

# Wachusett Regional High School

**Course Name: Ethics Human Conduct and Values**

**Level: Academic Foundation (AF)**

**Grade (s): 11 & 12**

## **Course Description:**

Ethics Human Conduct and Values is a one-semester, two-term course designed to provide eleventh and twelfth grade students with an in-depth knowledge, understanding, and analysis of ethical and moral theory. This course is not designed to indoctrinate students into one way of thinking or believing. In fact, diverse points of view and arguments from a variety of sources will be used to demonstrate how varying people can come to different conclusions regarding acts of human behavior. The study of our inquiry into ethical theory begins with an introduction to ethics, its importance, and varying ethical theories and philosophers. After a solid foundation of ethical theories has been established, various moral dilemmas will be examined throughout the remainder of the course. The moral dilemmas will, at times, have historical significance, and at other times, be based on modern technological advancements. The course will conclude with a final examination based on the ethical theories and moral dilemmas presented throughout the course.

## **Links to Student Expectations:**

1. All students will assess information in a critical manner by using skills that demonstrate the ability to identify and approach, and provide resources to solve a problem.
2. All students will learn to communicate critically, persuasively, and personally in both oral and written expression.

## **Interdisciplinary Connections:**

- ✓ United States and World History
- ✓ Literature
- ✓ Music
- ✓ Film
- ✓ Science and Technology

## **Essential Concepts:**

1. Ethics studies and analyzes ethical and moral theories with the corresponding philosophers.
2. Ethics studies personal, social, and cultural values in the context of moral dilemmas.
3. Ethics studies the choices, actions, decisions, and consequences of human and cultural behavior.

## **Student Objectives:**

1. Students will read, listen, write, frame relevant questions and reasoned arguments, engage in discussion and debate, conduct research, and interpret and present evidence and data in a systematic, logical manner.
2. Students will explain how different people, in many circumstances, used their intelligence, reasoning, and emotion to arrive at various conclusions regarding acts of human behavior.

# Wachusett Regional High School

## *Student Objectives continued*

3. Students will demonstrate an awareness of diverse ways of thought, belief systems, and cultural values that have shaped and impacted the moral and ethical paths of the world.
4. Students will comprehend the importance of tolerance for others through the understanding of not only our differences but also our similarities in the overall human experience.
5. Students will utilize the content, skills, and knowledge gained from this course to become active, self-developing learners, informed decision makers, and involved citizens on a local, national, and international level.

## **Suggestions for Instruction:**

Students will read primary and secondary texts:

Rachels, James. Elements of Moral Philosophy. McGraw Hill, 1999.

Albert, Ethel M. Great Traditions in Ethics. Wadsworth Publishing. Belmont, CA, 1984.

The study of Ethics: Human Conduct and Values will be based on the chapters and sections within the students' textbook, The Elements of Moral Philosophy by James Rachels. Students will be responsible for reading the text, as well as completing accompanying study guides. In addition to the text, the teacher will use various other interactive and multi-sensory instructional methods to facilitate student understanding of ethical and moral theories, dilemmas, issues, and concepts. The methods include, but are not limited to the following: primary and secondary source readings, lectures, cooperative learning, computer technology, guided discussions, debates, essays, journal assignments, performances, exhibitions, independent research projects, audio-visual presentations, guest speakers, and enactments of moral dilemmas. The teacher is aware that students have diverse learning styles and every effort is made to reach every student through various teaching methods.

## **Suggestions for Assessment:**

- ✓ MCAS ELA long composition rubric
- ✓ MCAS ELA short composition rubric
- ✓ Quizzes
- ✓ Essays
- ✓ Tests
- ✓ Written and oral projects
- ✓ Performance assessments
- ✓ Authentic assessments

## **Curriculum:**

- ✓ What is Morality?
- ✓ The Challenge of Cultural Relativism
- ✓ Subjectivism in Ethics
- ✓ Does Morality Depend on Religion?
- ✓ Psychological Egoism
- ✓ Ethical Egoism
- ✓ The Utilitarian Approach
- ✓ The Debate over Utilitarianism

# Wachusett Regional High School

## *Curriculum continued*

- ✓ Are there Absolute Moral Rules?
- ✓ Kant and Respect for Persons
- ✓ The Idea of a Social Contract
- ✓ Feminism and the Ethics of Care
- ✓ The Ethics of Virtue
- ✓ What Would a Satisfactory Moral Theory be Like?

## **Lesson Extensions:**

- ✓ Guest speakers
- ✓ Video conference
- ✓ Community outreach project
- ✓ Research paper