

**Oakton College**  
**Syllabus for PHL-106- 0G2, Ethics, Fall 2023**  
**(Ethics With a Module on Cosmopolitanism and the**  
**Asante Culture)**  
(TR 11 AM to 12:15 PM)

**Prof: Carlos Briones, Ph.D.**

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D2L [email preferred](#)

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Skokie Faculty Office: 847-635-1435

**Student Support Hours:**

**At Des Plaines 2514:**

Mondays from 9 to 9:20 AM and 11 AM to 12 PM

Wednesdays from 9 to 9:20 AM, 11 AM to 12 PM, and 2 to 3:30 PM

**At Skokie**

Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:30 to 10:50 AM and from 12:30 to 1 PM

**Online through the Zoom link under “Zoom Student Support Hours” on the D2L “Content” tab:**

Mondays from 4:50 to 5:40 PM.

Wednesdays from 6 to 6:50 PM.

Friday from 8:30 to 9:20 AM

Feel welcome to use the office hours just to check in or if you are having any difficulties with the course. Please ask me for an appointment if you cannot make any of these times.

<b>I.</b>	<b><u>Course Prefix</u></b>	<b><u>Course Number</u></b>	<b><u>Course Name</u></b>	<b><u>Credit</u></b>	<b><u>Lecture</u></b>	<b><u>Lab</u></b>
	PHL	106	Ethics	3	3	0

**II. Prerequisite:** None

**III. Course (Catalog) Description**

Course studies meaning, value, and moral responsibility in human life. Topics include examination of at least four conflicting theories about what constitutes moral conduct and social justice; application of these theories to individual moral dilemmas and to contemporary social issues such as world hunger or the environmental crisis.

#### **IV. Learning Objectives**

After completing this class, students will be able to do the following:

- A. Define the basic vocabulary needed to discuss ethical theories and be able to state the problems that ethical theories address.
- B. Explain and compare at least four conflicting ethical theories and the arguments that support these theories.
- C. Evaluate ethical theories by critically examining (both orally and through written work) the arguments that support the theories and by discussing what important considerations may be lacking in the theories studied.
- D. Apply ethical theories to concrete situations on the personal level, on the national level, and on the global level
- E. Use the ethical theory with which they agree to defend their own positions on contemporary moral issues both orally and in writing.
- F. Exhibit values related to teamwork and collaboration, fostered by the pedagogy of shared-inquiry and critical dialogue appropriate to the humanities and philosophy.
- G. Use aspects of the Asante culture of Ghana to understand the concept of Cosmopolitanism as an ethical ideal.**
- H. Illustrate how trans-cultural conversations are essential in developing a humanistic morality through dialogue involving the Assante people of Ghana.**

#### **V. Academic Integrity and Student Conduct**

Students and employees at Oakton College are required to demonstrate academic integrity and follow Oakton's Code of Academic Conduct. This code prohibits:

- cheating,
- plagiarism (turning in work not written by you, or lacking proper citation),
- falsification and fabrication (lying or distorting the truth),
- helping others to cheat,
- unauthorized changes on official documents,
- pretending to be someone else or having someone else pretend to be you,
- making or accepting bribes, special favors, or threats, and
- any other behavior that violates academic integrity.

There are serious consequences to violations of the academic integrity policy. Oakton's policies and procedures provide students a fair hearing if a complaint is made against you. If you are found to have violated the policy, the minimum penalty is failure on the assignment and a disciplinary record will be established and kept on file in the office of the Vice President for Student Affairs for a period of 3 years.

Please review the Code of Academic Conduct and the Code of Student Conduct, both located online at <https://www.oakton.edu/pdfs/student-handbook.pdf>

### Statement on the Inappropriate Use of Generative AI

Learning requires work. It is the cognitive effort and work that helps you learn the material or develop the skills you will need in your professional career and life. It also requires the courage to risk being wrong or defending your ideas. To maximize your learning and development, it is important that the cognitive and creative work be your own. When you use AI in assignments and present the work as your own, you rob yourself of the opportunity for academic, intellectual, and personal development. Any words, writings, or ideas that are not your own need to include full attribution to their source. This is true whether those ideas came from a textbook, professional journal, popular website, or a Generative AI program such as Chat GPT or Google Bard. Failure to include proper attribution or authorization is a form of academic dishonesty and will be reported. When in doubt, cite your sources! This protects you! Correctly citing sources is part of the learning that you should do in college, and I am here to help you.

