**EHR 1204 History of Ethics**

**Course description**

The course will examine the history of ethics back to the ancient Greek. The emergence of ethical ideas and relation of these to different cultural epochs will also be studied. Examines philosophers like Socrates, Plato and Aristotle; examination of ethical schools like stoicism and Epicureanism; medieval and modern philosopher like T. Aquinas, W. of Ockham, T. Hobbes, J.J. Rousseau, J. Locke, I. Kant, and above all contemporary theories like existentialism (J.P. Sartre, S. de Beauviour), situation ethics (J. Fletcher), emotivism (C.L. Stevenson, A.J. Ayer), intuitionism (G.E. Moore, H.A. Prichard, D. Ross) and prescriptivism (R.M. Hare). In the contemporary World situation, the course shows how our fundamental ethical concerns are related to the overriding cultural concerns of the early 21the century.

**Course objectives**

# The course will help the students to understand the history of ethics, the emergence of ethical ideas and relation of these to different cultural epochs. Students will also be helped to assess how our fundamental ethical concerns are related to the overriding cultural concerns of the early 21st century.

***Learning objectives***

By the end of the course, students will:

1. Know the roots and origins of major positions in ethics
2. appreciate the roles of historical phenomena in shaping ethical thinking
3. Be able to relate cultural epochs with ethics discourse
4. Understand the nature and history of ethical reasoning

**Course outline**

1. Introduction to the History of Ethics
2. Pre-classical Greek ideas on ethics: Egypto-African, Oriental, Chinese
3. Classical Greek ideas on ethics
4. Early Christian ethical views
5. Medieval ethical discussions and positions
6. Ethics in the light of the Luther and the Reformation
7. Modern moral and ethical views and positions
8. Postmodern moral and ethical discussions

**Methodology**

The facilitator(s) will employ the following methods; Interactive lectures, Value clarification exercises, question and answer, small group discussions, brain storming.

**Assessment Mode**

Take home exercise 15%

Practical exercise test 15%

End of semester examination 70%

**Reading List**

1. Jacques Maritain, 1984, *Moral Philosophy: A Historical and Critical Survey of the Great Systems*, Scribner
2. Henry Sidgwick, 1988, *Outlines of the History of Ethics for English Readers*, Macmillan and Co.
3. Alasdair MacIntyre, 1990, *A Short History of Ethics*, 2nd Ed., Routledge