Philosophical Ethics (PHIL 235W) is unusual in several respects. Before attempting to register for the course, please consider all of the following points carefully:

1. Instructor Consent is required for registration.

2. Half of the participants in this course will be WU students and the other half will be prisoners at Oregon State Penitentiary (OSP). OSP is Oregon’s only maximum security prison, housing male prisoners who have been convicted of crimes including murder, rape, armed robbery, and assault. To take this class, you must be willing to engage with classmates who may have committed violent crimes. You must also be willing to discuss challenging ethical and political issues with men who have had, and in some instances continue to have, affiliations with groups and organizations that you might find objectionable.

3. Your admission to OSP is strictly conditioned on your following Department of Correction rules concerning dress and conduct. We will review those rules at the start of the semester. Anyone who fails to follow the rules can be blocked from entering OSP. Please remember that violations might jeopardize not only your access to our classroom but also the arrangement that makes joint courses of this sort possible.

4. To enter OSP, you must pass a background check. For this purpose, you will need to provide me with your full legal name, date of birth, and driver’s license number and state. If you do not pass the background check, you cannot take this class. No one at Willamette plays any role in deciding whether you pass the background check, and there is no mechanism for appeal.

5. This is a writing-centered course. Student writing will be subject to in-class critique and peer review. You have the right to except your work from in-class critique, but I urge you to consider leaving it in the stack. All written work will be anonymized before it is discussed in class, and in fact I will not know whose work I am grading even while I grade it.

Ivan Welty

October 26, 2019
6. We will meet as a class only once per week. It is very important that you not miss class. If you are prone to frequent absences or have many competing commitments, please consider a different class.

7. Much of our discussion will take place in small groups. To participate in those discussions, it is vital that you do the reading assigned. This is not a class that you can coast through. You will find that students at OSP take their studies extremely seriously and we must all match their level of commitment.

8. Our first two meetings will be on Tuesday as scheduled, but in the evening in Eaton 309 rather than in the early afternoon at OSP (I will meet separately with OSP students those two weeks). I’ll announce details as the semester approaches.

If after reading all of this you still wish to take the course, please drop me an email indicating your interest. You can find my contact information, including email address, on my homepage.