I want you to be successful in this course, and I am here to help you reach your personal academic goals. Sometimes students are tempted to violate academic integrity rules when pressed for time or feeling desperate. PLEASE reach out to me at any time you are feeling stressed, unsure, or confused.

### VI. Tentative Outline of Topics

Readings come from our textbook: *Ethics, The Essential Writings* (EEW), from *Cosmopolitanism*.

<b>Week and day</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading, Activity or Assignments Due (Come to class having read what is assigned by that date)</b>
<b>Week 1</b>		
<b>T, 8/22</b>	Class Introduction	Syllabus, schedule and introductions
<b>R, 8/24</b>		Introduction, Gordon Marino Chapter 1, Plato (pp. 3-5)
<b>Week 2</b>		
<b>T, 8/29</b>	What is Ethics? Objection to Ethics	Plato: The Republic: Book II, pp. 38-42 in EEW
<b>R, 8/31</b>	Plato's Case for Ethics	Read: <a href="https://reasonandmeaning.com/2019/02/24/summary-of-justice-in-platos-philosophy/">https://reasonandmeaning.com/2019/02/24/summary-of-justice-in-platos-philosophy/</a>

		<p>And watch this short video (about 9 minutes) on Plato's view on the state of the just soul:</p> <p><a href="https://www.coursera.org/lecture/plato/the-just-soul-nSgj1">https://www.coursera.org/lecture/plato/the-just-soul-nSgj1</a></p>
<b>Week 3</b>		
<b>T, 9/5</b>	Emotivism	Chapter 7, David Hume (introduction) and <i>An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals</i> , Section I, Of the General Principles of Morals, in EEW, pp. 149-157
<b>R, 9/7</b>	Justice	<i>An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals</i> , Section III. Of Justice. Part I. pp. 162-169.
<b>Week 4</b>		
<b>T, 9/12</b>		<i>An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals</i> , Appendix. Concerning Moral Sentiment. Pp. 179-187.
<b>R, 9/14</b>		Kant's Ethics (section in "Normative Theories, Shaw"). In the D2L readings. Chapter 8, Immanuel Kant (Introduction) in EEW
<b>Week 5</b>		
<b>T, 9/19</b>		Chapter 8, Immanuel Kant, Continued Paper feedback exchange
<b>R, 9/21</b>	Rationalism (Deontology)	Chapter 8, Immanuel Kant, Continued <b>PAPER 1 DUE SEP 24</b>
<b>Week 6</b>		
<b>T, 9/26</b>		Chapter 8, Immanuel Kant, Continued
<b>R, 9/28</b>	Utilitarianism	Utilitarianism (section in "Normative Theories, Shaw"). In the D2L readings.
<b>Week 7</b>	Amorality or Moral Relativism	On the Genealogy of Morality. "Good and Evil," and "Good and Bad" pp. 274-284

T, 10/3		
R, 10/5		On the Genealogy of Morality. "Good and Evil," and "Good and Bad" pp. 284-290
<b>Week 8</b>		
T, 10/10		On the Genealogy of Morality. "Good and Evil," and "Good and Bad" pp. 290-298
R, 10/12		<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>
<b>Week 9</b>		
T, 10/17		On the Genealogy of Morality. "Good and Evil," and "Good and Bad" pp. 290-298
R, 10/19	Ethics of Care	Nel Noddings: <i>A Feminist Approach to Ethics and Moral Education</i> in EEW
<b>Week 10</b>		
T, 10/24		Nel Noddings: <i>A Feminist Approach to Ethics and Moral Education</i> in EEW
R, 10/26	All College Learning Day	No day time classes. College opens at 5 PM. <b>PAPER 2 DUE OCT 29</b>
<b>Week 11</b>		
T, 10/31	Advances in Feminist Ethics	Virginia Held; The Ethics of Care; Article in D2L
R, 11/2		Virginia Held; The Ethics of Care; Article in D2L
<b>Week 12</b>		
T, 11/7	<b>Cosmopolitanism as an ideal</b>	<b>Kwame Anthony Appiah: <i>Cosmopolitanism</i>, Introduction, "Making Conversation"</b>
R, 11/9		<b>Kwame A. Appiah: <i>Cosmopolitanism</i>, Chapter 2. "The Escape from Positivism"</b>
F, 11/10	<b>Veterans Day holiday</b>	<b>College closed</b>
<b>Week 13</b>		
T, 11/14		<b>Kwame A. Appiah: <i>Cosmopolitanism</i>, Chapter 2. "The Escape from Positivism"</b>

