



Ethics Syllabus

Introduction to Ethics, PHIL 2306-0030 14512

Jul 8, 2019 – Aug 11, 2019

Distance Learning

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Course Description:

A philosophical reflection of the basic principles of the moral life, including traditional and contemporary views concerning the nature of goodness, happiness, duty, and freedom as they apply to individual right, business, medicine, and community well-being. This course satisfies the Language, Philosophy and Culture or Component Area Option of the HCC core.

PREREQUISITE(S):

- ENGL 1301 or higher

HCC CORE CURRICULUM:

This course satisfies the **Philosophy, Language, and Culture** component area or the **Component Area Option** in the HCC Core Curriculum. If you are not sure that you need this course to graduate, please consult with your advisor.

Course Goals:

1. Familiarize students with major arguments, theories, and figures in Philosophy
2. Cause students to think critically about the perspectives of published Philosophers as well as about their own perspectives
3. Learn how to produce cogent arguments in writing and in discussion

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. **Read, analyze,** and **critique** philosophical texts.

- 2. Demonstrate knowledge** of key concepts, major arguments, problems, and terminology in philosophy.
- 3. Present** logically persuasive arguments both orally and in writing.
- 4. Demonstrate critical thinking skills** in evaluation and application of philosophical concepts to various aspects of life.
- 5. Evaluate** the personal and social responsibilities of living in a diverse world.

Course Format:

1. Readings – The “bread and butter” of the course. I will be giving out hand-picked readings on Canvas that students will read, as assigned, as the basis of the course.
2. Tests – There will be 3 tests at 3 equidistant points in the semester. They may be multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, matching, short answer, or essay. The tests will cover the assigned readings.
3. Capstone Project – Book Report. Each student will read a book on a topic in Applied Ethics that will be approved by me. An essay will be submitted according to a specified format. The project will be submitted in stages: Proposal, Proof of Purchase, Rough Draft, Final Draft. Each will be worth a certain amount of points, proportionate to their importance in the final product.

Notice About Online Learning Management Software:

This is a *web-enhanced* lecture course that uses *Eagle Online 2*. The *Eagle Online* login page is:

<https://eo2.hccs.edu/login/index.php>

Your Eagle Online username is the same as your HCC Eagle ID (or User ID) which is used for Online Registration (for example: W0034567). Your password is the same password you use to log in to PeopleSoft, HCC Webmail, and Active Directory (computer terminal login). For any questions about your Eagle ID or password, please go check online [here](#).

IMPORTANT: Eagle Online works best with the latest version of Mozilla Firefox. Download it free, [here](#). (Please check your Operating System to see if you have Firefox in your applications.)

Required Texts:

There will be no textbook for the course. The readings will be provided on Canvas.

However, the Capstone project will be a book report – and you will be required to obtain a book either from the library, Kindle/e-reader, or a retailer.

Grading Components and Weights:

1. Tests (3) 60%
2. Capstone Project 45%
3. I am fully aware that 60% + 45% is 105%, not 100%. What this means is that if you fall behind on either the tests or the project, you still have the chance to recover without needing "extra credit"

Specific Assignments/Topics:

- **Intro Discussion – GRADED**
 - There will be an introductory post where we can discuss our existing experience with the topic
- **Capstone Assignment: Book Report Topic/Book Selection**
 - We will submit a proposal for the book report, I will approve or reject the submission
- **Capstone Assignment: Book Proof of Purchase/Rental**
 - We will submit the proof that we purchased this book contemporaneously with the class
- **Capstone Assignment: Book Report Rough Draft**
 - We will submit our rough draft of the book report, I will return it with comments
- **Capstone Assignment: Book Report Final Draft**
 - We will submit the final draft of the book report, utilizing my comments to revise
- **Read Plato - Ring of Gyges**
 - What is "justice?" What is "fairness?" Why should we live justly?
- **Read Thomas Nagel - Right and Wrong**
 - A more contemporary summary of how we might determine the right thing to do
- **Read Plato – Crito**
 - Why should we obey the law?
- **Read Martin Luther King Jr: Letter from a Birmingham Jail**
 - Why should we not obey the law?
- **Read Aristotle: Nicomachean Ethics Book 2**
 - What is virtue? We review Aristotle's "virtue ethics" in its original form.
- **Read Jeremy Bentham - Principles of Utility**
 - Utilitarianism – we look at Jeremy Bentham's theory of utilitarian ethics in its original form.
- **Read Immanuel Kant: The Categorical Imperative (excerpt)**
 - Deontology – we examine Immanuel Kant's Categorical Imperative in its original form.
- **Read Don Marquis - Why Abortion is Immoral**
 - Applied Ethics – we review several viewpoints on a contemporary moral issue
- **Read Judith Jarvis Thomson - A Defense of Abortion**
 - Applied Ethics – we review several viewpoints on a contemporary moral issue

