

Unit I: Introduction to Science and Ethics

US275 Scientific Ethics
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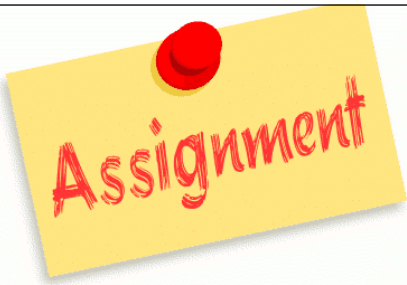
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Course Introduction

- be able to explain how the information in this online course will be presented.
- be able to explain the assignments and grading for this course.
- “Meet” the other students in the course.



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I. What is this course about?

This course is likely to be very different from other university courses you have taken.

In order to be successful in this course you need to remain involved in the group discussions on the different topics. I want you to review the course information (syllabus and course policies), and then post a response in the Questions & Concerns discussion thread.

Your post should contain either:

I have read the syllabus and course policies and have no questions.

or:

I have a question about _____.



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2. Introduce Yourself

Since this course is totally online, it is important for us to “virtually” get to know everyone. Therefore, I want you to post a short introduction of yourself to the Cyber Cafe in the Discussion Board section.

At a minimum, the post should contain:

1. Name
2. Photo of you
3. Why are you interested in this course?
4. What would you like to learn in this course?

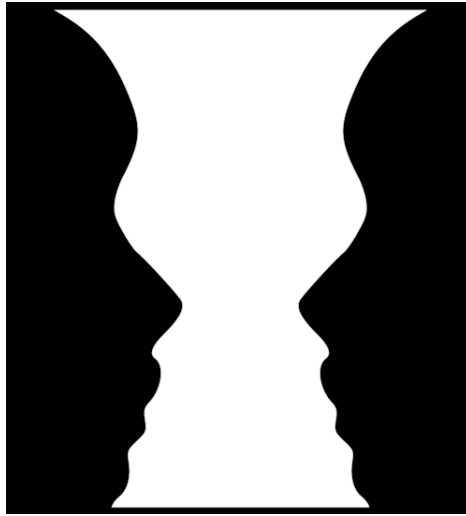
Read and Reply to your classmates introductions.



4

Perspective, Controversies, and Civility

- Describe how each individual carries a unique perspective on the world around them.
- Describe how differences in perspective can contribute to differences of opinion on issues.
- Interact with classmates in a respectful and informed manner.



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3. The Civility of Civilized Politics

2012 is a presidential election year, with all of congressional representatives and 1/3 of the senators up for election. It appears that the next 10 months will be filled with partisan bickering, attack ads, mud-slinging, and debates.

In your discussion group:

Discuss what things can be done to promote a civil discourse of the important issues that require the attention of our elected officials.



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Introduction to Philosophy

- identify the three major divisions of philosophy
- describe the basic approach to explaining the world used by each of the major divisions of philosophy.



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Assignment

4. Explaining the world around you

You observe that all of the leaves on the *Ginkgo biloba* tree on campus turn yellow and fall from the tree at the same time.

In your discussion group:

Come up with explanations for why all of the Ginkgo biloba leaves fall from the tree at the same time using each of the divisions of philosophy. Indicate whether the explanation fits into the area of metaphysics, value theory, or epistemology.



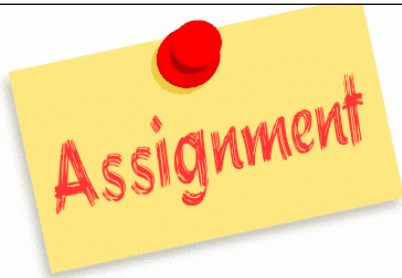
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What is this thing called Science?

- describe how science is different from other ways of explaining the world
- explain the different approaches that scientists use to studying the world.



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5. Scientific Controversies

What constitutes a scientific controversy...

In your discussion group:

Each member of the group should find an example of online news article where scientific controversies are mentioned (include the link to the article in your post).

Other members of the group should find and post examples of reliable and unreliable resources related to each controversy.

Discuss the validity of the claim of controversy.



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Thinking and acting as a scientist

- describe how scientists collect observations about the world.
- consider how you use the scientific approach in your daily life.



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Assignment

6. Everyday uses of scientific method

You are driving down the road when your car suddenly stops...

In your discussion group:

Use the scientific method to determine what caused the car to stop. Come up with different hypotheses (reasons) for why the car stopped and describe experiments that you can use to test whether or not that is the true cause.



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Introduction to Ethics

- explain the way that ethics and morals direct an individual's actions



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Assignment

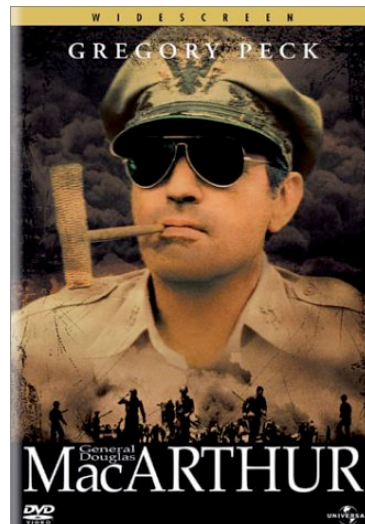
7. Overriding Principles

Watch the youtube video of Gregory Peck as General Douglas MacArthur addressing the Corp of Cadets in 1962.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A99ooAeN2Q4>

In your discussion group:

Within your group, discuss what principles you think should be supreme and always followed. Are there any instances when even these highest principles should be set aside?



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Any Questions?

Email me at:
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