R, 11/16		Kwame A. Appiah: <i>Cosmopolitanism</i> , Chapter 4. “Moral Disagreement”
Week 14		
T, 11/21		Kwame A. Appiah: <i>Cosmopolitanism</i> , Chapter 4. “Moral Disagreement”
R, F 11/23,24	THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY	COLLEGE CLOSED
Week 15		
T, 11/28		Kwame Anthony Appiah: <i>Cosmopolitanism</i> , Chapter 5, “The Primacy of Practice”
R, 11/30		Kwame Anthony Appiah: <i>Cosmopolitanism</i> , Chapter 10, “Kindness to Strangers” PAPER 3 DUE 12/3
Week 16		
T, 12/5		Kwame Anthony Appiah: <i>Cosmopolitanism</i> , Chapter 10, “Kindness to Strangers”
R, 12/7		Review
Week 17		
T, 12/12		FINAL EXAM
R, 12/14		FINAL GATHERING

### Important Dates to Remember

9/18	Last day to withdraw from course and have it dropped from record
10/23	Last day to withdraw with a W. Students will receive a grade in all courses in which they are enrolled after this date.

### **VII. Methods of Instruction**

- A. Lectures and discussion
- B. Small group work
- C. Discussion of films and documentaries
- D. Student presentations and debates

### **VIII. Course Practices Required**

**Participation:** This is a face-to-face class. Attendance is mandatory, but more than that, experience shows that class absence will severely hurt your ability to keep up with the material and do well in class. Students earn one point by fully participating in the class discussion. By this, I mean that:

- You should be in the class for its full duration
- Your focus during our sessions should be on the class material and discussion (as opposed to trying to do something else at the same time).
- Your questions or comments should be connected to the text under discussion, meaning you should come to class having read the assigned reading for the day.

Students who are present but do not meet the above requirements will only receive one portion of the participating point.

If you exceed six absences without checking in, beyond excused absences (e.g., religious, athletics, etc.), you might be automatically withdrawn from the class. If you are not showing up, I'll assume you have quite the class.

**Courtesy:** Let's be civil and cordial with each other. Philosophical discussions sometimes stir strong emotions and can get heated. This does not mean that we should not say what we think, but we must always remember to be respectful of others' opinions and belief systems. Ideally, however, we can go beyond civility and create a friendly environment.

**Homework:** Your homework will include writing a post on the D2I Discussion board before each class. For most readings, I will post some questions in advance in the discussion board. Your post might consist of answering one of these questions.

The questions will be mainly interpretive or evaluative. Interpretations attempt to clarify the meaning of something in the text, and you should be able to support them through data in the text. Evaluations make an assessment or appraisal of something the author says or implies by checking it against your experience. Students can have different interpretations and evaluations, so your entries will differ.

Your post might also consist of a response to someone else's answer. However, your post must add to the discussion; simply writing something like "You are right" or "I totally agree" would not count as acceptable homework.

**All responses should:**

- **Answer the question asked,**
- **Be clearly connected to the text we are reading,**
- **Be significant,**
- **Be properly threaded or connected,**
- **Form at least a paragraph with several clearly connected sentences. (Most weeks, you will write two posts, one for each class. These responses should add to at least one-third of a page of double spaced 12 font writing per week)**

If comments do not meet this standard, less than full credit will be given. Also, you may not compensate for absence from the Discussion Forum by posting responses after the class they are due.

