J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College
Course Content Summary

Course Prefix and Number: PHI 226
Credits: 3

Course Title: Social Ethics

Course Description: Provides a critical examination of moral problems and studies the application of ethical concepts and principles to decision-making. Topics may include abortion, capital punishment, euthanasia, man and the state, sexuality, war and peace, and selected issues of personal concern. Prerequisite: Placement in ENG 111 or placement in Co-requisites ENG 111 and ENF 3. Lecture 3 hours per week.

General Course Purpose: Serves as a humanities elective for students in AA and AS transfer degrees and AAS occupational/technical degrees. Course transfers to VCU, ODU, and George Mason per each institution’s current transfer guides. To avoid transfer problems, students should always verify for themselves the transferability of courses with the institution to which transfer is contemplated.

Course Objectives:
Upon completing the course, the student will be able to
a. Differentiate the major theories of ethics, including relativism, egoism/altruism, utilitarianism, deontology, human rights, and contemporary theories.
b. Explain many of the basic ethical problems that have shaped the scene of Western philosophy from antiquity to the modern time.
c. Analyze the specific dilemmas in ethics, including, but not limited to, abortion, capital punishment, euthanasia, animal rights, war and peace, and digital piracy in the context of ethical theory.
d. Demonstrate the importance of critical analysis and ethical theory for the understanding and resolution of ethical dilemmas.

Major Topics to Be Included:
a. Relativism
b. Egoism/altruism
c. Utilitarianism
d. Deontology
e. Human rights
f. Contemporary theories of ethics

Effective Date of Course Content Summary: Spring, 2014