

## Objective 2.1: Knowledge of the Liberal Arts PHIL 331: Ethical Issues in the Professions and Business

Students will possess a broad understanding of how to think about the world, having studied the modes of inquiry characteristic of humanities, mathematics, natural sciences, and social and behavioral sciences.

### Outcomes 2.1-E: Philosophical Mode of Inquiry

By graduation students will:	Not Proficient 1 Point	Developing Proficiency 2 Points	Proficient 3 Points	Exceeding Proficiency 4 Points
Identify the distinguishing characteristics of philosophical questions (non-empirical questions suitable for being approached dialectically).	<i>The student fails to identify three philosophical claims.</i>	<i>The student identifies three philosophical claims but fails to explain what makes them philosophical.</i>	<i>The student identifies three philosophical claims and succeeds at explaining what makes them philosophical.</i>	<i>The student identifies three philosophical claims and, in explaining what makes them philosophical, clearly indicates an understanding of the limits of empirical inquiry.</i>
Compose an essay that accurately captures someone else's reasoning in support of their answer to a philosophical question.	<i>The student fails to capture the gist of the argument.</i>	<i>The student captures the gist of the argument but leaves out one or more important elements.</i>	<i>The student sets the argument out clearly, accurately, and fully.</i>	<i>The student sets the argument out clearly, accurately, and fully, and reflects intelligently on its significance.</i>
Compose an essay that accurately captures a significant objection to a clearly formulated philosophical argument and explains why the objection is significant.	<i>The student fails to raise a significant objection.</i>	<i>The student raises a significant objection, but fails to explain how it undermines the argument.</i>	<i>The student raises a significant objection and explains how it undermines the argument.</i>	<i>The student raises a significant objection, explains how it undermines the argument, and reflects intelligently on how a defender of the argument could reasonably reply.</i>

**Assignment meeting Outcome 1:** Given a list composed of philosophical and non-philosophical claims, the student will select three examples of philosophical claims and explain what makes them philosophical.

**Assignment meeting Outcome 2:** The student is assigned a passage of text presenting a philosophical argument and asked to set the argument out clearly and fully in their own words.

**Assignment meeting Outcome 3:** The student is presented with a clear and full statement of a philosophical argument in numbered steps and is asked to formulate and defend an objection calling into question either one of the argument's premises or its internal logic.

## **PHIL 331: Ethical Issues in the Professions and Business -- sample assignments fitting the CORE assignment descriptions**

### **Outcome 2.1E.1**

Select three philosophical claims from the following list (which actually contains four such claims) and explain what makes them philosophical.

1. We are under no obligation to provide life support for a human being permanently deprived of reason and experience.
2. The reduction in the number of U.S. motor vehicle fatalities over the past 50 years (53,543 in 1969 and 36,120 in 2019) was caused primarily by the increased use of seatbelts and by the safety features engineered into automobiles.
3. If it appears that a person has conflicting duties, then at least one of these apparent duties is not an actual duty.
4. Although most Americans prefer representational art to abstract art, the U.S. National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) funds more abstract art projects than representational art projects.
5. No matter how unjust a law, citizens nonetheless have a duty to obey it.
6. Over the past 120 years, capitalist societies have enjoyed significantly higher standards of living than Marxist or communist societies.
7. According to the American Bar Association, it is wrong for a lawyer to compensate, give or promise anything of value to a person for recommending their services.
8. It is wrong to believe anything upon insufficient evidence.
9. The treatment of mental illness in the United States prior to the mid-twentieth century would be considered barbaric or inhumane by mental health practitioners today.
10. A recently deciphered cryptogram sent to police by the so-called Zodiac Killer in 1969 has led some investigators to conclude that the serial killer was probably a police officer.

### **Outcome 2.1E.2**

How does Milton Friedman argue in "The Social Responsibility of Business Is to Increase Its Profits" that corporations do not have any moral obligations to society other than to obey the law?

### **Outcome 2.1E.3**

What is the strongest objection you can think of to the following argument? Set out your reasoning as clearly, thoroughly and persuasively as you can, and be sure to explain how, if this were true, the argument would be undermined.

1. Employees owe a duty of loyalty to their employer.
2. Harming someone to whom one owes a duty of loyalty is a violation of that duty.
3. Whistleblowers harm their employers.
4. It is always wrong to violate one's duty.
5. Therefore, it is always wrong to blow the whistle against one's employer.