

# INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY

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## PHIL 1301 (12699)

Spring 2016  
Regular Term



### Prof. Dan Flores

Houston Community College  
Dept. of Philosophy  
Director, Honors College Northwest

## 1. CONTACT INFORMATION

INSTRUCTOR: Prof. Dan Flores

E-MAIL: [profdanflores@gmail.com](mailto:profdanflores@gmail.com)

It is very important that you go [HERE](#) and log-in and update your e-mail to one that you will check regularly and that you can receive notifications at.

LEARNING WEB: <http://learning.hccs.edu/faculty/daniel.flores1>

OFFICE: Spring Branch Campus, Suite 110; Hours: TBA

The first **single** door to the right of the The Commons:

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Houston+Community+College/@29.7867065,-95.5609929,19z/data=!4m5!1m2!2m1!1sHouston+community+college,+1050+West+Sam+Houston+Pkwy+N,+Houston,+TX!3m1!1s0x0000000000000000:0xc534893525e03f9f>

PHONE: 713.718.7465

CLASS MEETING TIME: TuTh, 12-1:30pm, Spring Branch Campus, Room 711



## 2. HCC COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is a study of the major issues in philosophy and/or the work of major philosophical figures in philosophy. Topics in philosophy may include theories of reality, theories of knowledge, theories of value, and their practical applications (Texas ACGM). It provides a theoretically diverse introduction to the study of ideas, including arguments and investigations about abstract and real phenomena, particularly in the areas of knowledge, ethics, and religion (HCC Course Catalogue). This course stresses the HCC Core Objectives of Critical Thinking, Communication Skills, Personal Responsibility, and Social Responsibility.

## 3. STUDENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

a.) HCC Policies:

<http://www.hccs.edu/district/students/student-handbook/>

b.) FERPA Rules:

<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>

c.) The [Instructor Welcome](#), [On Being A Good Student](#), [General Grading Rubric](#), & [Justification Form](#) are extensions of this Syllabus.

**WHAT FOLLOWS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT INSTRUCTOR DISCRETION.**

## 4. TEXTS AND READINGS

All texts and readings will be provided to you via links on this syllabus and as .pdfs on my Learning Web page.

## 5. GRADED WORK

Exam One .....20 points  
Exam Two .....20 points  
Exam Three .....30 points  
Exam Four .....30 points  
Total .....100 points

## EXAMS

Exams will be in-class, written. You will receive a series of three to six questions a week or two before the exam date. On the day of the exam we will randomly draw two questions which everybody will answer. The door will close once the exam has begun. If you are not present once the door is closed, you will forfeit the exam. If you have allowable reasons for arriving late/missing the exam, you will have to document it with a Justification Form and any relevant documents. I will allow a make-up if you meet the requirements. **PLEASE DO NOT KNOCK AT THE DOOR IF YOU ARRIVE LATE.**

## 6. ATTENDANCE, MAKE-UPS, AND GRADES

**Sept. 6th** is the official Day of Record.

1. I do not accept assignments via e-mail unless I agree to it in advance regardless of any technical difficulties. (This is especially true for on-line students.)
2. I do not recognize the legitimacy of extra credit. I do not offer it. Do not ask me for it.
3. I do not give Incompletes ("I").
4. You will be dropped for excessive absences. See the 12.5 rule in the **CLASS ATTENDANCE** section in the [Student Handbook](#). For on-line courses, this amounts to two (consecutive or non-consecutive) weeks of no activity.
5. I do not withdraw students. Being dropped for excessive absences is not the same as being withdrawn. Withdraws for personal, medical, etc. reasons are up to the student.
6. Texas students may withdraw from courses a total of six time during their academic careers. (SB 1231). Use them wisely. Please come see me before you decide to drop.

If you miss an EXAM or you wish to turn your unexcused absence into an excused one and you feel that you have **ALLOWABLE** reasons for your absence or missed EXAM, then **you must fill out a Justification Form and hand it in to me**. The **Justification form** outlines what is and what is not a considered an excused absence and can be found on my Learning Web page: <http://learning.hccs.edu/faculty/daniel.flores1>. It is considered an extension of this syllabus. **If you meet the requirements on the form, I will allow a make-up. If you do not, I will not allow a make-up.** You will have five days from the exam to give me a physical copy of the Justification Form and accompanying documentation. DO NOT send it via e-mail. FILLING OUT THE JUSTIFICATION FORM DOES NOT GUARANTEE ANYTHING. If it is filled out correctly, then I will simply consider your case. If it is not filled out correctly, then I will not consider your case.

Information on withdraws:

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", See Academic Calendar below. After that date and time, 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.

## 7. ACADEMIC HONESTY

**DO NOT CHEAT! I actively look for cheating and plagiarizing and I will go to great lengths to find and document it!!** There is absolutely no reason for it. The first time I catch you, you will simply fail the assignment, lose points, and receive a warning. The second time you cheat, **you will fail the course** and I will become very involved in pursuing the proper disciplinary action to the extent that HCC guidelines allow. See the following website for HCC's stance on academic misconduct.

<http://www.hccs.edu/district/students/student-handbook/> (See, "Scholastic Dishonesty")

See the following for additional information on plagiarism:

<http://plagiarism.org/> and <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/1/>

See my Learning Web page and the folder titled [GUIDES TO STUDYING PHILOSOPHY](#) for more info on writing

These are incredible sources of information. Spend some time studying them. Every college student should know this very basic information. There are no excuses for plagiarism!

