Ray,

As I teach it currently, PHI-113 "Contemporary Moral Problems" includes a unit on Ethics & Warfare, in which we discuss Michael Walzer's classic book Just and Unjust Wars. I don't have a detailed syllabus, but I'll give you what I have.

MTN

WESTMONT COLLEGE
Department of Philosophy

PHI 113: Contemporary Moral Problems
Spring Semester, 2009  MWF, 2:00 – 3:05pm  Room: MG 1
Instructor: Mark Nelson
Office: Porter Center, Rm. 6
Tel: x 6259; Email: manelson@westmont.edu

Course Description

I. Course Guidelines:
A. Objectives: [With references, where relevant, to Westmont’s Six Learning Standards]
   1. To sharpen skills in thinking, reading, and writing; [“Written and Oral Communication”, “Critical and Interdisciplinary Thinking”]
   2. To reflect philosophically on a range of contemporary moral problems. [“Critical and Interdisciplinary Thinking”, Active Societal and Intellectual Engagement]
   3. To be introduced to some important philosophical literature about these problems, representing diverse philosophical points of view; [“Diversity”]
   4. To undertake all of the above in the light of core beliefs and commitments of historic Christianity. [“Christian Orientation”]

B. Learning Methods:
   1. Lecture Preparation (including assigned readings, written exercises)
   2. Attending Lectures and Participating in Class Discussions
   3. Essay and/or Exam Preparation: rereading course notes; reading additional materials; outlining, writing/editing your essays, preparing them for submission, etc.

C. Class requirements: Attendance at all classes is expected. I shall not take attendance, except occasionally, as a means of learning your names and gaining a general impression of who is in class and who isn’t. If your attendance becomes problematic in my opinion, I shall call it to your attention, but I shall not penalise you. You will not, however, be permitted to make up missed quizzes, unless you provide me with a legitimate excuse of the usual sort (illness, family emergency, travelling with an official Westmont field trip, sports team, music group, etc). One’s personal travel schedule will not be considered a legitimate excuse for missing a normally scheduled class. (If, e.g., your ride home for Spring Break is leaving before our last class, and this causes you to miss a quiz, you will not be permitted to make up that quiz or take it early.)

D. Assessment: Assessment is by two 2,000 word essays, a final exam, and frequent, short quizzes on reading assignments. Each of these components will count 25%. You must provide an accurate word count at the end of your essay, and you must keep to the word limit: essays of more than 2,000 words (including quotations and footnotes, but not bibliography) will not be accepted for marking. In marking the essays I shall be looking for three things, weighted roughly
equally:
• How well you have understood course material;
• How well you explain and justify your own view of the assigned topic;
• The quality of your essay as an essay (i.e., as a piece of writing in its own right) on that particular topic.

E. Essay Submission Procedure: Essays must be typed or word-processed and handed in to me in class, unless otherwise specified. Late essays will lowered by one third of a grade (e.g., from ‘B’ to ‘B-‘) for the first day late (i.e., any time after the end of the assigned class period) and an additional third for each additional day (i.e., 24 hour period) late.

F. Cheating: cheating, including plagiarism, will result in an automatic ‘F’ for that assignment and referral to the relevant College authorities.

G. Plagiarism: plagiarism is the presenting of someone else’s work, verbatim or paraphrased, intentionally or unintentionally, as your own. If you have studied for a paper or exam with another student and there is, a result, the slightest chance that your answers may resemble theirs, you should indicate in your paper or exam that you have done so and identify them by name. (E.g., in a footnote, you might say, “In preparing for this paper, I discussed some of these ideas with Phyllis Stein.”)

H. Missing Exams: a missed exam will result in failure of that exam, unless prearranged with me.

I. Getting Help: If you want to discuss any aspect of the course, please see me during one of the Office Hours posted on my door, or fix an appointment to meet at another time. If you have any kind of problem that is preventing you from working on this course, speak to me or to your Personal Advisor or to anyone you feel you can approach. For help with writing assignments, the “Writer’s Corner” is a good first stop.

J. Disability: Students who have been diagnosed with a disability (learning, physical or psychological) are strongly encouraged to contact the Disability Services office as early as possible to discuss appropriate accommodations for this course. Formal accommodations will only be granted for students whose disabilities have been verified by the Disability Services office. These accommodations may be necessary to ensure your full participation and the successful completion of this course. Contact the Director of Disability Services, Michelle Hardley (805-565-6159, mhardley@westmont.edu) as soon as possible.

K. Courtesy: It goes without saying that all members of the class should treat each other courteously at all times. This includes, among other things not snoozing, texting, facebooking, websurfing, reading newspapers or doing work for other classes during our class period. You may use your laptop in class for taking notes, but please do not log on to the internet during class.

II. Course Texts:
D. Additional photocopied essays supplied by instructor.

III. Syllabus:
This is the second time I have taught this course, and I do not yet have a detailed syllabus. We will simply be working through the above books, in order, with occasional additional readings inserted where appropriate.

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