

Curricular Phase:

Program Proposal for an Undergraduate Applied Ethics Certificate (12 credits)

1. Objectives

Program Summary and Objectives

This is a proposal for a 12-credit Ramapo College of New Jersey undergraduate Certificate in Applied Ethics.

Applied ethics, also called practical ethics, attempts to answer the question of how people should act in specific situations. Applied ethics is the place where ethical theory meets disciplinary, professional, or practical fields.

Currently Ramapo already offers a number of courses that fall under the heading of applied ethics. This certificate bundles several courses so that students may graduate with an additional credential in this sought-after field.

The program goal is for students to develop an intellectual and practical framework for engaging with ethical problems.

Students will take three courses.

Required course (4 credits):

- HGS - PHIL 233 Ethics - 4 credits, required

Elective courses, choose 2: (8 credits):

- ASB - BADM 301 Ethics in Business
- ASB - SUST 210 Business and Sustainability
- ASB - INFO 315 - Computer Law & Ethics
- CA - COMM 231 Media Issues and Ethics
- HGS - PHIL 328 Bioethics
- HGS/SSHS - PHIL 205/PSYC 205 The Ethical Self
- SSHS - LAWS 210 Law, Justice, Morality
- SSHS - PSYC 206 Ethical and Legal Issues in Psychology
- TAS - DATA 225 Ethics of Technology
- HNRS 325 Honors Values and Ethics Seminar

2. Evaluation and Learning Outcomes Plan

Program Assessment

Goals, outcomes, and assessment process

The Program Goal is for students to:

- (1) Develop an intellectual and practical framework for engaging with ethical problems.

The student Learning Outcomes are:

- (1.1) Students should be able to articulate core ethical theories and their applications to real-world problems, and
- (1.2) Students should be able to explain the role of ethics in the workplace and public life.

This goal and outcomes will be included in College assessment procedures, including any direct and indirect measures, as determined by the Vice Provost for Assessment.

Alignment of outcomes to all college goals outcomes

All College Strategic Plan	SLO 1.1 Articulate core theories and applications	SLO 1.2 Explain the role of role of ethics in workplace and public life
Goal 1: Academic Excellence & Student Success, Objective a.	x	x
Goal 2: Inclusive Community, Objective d.	x	x

Curriculum map

Courses	SLO 1.1 Articulate core theories and applications	SLO 1.2 Explain the role of role of ethics in workplace and public life
PHIL 233	x	x
BADM 301	x	x
SUST 210/BADM 210	x	x
INFO 315		x
COMM 231		x
PHIL 328	x	x
PHIL 205/PSYC 205	x	x
LAWS 210	x	x
DATA 225		x
HNRS 325		x

3. Relationship of Program to Institutions Strategic Plan

Alignment with College’s Mission and Vision

<p>College’s Mission Statement Ramapo College is New Jersey’s Public Liberal Arts College, dedicated to providing students a strong foundation for a lifetime of achievement. The College is committed to academic excellence through interdisciplinary and experiential learning, and international and intercultural understanding. Ramapo College emphasizes teaching and individual attention to all students. We promote diversity, inclusiveness, sustainability, student engagement, and community involvement.</p>	<p>This program delivers “interdisciplinary and experiential learning.”</p> <p>Students will take courses from different disciplines and convening groups, providing interdisciplinarity. Applied ethics, as a field of study, is always interdisciplinary.</p> <p>Secondly, the assignments and activities in those classes stress attention to real-world applications to ensure experiential learning. After the required course, students will choose to have significant learning experiences within science, health, business, law, and/or journalism.</p> <p>“A professional will never be able to separate his or her work life from his or her personal, private life. Your personality will be crucial to your success as a professional, and your professional life will influence and change how you interact with your friends and family and even your self-definition.”¹</p>
<p>Ramapo College Vision Ramapo College delivers a transformative education in a diverse community dedicated to welcoming and mentoring students who bring with them a range of lived experiences. We will achieve national distinction for developing empathetic problem solvers, ethical change agents, and responsible leaders who make a positive impact and thrive in a changing world.</p>	<p>This program is expressly developing students to be <i>ethical change agents</i> because of their theoretical and practical experience in applied ethics.</p> <p>“Applied ethics, unlike theoretical ethics, cannot ignore actual conditions. Since applied ethics is directed toward the solution of controversial issues, it must assume disagreement and hence seek procedures for moving from disagreement to agreement.”²</p>

Alignment with the Strategic Plan and School Mission or Goals

¹ Martin, Clancy, Wayne Vaught, and Robert C. Solomon. 2010. Introduction to *Ethics Across the Professions*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

² DeMarco, Joseph P. and Richard M. Fox. 2020. *New Directions in Ethics: The Challenges in Applied Ethics*. Philadelphia, PA: Routledge Library.

