

Philosophy 276
Essay Topics, Summer 2017
Due Date: End of Term, August 17th, last day of classes

There are several things to remember: It is best for you to formulate your own topic instead of relying on my guidance. You should familiarize yourself with how to write a philosophy paper using the documents linked to the first page on my website. You will produce an argumentative paper in most cases. You should produce a paper between 6-8 pages. It should be double-spaced and use consistent documentation.

1. **Pragmatism.** Read John Dewey's piece, "The Construction of the Good," pp. 89-97. Analyze Gerald Andrews Emison's article, "American Pragmatism as a Guide for Professional Ethical Conduct for Engineers", comparing Pragmatism with two other ethical theories. Does Pragmatism offer anything new or different than the two other theories in an effort to guide the ethical conduct of engineers? You may wish to use Preston's Stovall's article on Engineering ethics, p. 45-onwards, to this end.

2. Find two philosophy articles on ethical codes in any para profession, i.e. nursing, policing, and analyze the codes to determine why the codes are needed and whether they work to guide the professional in ethical judgments. Your analysis should consider the purpose of codes of conduct in this profession.

3. Take any profession not covered in our textbook and analyze it to determine the following: How is it organized? What measures does it take to self-regulate or legislate? What obligations does it impose on its members? Does it enhance the ability of its workers to benefit society? In other words, analyze how it operates and conducts its affairs.

4. Analyze the issue of Conflict of Interest as presented in our textbook. You will focus on 3 articles: Coleman's, Goldberg's and Laliberte & Hudon's. This is found in Part 8 of the textbook. Formulate a thesis related to why conflicts of interest matter ethically. What should be done to address such conflicts and why?

5. Analyze the ethical issues in the topic of Foreign Aid focusing particularly on how the workers should be working, or unique responsibilities they may have. Do they have, along with their organization, any obligations to avoid interfering? Given the poor records of many large Aid organizations in leaving negative consequences in its tracks, try to determine what organizations and individuals should do to avoid inflaming a problem, instead of helping to solve it. What professional-client relationship should be developed to help instead of hinder development?
6. Do some minor research on the issue of Gatekeeping. Formulate an argument about how serious a problem it is and what might need to be done to resolve it.
7. Examine the philosophical issues in approving new drugs in Canada. In so doing, try to show how different theories lead to different rules or procedures. In particular, examine the ethical problems of adopting the precautionary principle in such procedures.