

The Good Life: Ethics and Contemporary Moral Problems

Ethics 2050 Foundation Narrative

Students in Villanova University's College of Liberal Arts & Sciences examine distinct accounts of the human person, society, God, and the natural world that are initially mediated to students for their critical reflection through a series of core courses. These courses comprise the start of their undergraduate studies in a college committed to the values that define it as part of a Catholic, Augustinian institution of higher education.

A primary goal of a liberal arts education is to provide students with the skills necessary to examine critically the claims advanced by the various communities and traditions they share or encounter in their lives. Many of these traditions specifically respond to the question of how one should live or offer guidance for a good human life. They characterize right actions and their relation to human excellence; right relations with ourselves, others, our natural environment, and God; how these relations are expressed in human practices and institutions; the nature and sources of moral failure; the nature of practical reasoning; and so forth. Critical examination of such normative claims with respect to human activity is the domain of the academic discipline of ethics. ETH 2050 is the course in the core curriculum whose clear goal is to advance students in the knowledge and development of the skills necessary to engage in that critical examination. This course asks students to examine the ways in which the Christian and secular traditions impact the understanding and pursuit of the good life.