<p>Ramapo College Boldly Ascending Strategic Plan Goal 1: Academic Excellence & Student Success</p>	<p>Objective a. Provide learning environments and opportunities that encourage the development of deep content knowledge that leads to discerning engagement in work and in the world.</p>	<p>This program ensures deep content knowledge of applied ethics with three courses in the field.</p>
<p>Ramapo College Boldly Ascending Goal 2: Inclusive Community</p>	<p>Objective d. Develop future leaders who gain self-awareness, mentor others, and emerge as change agents</p>	<p>This program fosters ethical consciousness, which is surely a prerequisite for future leaders and change agents.</p>
<p>School of Humanities and Global Studies Unit Plan</p>	<p>Outcome #2, Create New Interdisciplinary Programs</p>	<p>This program draws on courses from 4 schools, with the one required course (PHIL 233), being housed in HGS.</p>

Impact on Other Programs

This Certificate in Applied Ethics has no foreseeable negative impact on existing programs. It makes use of courses and resources already readily available. The program will have a foreseeable positive impact on the courses/disciplines participating by adding to enrollments.

4. Program Need

Program's need

An undergraduate applied ethics certificate will benefit our students and the College in a number of ways:

- Students will gain the vocabulary, background, and skills to address ethical issues in a variety of fields, including business, science, law, journalism, and the ‘helping professions’ in education, social work, and therapy.
- Employers prize candidates who have a demonstrated commitment to ethical practices in the workplace, giving these students a competitive advantage in the employment market.
- This applied ethics certificate is interdisciplinary in nature, building from a foundation in philosophy to application in several disciplines. Such an interdisciplinary perspective is prized in a wide variety of educational and professional pursuits.
- Studying ethics can be personally rewarding, helping individuals to develop their own identities as moral agents.
- An undergraduate certificate is available as a professional development credential for non-matriculated students.

Employers are confronting new realities and will require a flexible workforce equipped to respond to new ethical dilemmas. For example, Gartner’s article on “The Future of Work Trends for 2023” identifies challenges employers will face, including mitigating algorithmic hiring bias, protecting employee privacy, and implementing DEI initiatives.³ All of these trending challenges *are* challenges in applied ethics.

Thus the demand for employees who have an interest and expertise in ethics is high. For example, a cursory search of Zip Recruiter lists hundreds of opportunities related to applied ethics, in industries such as business, tech, and medicine – and many of these jobs do not require graduate degrees.

Comparison with similar programs in the State and neighboring states

A recent article by *Inside Higher Ed* documents the success nationwide of undergraduate certificates in ethics.⁴ Different sorts of institutions that have implemented ethics certificates are covered in the article, from mid-sized Millersville to the large University of New Hampshire. Locally, four institutions offer similar certificates.

Institution	Offering
Rowan University	12-credit Ethics Certificate. ⁵
William Paterson University	12-credit Professional Ethics Certificate as well as a Health Care Ethics Certificate. ⁶
Temple University	12-credit Ethics Certificate. ⁷
Rutgers Business School	Several different kinds of certificates aimed at either non-matriculated or graduate students. ⁸

³McCrae, Emily Rose and Peter AykensGartner. 2023. “9 Future of Work Trends.” *Gartner.com* <https://www.gartner.com/en/articles/9-future-of-work-trends-for-2023>

⁴ Quinn, Ryan. 2023. “Certificates from a Philosophy Department.” *Inside Higher Ed*. <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/faculty-issues/curriculum/2023/05/17/certificates-philosophy-department>

⁵ Rowan University. 2023. <https://chss.rowan.edu/departments/phwr/programs/cugs-ethics.pdf>

⁶ William Paterson. 2023. <https://www.wpunj.edu/cohss/departments/history-philosophy-and-liberal-studies/>

⁷ Temple University. 2023. <https://www.temple.edu/academics/degree-programs/ethics-certificate-undergraduate-la-ethc-cert>

⁸ Rutgers University Institute for Ethical Leadership. 2023. <https://www.business.rutgers.edu/ethical-leadership>

We do not believe that the existence of these certificates at competitor institutions should dissuade Ramapo from offering one. To the contrary, a Certificate in Applied Ethics is unique among these offerings.

