This course examines some aspects of ethical decision making in conflict situations. What becomes of ethics when put to the test of fear? What conditions make resistance possible? Are ethical standards of legitimacy similar to legal standards? The course aims at analyzing the necessary conditions for ethical decisions making and, while doing so, to understand better the relations between ethics, moral, cultural, political and personal factors that make ethical actions possible.

**Learning objectives:**
- To understand the place of ethics in contemporary culture.
- To reflect on the relations between ethics, moral, law and legitimacy.
- To get acquainted with various theories on ethics.
- To reflect on the conditions that make ethical decisions possible.
- To examine the importance of subjectivity in ethical decision making.
- To analyse the links between moral and ethics in conflict situations and in conflict resolution.
- To identify the relations between ethics, action and justice.

**Methodology:**

Class participation is mandatory. Required readings will be determined for each lesson. Explanatory comments will be given by the professor, who will also lecture on some specific issues. Students will be invited either to comment the text, to formulate some questions for discussion in relation to the material, or to share some thoughts, reflections or critics raised by the readings. In preparing for class discussion the students will address the following issue: what does that paper teach us on ethics in conflict situation or on ethics and reconciliation? In some cases, students will be asked to answer more specific questions. Some reading will serve as case studies, some will be illustrated by a case presentation. After the second week of teaching, each lecture will include a practical part. Students will be asked to present case illustrations for discussion and analysis, in relation with the material of the lecture.

Reading the material is compulsory for all. Therefore, to ensure optimal class participation to the discussion, each student will be required to hand in, at each class, a short paper (one page, or less) related to the required readings (brief summary, main ideas, questions, or critical comments). Class participation counts for 30% of the final note: 25% for class presentations.
and weekly preparations of the short paper, and 5% for participation in the discussion. Weekly work is essential to a profitable integration of the material presented in class.

**Evaluation:**
Class participation (including presentation, case illustration and short papers): 30%
Exam (take home): 30%
Research and integration paper: 40%

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**Course outline**

**INTRODUCTION**

Introductory comments. Ethics and conflict. The practical nature of ethics and the inherent relations between ethics, ethical decision making and action. Ethics, moral and deontology. The instrumentalization of ethics in contemporary culture. Law and ethics: ethical legalism and current reasoning.
Ethics, aesthetics, and truth: parameters of a debate.
Ethics and virtue. Ethical decision making in conflict situation: the test of fear. Ethics and resistance: authority, power, conformism, obedience. The ethical subject and the acting subject.

*Readings*
*Bulgakov, M. The Master and Margarita,* chap II.
*Milgram, S. Some Conditions of Obedience and Disobedience to Authority,* in *The Individual in a Social World.* 1977, Addison-Wesley, pp 102-123.

**1. CULTURAL CONDITIONS OF ETHICAL DECISION MAKING**

**a) Ethics in postmodern conditions**
Some definitions of postmodernism and its relevance for the current understanding of ethical decision making.
Values and ethics

*Readings*

*Singer B. Introduction to Freitag.* *European Journal of Social Theory* 5 (2) : 171-173

* All readings listed are not compulsory. Compulsory readings are marked with an *, but changes are possible. This will be decided as the course evolves.

- Introduction, by Steve Connor
- Sheehan, P. Postmodernism and Philosophy.


**b) Ethics, Law and Human rights**


Judicial decisions:
*Multani c Commission scolaire Marguerite-Bourgeoys*, (2006) 1 RCS 256
*Alberta vs Hutterian Brethren of Wilson Colony* 2009 CSC 37.


*Tessier Hélène, Raisonnable ou rationnel? Pluralisme religieux, droit à l’égalité et accommodement raisonnable : rationalisme et bi-juridisme canadien. ( à paraître)


c) Ethics under different cultural conditions: classical and current theories

Readings
*Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, ch. 1, 2, 3 5. Available on line


Marxist perspectives:


2. Personal and Subjective Conditions of Ethical Decision-making

Ethics and Moral Sense:
Classical theories in social psychology. Genetic and cognitive theories (Kohlberg). Psychoanalytic approaches: the divided self, subjectivity and introduction to the metapsychology of action.

Readings:

**Ethics of care: a feminist perspective**
Held V. Can the Ethics of care handle violence? *Ethics and Social Welfare*, 4:2, 115-129
Available on line.

**A psychoanalytic perspective**

**The perspective of work**

3. **Political conditions of ethical decision-making**

Law and ethics, the limits of the legal approach: the issue of legitimacy.

**Readings:**
- Concept of Legitimate Order
- Sociology of Charismatic Authority
- Pure types of legitimate Authority
- Charismatic Authority and its Routinization
- Bureaucracy


4. **Ethics, Human Rights and violent conflicts**

Humanitarian Law and international jurisdictions. Safety and terrorism.

Supreme Court Decision:
*Charkaoui c Canada (Citoyenneté et immigration) 2007 1 RCS 350.


Cryer, R. Friman, H. Robinson, D. Wilmshurst, E., War Crimes. *Id.*


5. **Ethics and Reconciliation**


**Readings :**