Grading Policy [Example]:

All grades will be calculated according to a percentage of *total points*. The total number of points for this term is 900. The term grade legend follows:

A = 90% to 100%	4 points per semester hour
B = 80% to 89.9%	3 points per semester hour
C = 70% to 79.9%	2 points per semester hour
D = 60% to 69.9%	1 point per semester hour
F = 0% to 59.9%	0 points per semester hour
FX (Failure due to non-attendance)	0 points per semester hour
IP (In Progress)	0 points per semester hour
W (Withdrawn)	0 points per semester hour
I (Incomplete)	0 points per semester hour
AUD (Audit)	0 points per semester hour

IP (In Progress) is given only in certain developmental courses. The student must re-enroll to receive credit. COM (Completed) is given in non-credit and continuing education courses. FINAL GRADE OF FX: Students who stop attending class and do not withdraw themselves prior to the withdrawal deadline may either be dropped by their professor for excessive absences or be assigned the final grade of "FX" at the end of the semester. Students who stop attending classes will receive a grade of "FX", compared to an earned grade of "F" which is due to poor performance. Logging into a DE course without active participation is seen as non-attending. Please note that HCC will not disperse financial aid funding for students who have never attended class.

Students who receive financial aid but fail to attend class will be reported to the Department of Education and may have to pay back their aid. A grade of "FX" is treated exactly the same as a grade of "F" in terms of GPA, probation, suspension, and satisfactory academic progress. To compute grade point average (GPA), divide the total grade points by the total number of semester hours attempted. The grades "IP," "COM" and "I" do not affect GPA.

Late policy:

Late Assignments: No Late work will be accepted, period. For one, I list all of the assignments well before their respective due dates. For two, the due dates themselves tend to be very lenient and allow plenty of time for you to complete your work on time. For three, I just see nothing positive about it. Lateness is not a virtue that should be valued or cultivated. Lateness is a deficiency of time management. I would be doing you a disservice by enabling this behavior.

*!! Philosophy Tutoring is available at <http://hccs.askonline.net/> **Please use it if you need it !!***

Plagiarism: (see also Academic Dishonesty)

Plagiarism is strictly prohibited. To make it very simple for you: write everything ONLY in your own words. Any sources you refer to, cite properly. Plagiarism is not allowed, will be detected, and will be given a zero for the assignment, possibly the course.

The following are specific examples of plagiarism that are prohibited and will be given a zero:

- Copying entire essays
- Copying parts of essays, even just a few sentences
- Someone else writing the essay for you

-Submitting the same assignment for multiple classes (It's defined as "self-plagiarism" – you can look it up. Some teachers don't mind this, I do.)

Make-up Policy:

In cases of excused, legal, documented inability to complete coursework, I will allow you the opportunity to make up assignments in alignment with a plan that we both formulate. This will be highly restricted to only those cases of true emergency. Do not expect to be allowed to make up work due to events like company meetings, vacations, family gatherings, other coursework, etc. This all falls under the umbrella of time management. Lack of preparation on your part does not constitute any emergency, urgency, or even mere inconvenience on my part. School is an obligation - A voluntary obligation in the interest of mutual benefit, but an obligation nonetheless.

Furthermore, for online classes, it must be demonstrated that you were so violently ill or so entirely incapacitated that you could not complete online coursework which doesn't really require even leaving your bed in many cases.