5. Students anticipated enrollment

Program's anticipated enrollment from launch to optimal level

There is no EDEPS or similar data on certificate completion rates.

We therefore are modeling our anticipated enrollment on the Spanish for Health Care and Human Service Professionals Certificate (SPHC), also an interdisciplinary program rooted in the liberal arts. That program launched in Fall 2018 and graduated 11 students in Spring 2019. By Spring 23, 38 students earned SPHC Certificates.

Anticipated enrollment:

2024-2025	10
2025-2026	15
2026-2027	25
2027-2028	35
2028-2029	40

It is important to note that since this program is built from regularly offered courses with robust enrollments, it only presents a net win for the College in terms of costs if we can attract a handful of non-matriculated students.

As documentation of student interest, we surveyed enrollments in the courses listed in the proposed program offered in Fall 2023. Currently we estimate that 300 students are taking one of the classes in the program this term. That means that if we had an applied ethics certificate, these 300 students would be one third of the way to earning the credential.

6. Program Resources

The curriculum for this certificate makes use of courses already offered, and uses no additional resources immediately. All of the required and elective courses are offered quite frequently as part of the General Education program.

7. Degree Requirements

Course titles, descriptions and credits; Course sequencing

Students will take three courses.

One required course (4 credits):

- HGS - PHIL 233 Ethics, 4 Credits

This course is an introduction to ethics. Ethics asks how humans ought to live and the kinds of people they ought to try to be. We will discuss whether we can arrive at final answers to such questions. This class will have a dual focus on both theories of ethics, as well as on applied problems in today's multicultural world: world poverty, war, race and sexuality, among other topics. Our philosophical readings will include classic texts (e.g., Plato, Kant, and Mill) as well as recent texts (e.g., Martin Luther King, Carol Gilligan, and Peter Singer). We will learn through conversation, working and teaching in groups, and writing papers and exams.

Elective courses, choose 2 from any of these 4 credit courses: (8 credits):

- ASB - BADM 301 Ethics in Business, 4 Credits

The ability to identify and deal with business ethics issues is a priority for today's corporations. Well-publicized ethical and legal lapses at a number of prominent firms have highlighted the need for organizations to integrate ethics and responsibility into all business decisions. Accordingly, students need to develop the ability to discern whether specific business practices are not just legal but also beneficial, moral, and appropriate for all stakeholders. Using the ethical frameworks of utilitarianism, deontological ethics and virtue ethics, the course will investigate some of the more common areas in which ethical conflicts arise in the business setting and propose a number of methodologies for addressing them. The students will analyze ethical implications of the global distribution of power and resources and examine assumptions about individual and group identity. The course will also allow students to practice reflective inter/intra-personal skills and demonstrate logic and reasoning skills.

- ASB - SUST 210/BADM 210 Business and Sustainability, 4 Credits

This course examines the business rationale for sustainability as fairness to future generations, and analyzes how sustainability as the triple bottom line impacts organizations and their functioning. This course takes up the challenge of working out ethical and strategic approaches to impact analysis from within a holistic sustainability frame. The course covers concepts such as socio-ethical impact, competitive advantage and environment impact. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) and Environmental and Social Governance (ESG) as well as sustainability models of for-profit and non-profit organizations will be explored. Students in this course will focus on the business imperative for sustainability, and the ways in which the ethical case can be made for a shift in direction toward sustainability. They will come to appreciate the ethical dimensions of business operations, and understand the value proposition for sustainability action. This course has been cross listed with BADM-210.

- ASB - INFO 315 - Computer Law & Ethics, 4 Credits

An interactive, broad-based course for students interested in technology and ethics. Students will participate in debates, role plays, and frequent in-class assignments. One short written assignment, very specific to one or more issues in the course, will be required. There will also be a group project requiring a written ethical analysis and an oral presentation. Some classes may be taught in hybrid form, i.e., partially online. The hybrid portion of the course requires viewing streaming video and completing online quizzes and assignments. Some topics covered are: computer waste and mistake, the impact of technology on quality of life, gender-based issues, social networking, privacy concerns, intellectual property issues, computer security, software development, computer crime, hate sites, and management of IT organizations.

- CA - COMM 231 Media Issues and Ethics, 4 Credits

This course is devoted to an examination and discussion of current issues and ethics faced by media professionals. Designed to prepare students for ethical situations they will confront in their chosen area of the communications field, the course will examine various case studies from print and digital journalism, photojournalism, public relations and advertising. By the end of the course, students will have an understanding of professional media standards and how to apply them to situations which arise within the various media.