## 8. 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.

## 8. 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. <http://www.hccs.edu/district/students/egls3/>

## 9. ACADEMIC CALENDAR: <http://www.hccs.edu/district/events-calendar/academic-calendar/fall/>

## 10. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Demonstrate an understanding of arguments, problems, and terminology in philosophy.
2. **Analyze and critique philosophical texts in ways that demonstrate an awareness of argument structure and the evaluation of philosophical claims.**
3. **Present logically persuasive arguments orally and in writing that are relevant to philosophical issues covered in course material.**
4. Evaluate personal and social responsibilities of living in a diverse world in terms of the philosophical issues raised in course material.

## 11. SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

### WEEK ONE (Aug. 22–26): **BASIC LOGIC**

1. "Philosophical Tools" by Nils Rauhut (Learning Web)

### WEEK TWO (Aug. 29–Sept. 2): **BASIC LOGIC**

1. "Philosophical Tools" by Nils Rauhut (Learning Web)
2. "Fallacies" - <http://www.iep.utm.edu/fallacy/>

### WEEK THREE (Sept. 5–9): **INTRODUCTION TO MORAL THEORY**

#### **NO CLASSES MONDAY, SEPT. 5.**

3. "Ethics and the Examined Life" by Lewis Vaughn (Learning Web)
4. "Ch. 5 - Introducing Moral Philosophy" by Prof. Dan Flores (Learning Web)

### WEEK FOUR (Sept. 12–16): **REVIEW AND EXAM**

5. Tuesday, Review
6. Thursday, Exam I

### WEEK FIVE (Sept. 19–23): **RELATIVISM**

7. "Chapter 2: The Challenge of Cultural Relativism" by James Rachels (1941 - 2003)  
[www2.gsu.edu/~wwwphil/Graham2010/Rachels.pdf](http://www2.gsu.edu/~wwwphil/Graham2010/Rachels.pdf) (opens as a .pdf)
8. "Moral Relativism is Unintelligible" by Julien Beillard

Copy and paste this into GOOGLE: **Moral Relativism is Unintelligible" by Julien Beillard**

### WEEK SIX (Sept. 26–30): **CLASSICAL UTILITARIANISM**

9. "An Introduction To The Principles Of Morals And Legislation" by Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832)  
[http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/bentham1780\\_1.pdf](http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/bentham1780_1.pdf) (Read Chapters 1, 3, & 4)
10. "Ch. 2 - What Is Utilitarianism?" by John Stuart Mill (1806 - 1873)  
[http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/mill1863\\_1.pdf](http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/mill1863_1.pdf)(Read Ch. 2)
11. History of Utilitarianism  
<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/utilitarianism-history/> (Read sections 2, 2.1, and 2.2)

### WEEK SEVEN (Oct. 3–7): **DEONTOLOGY (KANT)**

12. "Chapter 1: Moving from common-sense knowledge to philosophical knowledge about morality" by Immanuel Kant  
<http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/kant1785chapter1.pdf>
13. Summary of Kant:  
<http://www.unc.edu/~gsmunc/phil22/Kantsum.pdf> (Read summary of Section One)

### WEEK EIGHT (Oct. 10–14): **REVIEW AND EXAM**

14. Tuesday, Review
15. Thursday, Exam II

**WEEK NINE (Oct. 17–21): DESCARTES AND MIND-BODY PROBLEM**

16. "A Brief Introduction To The Philosophy Of Mind" by Prof. Flores (read Parts I & II) (Learning Web)
17. "Meditations On First Philosophy" by Rene Descartes (read Meditations I & II) (opens as a .pdf)  
[http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/descartes1641\\_1.pdf](http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/descartes1641_1.pdf)

**WEEK TEN (Oct. 24–28): DESCARTES AND MIND-BODY PROBLEM**

18. Princess Elizabeth of Bohemia's Correspondence with Monsieur Descartes.  
[http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/pdfs/descartes1643\\_1.pdf](http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/pdfs/descartes1643_1.pdf) (read pp. 1-7)
19. A summary of that correspondence  
<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/elisabeth-bohemia/#MinBodIntNatMin>
20. "A Brief Introduction To The Philosophy Of Mind" by Prof. Flores (read Part III)

**WEEK ELEVEN (Oct. 31–Nov. 4): THE PROBLEM OF FREE WILL**

21. "Chapter Four: The Problem of Free Will" by Nils Rauhut (Eagle Online)
22. "Free will" entry on *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*  
<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/freewill/>

**WEEK TWELVE (Nov. 7–11): REVIEW AND EXAM**

23. Tuesday, Review
24. Thursday, Exam III

**WEEK THIRTEEN (Nov. 14–18): EXISTENTIALISM**

25. "Existentialism is a Humanism" by Jean-Paul Sartre.  
<http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/sartre/works/exist/sartre.htm>
26. The "Squashed" version of Sartre's Existentialism is a Humanism  
<http://www.public.asu.edu/~jmlynch/273/documents/sartre-existentialism-squashed.pdf>

**WEEK FOURTEEN (Nov. 21–25): PERSONAL IDENTITY**

**NO CLASSES NOV. 24 & 25**

27. "Personal Identity" by Ted Sider  
[http://tedsider.org/books/chapters\\_1\\_5.pdf](http://tedsider.org/books/chapters_1_5.pdf) (Read Chapter 1: "Personal Identity")

**WEEK FIFTEEN (Nov. 28–Dec. 2): PERSONAL IDENTITY**

27. "Personal Identity" by Ted Sider  
[http://tedsider.org/books/chapters\\_1\\_5.pdf](http://tedsider.org/books/chapters_1_5.pdf) (Read Chapter 1: "Personal Identity")
28. REVIEW

**WEEK SIXTEEN (Dec. 5–9): FINAL EXAM WEEK. NO CLASSES.**

**YOUR EXAM IS ON Wednesday, Dec 7 @ 12pm, SAME ROOM.**