You should post early enough so that you give others the opportunity to respond to your comments, so please avoid posting just before class. However, this should not limit the number of times you write on the discussion board. If you are interested in a topic or discussion, you should keep it going. We will use your posts in our class discussion, and I might ask you to read or elaborate on your comment or question.

**Group Presentations:** During the semester, we will have group presentations. The topics for these presentations will come from the texts in the syllabus. So, the date to present will depend on your chosen reading. Each student in the group should explain part of the reading for at least 5 minutes. Then one member of the group will ask questions he has previously collected from the other participants, and at least one of the other presenters should answer. These questions should be interpretive or evaluative, and the other members should support or challenge the interpretation or evaluation with reasons. In other words, they could say whether they agree or disagree with it and why or why they consider the idea important or not, and so on. In the last 5 minutes, the panel will open the discussion to the rest of the class, asking and answering questions.

The group won't be expected to cover all the content of the reading, but should focus on the main ideas. The panel should nominate a leader who would guide or manage the discussion. The panel participants should send me their questions in advance and practice discussing them with each other.

Your grade will depend on how well you defend your interpretation and evaluation and on the clarity of the exposition. Please keep in mind that the schedule of readings might move, since we could potentially linger on a topic or have some change of plans. You are responsible to send me your questions about one week ahead of your discussion. If you are not able to come to class on the day of your panel discussion, you must have a good reason and tell me in advance; it might be difficult to get you in another group and you might then miss the points for your presentation.

**Exams:** There will be a midterm exam and a final exam. Each will consist of 3 or 4 essay questions, and might also include some multiple-choice questions. I will provide you with a study guide to prepare for the exam and give you a more detailed description during class.

**Papers:** You will also be expected to submit three 3-page, double-spaced, 12 font size papers in which you will be asked to analyze or make a point about a topic connected with the assigned readings. For each of these papers, you will also have to submit in advance a document with the thesis you want to defend and an annotated bibliography with at least three sources. I will explain further these requirements before paper 1 is due. To write each of the papers, you will be able to choose from a list of topics or prompts I will provide under "Paper Topics" in the Content menu.

Late papers will be penalized by 5 points per week. Papers that are more than 4 weeks overdue will get a grade of zero unless you let me know if you are still

planning to submit them. The third paper won't be accepted beyond the last day of classes.

The criteria for grading will include level of understanding, structure (whether it has an introduction, thesis, support, conclusion, and connection or flow of ideas), and clarity. It will also include form or mechanical aspects of writing. So, please make sure to carefully proofread your papers, to avoid grammatical mistakes, misspellings, punctuation errors, and unconnected sentences. On the D2L page, under "Content," you can find a rubric to get an idea of what I will be grading.

**Extra-Credit Assignments.** There will be opportunities for extra-credit assignments to make up for justified absences and circumstances. Often the assignments will consist of attending an extracurricular event in the college, such as a play or lecture, and giving me a report or a reaction to it. Each assignment will have a value of up to .8%, and you can accumulate up to 3.2 points. In other words, you can submit up to 4 extra credit assignments.

**Miscellaneous:** Please be responsible for solving any problems with me about any problems affecting your performance. E-mail me and make an appointment, so that we can talk with each other.

#### **IX. Instructional Materials**

*Ethics, The Essential Writings*; Edited by Gordon Marino. Modern Library, New York, 2010.

*Cosmopolitanism, Ethics in a World of Strangers*, by Kwame Anthony Appiah, W.W. Norton & Company, Inc. New York, 2006.

Note: Current textbook information for each course and section is available on Oakton's Schedule of Classes.

If a Direct Digital Access (DDA) fee has been charged as part of tuition and fees, viewable on myOakton, students have the option to opt-out of the e-book(s) and fee(s). Please email [ddaoptout@oakton.edu](mailto:ddaoptout@oakton.edu) for more information.