- HGS - PHIL 328 Bioethics, 4 Credits

This course will be a comprehensive introduction to bioethics. Bioethics applies the traditional ethical concerns to the technologies and choices of today's world. Some questions we will consider are: When does human life begin? What does it mean to create life? How are humans uniquely responsible for sustaining life? Should it ever be ended for compassionate reasons? What obligations do we have to those who cannot make their own health care decisions? We will learn through conversation, working and teaching in groups and writing papers and exams.

- HGS/SSHS - PHIL 201/PSYC 205 The Ethical Self, 4 Credits

This course discusses some of life's basic questions. How do we construct our self? What has the greatest influence on our self: our past, present or future? How can we act as an Ethical Self? In this course 'self' is understood as complex, constituted through the dialectic among processes at societal, local and 'personal' (i.e., agentive) levels. The self, so created, is deeply influenced by societal discourses (e.g., gender, race, class), and can be seen as hybrid and filled with tensions. For example, a woman may be career oriented, yet also deeply committed to motherhood. These two aspects of her 'self' sometimes pull her in opposing directions, causing tension and ambiguity. Our goal in this course is to conceptualize the Ethical Self: One who understands the 'self as cohesive despite the presence of tension. So too, the Ethical Self approaches ambiguity with tolerance rather than intolerance. We will pay special attention to one's economic status in this course, and the effect that inequity of resources can have on identity construction. We will read about scholars such as Charles Pierce, Hans Vaihinger, Maria Lugones, Gloria Anzaldua, James Fowler and Lawrence Kohlberg. As you work through these readings, you will be guided by a series of keystone questions, such as those above, that will help you to engage more deeply with the readings.

This is cross listed as PSYC205 -- The Ethical Self.

- SSHS - LAWS 210 Law, Justice, Morality, 4 Credits

This course explores the dialectical relation between law, justice, and morality from the perspectives of law and the humanities--drawing substantially from the field of general jurisprudence, and specifically from the disciplines of philosophy, history, and literature of law. The course focuses on how justice as a moral and a legal construct has been conceived in its social and historical contexts from Biblical and Hellenic to modern and contemporary times. In particular, we will examine: the theoretical foundations of law, justice and morality; the embeddedness of law and justice in specific contexts and the extent to which our increasingly global world increases the number and complexity of moral and legal dilemmas confronting us as local and global citizens; and the ways in which law mediates the relationship between the individual and the state.

- SSSH - PSYC 206 Ethical and Legal Issues in Psychology, 4 Credits

This course will initially introduce students to the philosophy of ethics, applying a range of philosophical positions to various dilemmas in the field of psychology. How these philosophical positions are interpreted with regard to various Codes of Ethics in the helping professions will also be examined. This will be followed by a review of the specific debates that underlie, and/or result from, various schools of thought in the field of psychology. Next, specific controversies within the field of psychology will be examined, with the hope that these will be understood within the context of the larger philosophical positions covered earlier in the semester. Finally, some of the salient legal issues, such as patient confidentiality, research ethics and practitioner malpractice in the field of psychology will be addressed.

- TAS - DATA 225 Ethics of Technology, 4 Credits

This course presents a study of the impact of the computer on modern society. Positive and negative aspects of the use of the computer in such areas as the military, education, medicine, the office, the assembly line, databases, and the computerization of the home will be examined. This course will also take a deeper look into the collection, manipulation, and use of data. The course will include, but not be limited to, privacy concerns, security techniques, data anonymization, and proper vs. misuse of collected data.

- HNRS 325 Honors Values and Ethics Seminar, 4 Credits

This Honors course examines the ethics and values of diverse cultures through the way they use representation in the realm of performance. The course looks at the ways that performances relate to the ethics and values of diverse communities throughout history and geography, from ancient Greece to the present, from the Americas to Europe to Asia. Students will focus on the relationships between performance and spectators and the-ethical implications and provocations of performance such as the staging of violence, the representation of character, and the relationship of storytelling to global and local power structures and hierarchies. We will read philosophical, theoretical and historical material, attend and create performances, and study plays and other historical artifacts to examine the specific ethical issues that theatrical performances engender.

Distinction between required and elective courses

One course is required; it is PHIL 233. This course is a theoretical and practical introduction to ethics. Two elective courses are to be chosen from the list above. These courses are all more specialized courses in different areas within applied ethics.

Number of credits for the entire program including general education courses

12 credits (3 courses) are required.