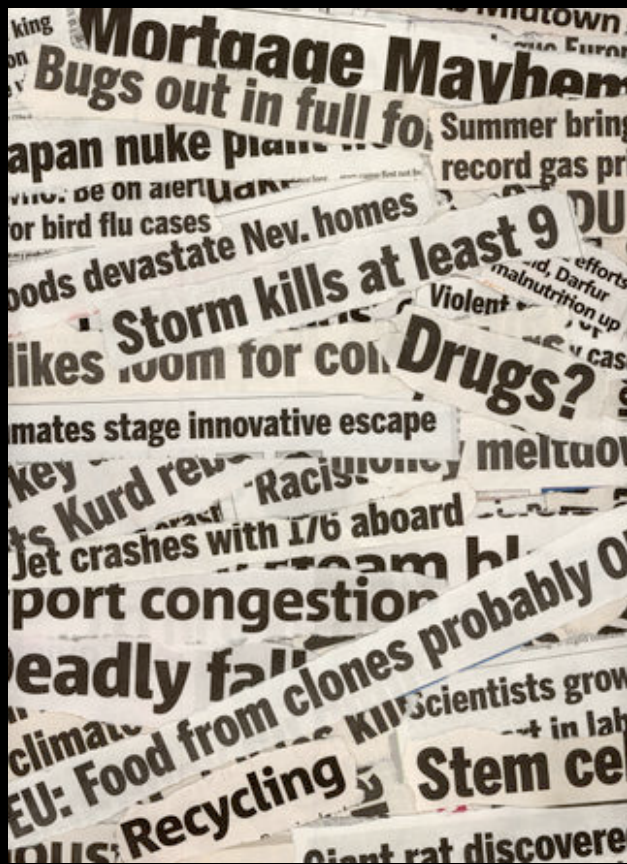


# *PHL 205*

## *Contemporary Moral Issues*



- Course topics ripped from today's headlines!
- Applied Ethics, Social & Political Philosophy, Public Policy
- Personal, social, political

# *Classroom Mechanics*

- TV cameras – get over yourself!
- YouTube video available in the evening or the morning following each class
- Speak up!
- Don't filibuster
- Be civil
- 10 minute break after about 50 minutes

## *Four Sections*



- Studio Classroom
- Honors
- Cottage Grove
- Cable Television/Online Video

# *Class Requirements*

- 4 exams, each worth 20% (multiple choice, T/F, taken in Testing Lab in CEN456) = 80%
- Studio Classroom: 20% participation
- Cottage Grove: 20% participation
- Honors: 15% paper/presentation, 5% class summaries = 20%
- Cable Television/Online Video: 20% online forum posts, 2 per week

## *First Week Tasks*

- Login to Moodle by Thursday night or you may be dropped Friday!
- Syllabus in Moodle – read it!
- Honors student: Post class summaries Wed & Fri
- Online Students: 2 Posts due by Sunday night
- Check Moodle Wednesday for Blog link

# *Making Moral Arguments*



- Three types of premises
  - Fundamental moral principles
  - Empirical principles
  - Legal principles

# *Moral Relativism*

- For the purposes of the class, we are assuming moral absolutism or universalism
- If you're interested in metaethics, take PHL 201 Ethics
- No previous knowledge of ethics required

# *Moral Relativism*

- Violates general principle that truth is that which corresponds with reality
- No one consistently believes or follows it
- Obvious immoral individuals/corrupt customs or cultures



# *Moral Relativism*

- Majority/status quo always right
- Absurd morality of polls
- Social protest by the minority always wrong
- Moral progress is impossible
- No non-arbitrary way to draw cultural lines

# *Making Moral Arguments*

- Avoid logical fallacies
  - *Ad hominem*
  - *Tu quoque*
  - *Ad populum*
  - Straw man
  - Red herring
  - Lack of proportion