#### **X. Methods of Evaluation**

<b>Course Requirements:</b>	<b>Grading (%):</b>
Class Participation	12
Discussion Posts	12
Quizzes	10
3 Papers	30
Group Presentation	4
Mid Term Exam	16
Final Exam	16

**Grading Scale:**

A: 100-90    B: 89-80    C: 79-70    D: 69-60    F: Less than 60

**XI. Other Course Information****Accommodations and Policies:**

1. Oakton College values equity and the diversity of learners and community members we serve. We strive to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you encounter a course, program, or activity that is not accessible, or you wish to request disability-related accommodations, please contact the Access and Disability Resource Center at [accessdisability@oakton.edu](mailto:accessdisability@oakton.edu) or 847-635-1489.
2. Oakton College is committed to maintaining a campus environment emphasizing the dignity and worth of all members of the community, and complies with all federal and state Title IX requirements.

Oakton College is committed to combating sexual misconduct. As a result, college faculty and staff members are required to report any instances of sexual misconduct, including harassment and sexual violence, to the Title IX Coordinator so that all parties involved may be provided appropriate resources and support options. There are two important exceptions to this requirement:

- 1) A list of the college's Confidential Advisors who, as counselors and medical professionals, do not have this reporting responsibility and can maintain confidentiality, can be found here:  
<https://www.oakton.edu/student-services/counseling/contact/>
- 2) An important exception to the reporting requirement exists for academic work. Disclosures about sexual misconduct that are shared as part of an academic project, classroom discussion, or course assignment, are not required to be disclosed to the college's Title IX office.

Students who have been subjected to any form of sexual misconduct, are encouraged to access these resources:

- Office of Student Affairs: 847-635-1745
- SHARE @ the Wellness Center: 847-635-1885 (8:30 AM TO 5 PM M-F) and 847-635-1880 (after business hours to reach the Counselor on Call)
- Oakton's Title IX webpage:
- <https://www.oakton.edu/about/policies-and-legal-notice/title-ix.php>

If there is a safety concern, please contact Oakton Police Department, 847-635-1880.

Other reporting information is available here:

[https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?OaktonCC&layout\\_id=2](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?OaktonCC&layout_id=2)

Resources and support for:

- Pregnancy-related and parenting accommodations can be found at: <https://www.oakton.edu/about/policies-and-legal-notice/title-ix2/pregnancy-and-parenting.php>
  - Resources and support for LGBTQ+ students can be found at <https://www.oakton.edu/life-at-oakton/diversity-at-oakton/lgbtqia2-at-oakton/>
3. Electronic video and/or audio recording is not permitted during class unless the student obtains written permission from the instructor. In cases where recordings are allowed, such content is restricted to personal use only. Any distribution of such recordings is strictly prohibited. Personal use is defined as use by an individual student for the purpose of studying or completing course assignments.

For students who have been approved for audio and/or video recording of lectures and other classroom activities as a reasonable accommodation by Oakton's Access Disabilities Resource Center (ADRC), applicable federal law requires instructors to permit those recordings. Such recordings are also limited to personal use. Any distribution of such recordings is strictly prohibited.

Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action through the Code of Student Conduct.

4. Oakton Emergency Building Closures. When an Oakton building is closed due to an emergency (e.g., weather-related closings), that doesn't mean instruction stops. Students should check for communications from their instructor via D2L, other learning environments such as myMathlab, or via email or text. If you don't receive communication from your instructor within 24 hours of building closure, please contact them.

### **COVID-19 Protocols**

*"See the [Oakton website](#) for relevant COVID-19 information and protocols."*

### **Discrimination:**

The Oakton College Catalog states: Oakton College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, disability, age, sex, sexual orientation, or marital status in admission to and participation in its educational programs, activities, and services, or employment practices. The College does not tolerate sexual harassment or sexual assault by or of its students or employees.

### **Oakton Values:**

- We exercise responsibility through accountability to each other, our community, and the environment.
- We embrace the diversity of the Oakton community and honor it as one of our college's primary strengths.

- We advance equity by acknowledging the effects of systemic social injustices and intentionally designing the Oakton experience to foster success for all students.
- We uphold integrity through a commitment to trust, transparency, and honesty by all members of Oakton.
- We cultivate compassion within a caring that appreciates that personal fulfillment and well-being are central to our mission.
- We foster collaboration within the college and the larger and recognize our interdependence and ability to achieve more together.