Ethics to a specific moral dilemma.
3. In a 150-250 word writing, analyze the ways in which the principles of Natural Law Ethics do and do not agree with the student's own ethical principles, and argue logically for the value of the student's position.

Unit 4: Understanding the Modernist Western Traditions (outcomes 1, 2, 4)
1. In a 150-250 word writing, explain the core principles of Deontological Ethics, and the cultural contexts out of which they emerged, including Hobbes and Hume–with particular focus on Kant.
2. In a 150-250 word writing, apply the principles of Deontological Ethics to a specific moral dilemma.
3. In a 150-250 word writing, analyze the ways in which the principles of Deontological Ethics do and do not agree with the student's own ethical principles, and argue logically for the value of the student's position.

Unit 5: Understanding the Late Modernist Western Traditions (outcomes 1, 2, 4)
1. In a 150-250 word writing, explain the core principles of Utilitarian Ethics, and the cultural contexts out of which they emerged, including Bentham--with particular focus on Mill.
2. In a 150-250 word writing, apply the principles of Utilitarian Ethics to a specific moral dilemma.
3. In a 150-250 word writing, analyze the ways in which the principles of Utilitarian Ethics do and do not agree with the student's own ethical principles, and argue logically for the value of the student's position.
4. In a 150-250 word writing, explain the core principles of Materialist Ethics, and the cultural contexts out of which they emerged, including Darwin, Hegel, and Nietzsche--with particular focus on Marx.
5. In a 150-250 word writing, apply the principles of Materialist Ethics to a specific moral dilemma.
6. In a 150-250 word writing, analyze the ways in which the principles of Materialist Ethics do and do not agree with the student's own ethical principles, and argue logically for the value of the student's position.

7. In a 150-250 word writing, explain the core principles of various versions of Feminist Ethics, and the cultural contexts out of which they emerged, including Wollstonecraft and Gilligan—with particular focus on de Beauvoir.

8. In a 150-250 word writing, apply the principles of Feminist Ethics to a specific moral dilemma.

9. In a 150-250 word writing, analyze the ways in which the principles of Feminist Ethics do and do not agree with the student's own ethical principles, and argue logically for the value of the student's position.

Unit 6: Understanding the Postmodernist Traditions  (outcomes 1, 2, 4)
1. Research a contemporary issue or theorist in ethics. These may include selections from the following or others approved by the professor: Existentialism (Sartre), Existential Guilt & Innocence (Camus), Social Contract (Rawls), Moral Agency (Foucault), Moral Luck (Williams & Nagel), Care Ethics (Nodding), Objectivism (Rand), Pragmatic Pluralism (Rorty), Capability Ethics (Nussbaum), Surveillance Ethics, New Virtue Ethics (Anscombe & MacIntyre).

2. Write an approximately 500 word summary and analysis of the research findings in #2 above, and present to the class for discussion.

3. In a 150-250 word analysis, synthesize the research presented by the class members into the student's own understanding of the common themes and understandings the postmodern moral theory.

4. Using the material studied in the Western Tradition, write a 150-250 word argument supporting the student's own decision for the moral basis of "the Good" to be used in his or her personal ethical system.

Unit 7: Understanding Hindu Ethical Traditions  (outcomes 1, 3, 4)
1. In a 150-250 word writing, explain the core principles of Hindu Ethics, and the cultural contexts out of which they emerged, with particular focus on dharma and karma.

2. In a 150-250 word writing, apply the principles of Hindu Ethics to a specific moral dilemma.

3. In a 150-250 word writing, analyze the ways in which the principles of Hindu Ethics do and do not agree with the student's own ethical principles, and argue logically for the value of the student's position.

Unit 8: Understanding Buddhist Ethical Traditions  (outcomes 1, 3, 4)
1. In a 150-250 word writing, explain the core principles of Buddhist Ethics, and the cultural contexts out of which they emerged, with particular focus on The Four Noble Truths.

2. In an approximately 500 word writing, examine how the specifics of the Eight-Fold Path would or would not apply in the student's own life.

Unit 9: Understanding Confucian Ethical Traditions  (outcomes 1, 3, 4)
1. In a 150-250 word writing, explain the core principles of Confucian Ethics, and the cultural contexts out of which they emerged, with particular focus on li, ren, and yi.
2. In a 150-250 word writing, apply the principles of Confucian Ethics to a specific moral dilemma.
3. In a 150-250 word writing, analyze the ways in which the principles of Confucian Ethics do and do not agree with the student's own ethical principles, and argue logically for the value of the student's position.

Unit 10: Understanding Islamic Ethical Traditions (outcomes 1, 3, 4)
4. In a 150-250 word writing, explain the core principles of Islamic Ethics, and the cultural contexts out of which they emerged, with particular focus on Islamic law and the five pillars.
5. In a 150-250 word writing, apply the principles of Islamic Ethics to a specific moral dilemma.
6. In a 150-250 word writing, analyze the ways in which the principles of Islamic Ethics do and do not agree with the student's own ethical principles, and argue logically for the value of the student's position.

Unit 11: Understanding Postcolonial Ethical Traditions (outcomes 1, 3, 4)
7. In a 150-250 word writing, explain the core principles of Postcolonial Ethics, and the cultural contexts out of which they emerged, with particular focus on African systems.
8. In a 150-250 word writing, apply the principles of Postcolonial Ethics to a specific moral dilemma.
9. In a 150-250 word writing, analyze the ways in which the principles of Postcolonial Ethics do and do not agree with the student's own ethical principles, and argue logically for the value of the student's position.

Unit 12: Comparing and Synthesizing Major Moral Systems in Articulation of the Student's Own Philosophy (outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4)
1. On a written examination, distinguish between the core principles of the major ethical systems studied.
2. On a written examination, provide explanation of one's own core ethical principles, both normative and meta, and support those principles with logical argument and examples of application.