Policy on Death as an excuse:

Every semester, I am confronted at least once with the difficult decision of allowing a student to make up work past the posted deadlines because of the emotional impact of the death of a loved one. On the one side of the argument, the student is claiming significant emotional impairment to the extent that they just could not complete their work on time. On the other side, I, the teacher, cannot possibly differentiate between students who are honestly experiencing said impairment, and those who dishonestly claim that they are experiencing said impairment as an excuse for not completing work they should have completed on time. Like many tough decisions, if I categorically say no, I risk harming those with legitimate emotional problems. If I categorically say yes, I risk anyone who is prepared to lie about it being given undeserved grace periods on classwork. I have created the following guidelines designed to mitigate this issue the best I can:

- I must be notified of the death as soon as it occurs and you are reasonably able to provide notice. And with smartphones, the internet, and computers, I do not find it all reasonable that you couldn't notify me within 24 hours. Additionally, if this notice is not given BEFORE a posted deadline, it will not be considered as an excuse for missing the posted deadline.
- I must be given some form of proof of the death. A funeral pamphlet, an obituary, or even a death certificate will do. This can wait until after said ceremony, as long as you provide me the notice beforehand.
- The death must be that of an immediate family member. Mother, father, brother, sister, child, or spouse only. I understand that sometimes friends, extended family, or even pets may be very close to us, but the line must be drawn somewhere. Otherwise, someone could say that they can't do homework because their neighbor died and they were very close. The above criteria could easily be satisfied even in that circumstance, which is why I am restricting this to immediate family only.
- I'm not required to give anybody any grace periods due to death. The course should be dropped and you should appeal to the registrar for an excuse from the state-mandated drop limits. Just keep that in mind when asking for any grace periods.

Attendance and Withdrawal Policy:

NOTE: It is the responsibility of the student to drop, or officially withdraw from this course. Your instructor will withdraw a student if and only if provided a written request from that student. Additionally, system-wide rules affect withdrawals:

- (1) Students who repeat a course for a third, or more times, may face a significant tuition/fee increase at HCC and other Texas public colleges and universities.
- (2) The Texas Legislature passed a law limiting new students (those starting college in Fall 2007) to no more than six total course withdrawals throughout their academic career in obtaining a baccalaureate degree. There may be future penalties imposed.
- (3) No student may withdraw from a course following the set "last date to withdraw", which for Fall 2017 is September 19th. After that date, a student can only be given a grade earned, or an "I" for incomplete. Incompletes must be made up by the end of the following long semester, after which they will automatically change to a grade of "F". Students receiving an "I" for a course are ineligible for graduation until the "I" has been removed from a student's transcript.

Students with Disabilities:

The HCC Accessibility website is located at the following url: <http://www.hccs.edu/district/departments/accessibility/>. You will find information about the types of assistance offered to students with special instructional needs on that web page. You will also find contact information for your college's ADA compliance and accessibility office.

For questions, please contact Donna Price at 713.718.5165 or the ADA counselor at your college campus. You can find a list of counselors [here](#).

EGLS3 – Evaluation for Greater Learning Student Survey System:

At Houston Community College, professors believe that thoughtful student feedback is necessary to improve teaching and learning. During a designated time near the end of the term, you will be asked to answer a short online survey of research-based questions related to instruction. The anonymous results of the survey will be made available to your professors and department chairs for continual improvement of instruction. Look for the survey as part of the Houston Community College Student System online near the end of the term.

At HCC the safety of our students, staff, and faculty is our first priority. As of August 1, 2017, Houston Community College is subject to the Campus Carry Law (SB11 2015). For more information, visit the HCC Campus Carry web page at

<http://www.hccs.edu/district/departments/police/campus-carry/>

Open/Campus Carry of Handguns: Firearms Are Allowed on Campus, but they must be concealed. Firearms are NOT allowed in designated safe zones. If you see anyone openly carrying a firearm on campus call the HCC Police Department at **8-8888** (713-718-8888) immediately.

Texas House Bill 910—known as the "Open Carry" law—allows holders of a handgun license to carry their handgun visibly in a waist belt holster or a shoulder holster, but **they may not**

openly carry on or in a college campus or building and they may not openly carry on any public or private driveway, street, sidewalk or walkway, parking lot, parking garage or other parking area of the college. Open Carry is effective as of January 1, 2016.

