Phil 315: Ethics
Second Term Paper
Fall 2008

Assignment
Compose an argumentative essay, approximately 5-6 pages long, addressing one of the topics below.
Due: December 5, 2008

Topics
1) Discuss whether Mill’s argument for freedom of speech could be used against the St. Paul ordinance.

2) Many countries have devised hate-speech laws which prohibit hateful speech directed at oppressed groups. Discuss whether this is an enlightened and progressive approach to hate speech. Be sure to take into consideration Mill’s arguments in On Liberty.

3) When, if ever, is war morally justifiable? If war is ever morally justifiable what justifies it? Draw on both the readings in this section and ethical frameworks developed in the first half of the course to support your position.

4) Is the saying true that, ‘all is fair in love and war’? Or are there certain moral standards that one must uphold while conducting a war? Draw on the readings in this section and the ethical frameworks developed in the first half of the course to support your position.

5) Regardless of your position on whether Euthanasia is morally acceptable, do you think that it is appropriate for the state to prevent otherwise willing doctors from assisting with the suicide of those who are terminally ill and want to die? Be sure to consider what Mill might say about this given what he says in On Liberty.

6) Is there a morally relevant difference between active and passive euthanasia? Draw on readings in this section and the ethical frameworks developed in the first half of the course to support your position. (Note that in considering whether there is a morally relevant difference, you are to consider whether these practices are equally acceptable or equally unacceptable. The focus of your argument should be on whether these practices have the same moral status, and not on whether you think Euthanasia is right or wrong.)

Instructions
- Write an essay which persuasively argues for a position on one of these topics.
- Papers should be approximately 5-6 pages, typed, double-spaced, 1.25” margins, 12 point font.
**Structure**

**Introduction:** In the introduction you should clearly identify what the problem is, what your position is (your thesis statement) and briefly outline how you will argue for your position. Please underline or highlight your thesis statement.

**Body:** The body of your paper should:
1) Provide reasons in support of your position.
2) Consider objections to your position. Here you must consider how a reasonable person might disagree with the position you have presented.
3) Respond to the objections. Provide reason to show that the objection does not threaten your position.

What you present as reasons, objections, and responses should demonstrate knowledge of the readings and theory we have been discussing throughout the course. Ensure that when you are drawing on arguments made in a particular reading or from a particular theoretical perspective, that you are doing so as a means of furthering your central point.

**Conclusion:** Your conclusion should briefly summarize your position and how you have argued for it.

**Mechanics**
It is expected that papers be free of all spelling and grammatical errors. Points may be deducted for spelling and grammatical errors and/or poor construction.

**Secondary sources**
Secondary sources are permitted but are not required. If you choose to use secondary sources, you must reference them, even if they are not directly quoted or referred to in your paper.

**Collaborative efforts**
This paper is to be written by you and you alone. While you may discuss general ideas with others, you may not write your papers together and you should not create outlines together. That is, you should not come up with an agreed upon idea and way of developing that idea and then proceed to each write essentially the same paper. Doing so is in violation of the honor code.

You may (and probably should) have someone proofread your paper. This person can raise questions for you to consider, point out rough sections that need further clarification, and make structural or grammatical suggestions.

**Writing center**
The writing center is a valuable resource that you may want to use. Trained tutors are available to help with your essay, free of charge. See their website at www.snc.edu/writingcenter.