Campus carry and open carry are two (2) separate laws. Texas Senate Bill 11—known as the “Campus Carry” law—will allow individuals who have a valid Texas handgun license to carry a concealed handgun in certain areas on college campuses. The Campus Carry law becomes effective at 4-year institutions on August 1, 2016 and at 2-year institutions on August 1, 2017.

All information regarding both Open Carry and Campus Carry is posted at <http://www.hccs.edu/campuscarry>.

Houston Community College is committed to cultivating an environment free from inappropriate conduct of a sexual or gender-based nature including sex discrimination, sexual assault, sexual harassment, and sexual violence. Sex discrimination includes all forms of sexual and gender-based misconduct and violates an individual's fundamental rights and personal dignity. Title IX prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex-including pregnancy and parental status-in educational programs and activities. If you require an accommodation due to pregnancy please contact an Abilities Services Counselor. The Director of EEO/Compliance is designated as the Title IX Coordinator and Section 504 Coordinator. All inquiries concerning HCC policies, compliance with applicable laws, statutes, and regulations (such as Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504), and complaints may be directed to:

HCC strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please meet with a campus Abilities Counselor as soon as possible in order to establish reasonable accommodations. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between you, your instructor(s) and Ability Services. It is the policy and practice of HCC to create inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law. For more information, please go to <http://www.hccs.edu/district/students/disability-services/>

Student Support

Any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable us to provide any resources that HCC may possess.

Academic Dishonesty: Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. A student who is academically dishonest is claiming an advantage not available to other students. The instructor is responsible for measuring each student's individual achievements and also for ensuring that all students compete on a level playing field. Thus, in our system, the instructor has teaching, grading, and enforcing roles. You are expected to be familiar with HCC's policy on Academic Dishonesty located at <http://www.hccs.edu/about-hcc/procedures/student-rights-policies--procedures/student-procedures/>

Pleading ignorance of the rules, including improper documentation (MLA, APA, etc....) is no justification for academic dishonesty.

Students who plagiarize, collude, or cheat will not have an opportunity to resubmit their work and they will receive a grade of 0 for the first assignment, an F in the course for a second assignment, and a report in our Maxient system which could lead to dismissal from the college.

Please utilize this rubric to self-regulate your essays and discussions prior to submission.

Metric	Good	Average	Poor
Argumentation	Clear, concise, discernable premises and conclusions, Little to no obvious fallacious reasoning, Facts that are true to the best of your knowledge supported by an earnest attempt at verification or references if disputable	Vague or unclear premises/conclusions, Reasoning that is easily recognized as fallacious, Facts that might be true but are largely “shot from the hip” and not supported by much if any research, “shotgun approach” to argumentation	Nonexistent or indiscernible premises or conclusions, little to no reasoning of any type/no real argument presented, facts that are easily recognized as disputable
Syntax & Grammar	Sentences flow at a precise level, proper use of all punctuation, zero or very few spelling errors	Choppy/hard to understand sentences, misuse of punctuation, run-on sentences or sentence fragments, spelling errors	Nearly incoherent sentences, frequent misuse of punctuation, run-on sentences or sentence fragments, high occurrence of spelling errors
Organization	Ideas are presented in order, paragraphs include topic sentences and supporting sentences, essay as a whole demonstrates masterful introduction, progression, conclusion	Some evidence of planning, ideas are presented in mostly correct order, paragraphs may lack organization, essay as a whole may lack organization	Incoherent or rambling thoughts, little to no evidence of structure, essay may be one big long rambling sentence or paragraph, no particular progression
Following Directions	Within the specific word minimums and maximums stipulated, turned in on or before the due date, responded to all aspects of the prompt, utilized the stipulated work-collection method	Close to the word counts but not precisely within them, turned in after the due date, touched on some aspects of the prompt, may have usurped the stipulated work-collection method	50% over or under the word count stipulation, turned in after or long after the due date, did not respond to most or any of the prompt, did in fact usurp the required work collection method