

SYLLABUS – PHIL 1301 (77344) – INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY

PROFESSOR Dan Flores

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This is by far the best way to get a hold of me outside of class and office hours. Please be sure to give me your name and class period either in the Subject line or in the body of your email. This is very important considering that I have several classes! You will still need to maintain and access your HCC e-mail. **Make sure that your e-mail associated with Eagle Online is working and that you check it regularly. Note that you can always set your HCC email to forward any messages to any valid email account you wish.**

OFFICE: Spring Branch Campus

Room 900N (in between Murphy's Deli and the Science Building)
713.718.7465

Hours: Tues/Thurs. 2:00 -- 4:30, Wed. 2:00 -- 4:00, and by appointment.

MEETING PLACE AND TIMES:

SB Campus, Friday 9am-12pm, Room 316

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is a theoretically diverse introduction to the study of ideas, including arguments and investigations about abstract and real phenomena. The basis for this inquiry is drawn from history, theories, their application, methods of reasoning, and carried forward to more recent thinkers and issues. (HCC Catalog). Included is the growing emergence of women's, minority, and non-western voices in philosophy. Accordingly, this course should not be construed as history-bound, or strictly western in its perspective. Its thematic elements are contemporary, including the nature and abiding presence of philosophizing in human discourse, and this discipline's impact on current developments in science, the humanities, and political/social order in world

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE FOLLOWING LIST OF PROCEEDURES, RULES, GRADING SCHEME, AND READING/ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE MAY BE CHANGED AT ANY TIME DUE TO CLASS NEED AND INSTRUCTOR DISCRESSION (an most likely will!!!).

GRADED WORK:

1. Quizzes.....30 points
2. Critical Response20 points
3. Group Work20 points
4. Final Paper.....30 points

Total.....100 points (No averages, fractions, etc. You begin with 0 points and work your way up. That's it!)

EXPLANATION OF GRADED WORK:

Quizzes

Quizzes will be multiple choice and T/F questions. Quizzes will open on Wed. at 8a.m. and will Close on Friday at 11p.m. You will have 1 & 1/2 hours to take the quiz once you have started. I will be strict about this. You know when the quizzes will happen. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have time to take them by scheduling your time. See **MAKE-UP POLICY** and **ATTENDANCE AND BEHAVIOR** below. If, for whatever reason, you do have technical difficulties, then you must document it by taking screen shots or photos showing me the date/time and the problem you are having.

Critical Responses

Critical Responses are short 1 -- 1 1/2 page responses to readings and lectures. You will be given specific instructions when the assignment becomes available. They are intended to get you to seriously reflect of the course material and demonstrate your engagement with and understanding of the material. Here are the guidelines. **1)** 1 -- 1 1/2 pages. **2)** no title, just your name and class period **on the top line**. Press 'Enter' and begin your work. In other words, no large or unnecessary spaces. **3)** Times New Roman or Calibri font set at 12`` or 11`` font size. **4)**

1" margin on all sides. **5)** Double-spacing. Critical Responses will be made available at least a few days ahead of time and will be due on Fridays no later than 5p.m. This will be strictly adhered to. See instructions for **QUIZZES** above.

Deviation from any one of these rules will get a penalty of minus one point for a total of minus five points. So, for instance, if you turn in a Critical Response piece that has a large font size, 2.5 spacing, and a title section with a title, class period, date, etc ... then you will receive minus three points for deviating from rules 2, 3, and 5.

Group Work

You will be given specific instruction regarding this. However, I must remind you that we are adults and that part of what that means is that we have to work together. If you are not a full participant, I will deduct points. If you show up late to group work, I will deduct points. Etc ... Keep in mind, also, that participating and providing input in the group does not necessarily mean that your ideas will be accepted.

Final Paper

I will give you a choice of topics to choose from sometime in the beginning of the semester. You must follow the formatting guidelines outlined above with the exception that your paper will be 6-8 pages. Grading rubrics will accompany the assignment. Start early. I will be expecting quite a bit from you. Do not plagiarize.

ADOPTED TEXTS AND READINGS:

All readings will be provided to you either **1)** as url links on your syllabus, or **2)** as .pdf files in a folder titled **(DE - READINGS - PHIL 1301)** on my Learning Web page located at <http://learning.hccs.edu/faculty/daniel.flores1> . The folder is password protected. I will give you the password in an e-mail. Keep in mind that if you are asked to read something and it is not a link on this document, then it is a .pdf located on my Learning Web page. If there are any other discrepancies, or if you feel that I have made some sort of mistake, then notify me right away.

VIDEO MINI-LECTURES:

I have a YouTube channel devoted to a series of video mini-lectures that are intended to be supplemental instruction to regular class lectures. For all students, but with particular regard for DE (on-line) courses, this is an excellent way to help focus your study.

<http://www.youtube.com/user/ProfDanFlores>

COURSE CALENDAR:

WEEK ONE: (January 17th): **ARGUMENTS, LOGIC, & FALLACIES**

1. "Chapter Two: Philosophical Tools" by Nils Rauhut
2. "Chapter 2 – Basic Argumentation & Inductive and Deductive Reasoning" by Prof. Flores

WEEK TWO: (January 24th): **ARGUMENTS, LOGIC, & FALLACIES**

1. *Ibid.*
2. <http://www.nobeliefs.com/fallacies.htm>
3. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_fallacies
4. <http://www.don-lindsay-archive.org/skeptic/arguments.html>

I do not expect you to read each and every fallacy. But I do expect you to spend some time with these websites and familiarize yourself with what fallacies are (errors in reasoning). You should know around ten of them or so.

WEEK THREE: (January 31st): **RELATIVISM**

1. "Introducing Moral Philosophy" by Prof. Flores
2. "Chapter 5 – Relativism" by Prof. Flores
3. http://www.qcc.cuny.edu/socialSciences/ppecorino/INTRO_TEXT/Chapter%208%20Ethics/Relativism.htm
4. <http://www.scu.edu/ethics/practicing/decision/ethicalrelativism.html>
5. **On-line Quiz**

WEEK FOUR: (February 7th): **UTILITARIANISM**

1. <http://www.utilitarianism.com/jeremy-bentham/index.html#one> (Read Chapters 1, 3, & 4)
2. <http://www.utilitarianism.com/mill2.htm>
3. <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/utilitarianism-history/> (Read sections 2, 2.1, and 2.2)

WEEK FIVE: (February 14th): **DEONTOLOGY**

1. <http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/pdfbits/kgw1.pdf>
2. <http://www.unc.edu/~gsmunc/phil22/Kantsum.pdf> (Read summary of Section One)

WEEK SIX: (February 21st): **PHILOSOPHY OF MIND: DESCARTES' *MEDITATIONS***

1. **On-line Quiz**
2. Descartes ***Meditation 1***: <http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/descartes/1639/meditations.htm>
3. Descartes ***Meditation 2***: <http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/descartes/1639/meditations.htm>
4. "A Brief Introduction To The Philosophy Of Mind: **Parts One & Two**" by Prof. Dan Flores

WEEK SEVEN: (February 28th): **MIND AND CONSCIOUSNESS**

1. "Mind and Consciousness." by Frankish and Kasmirli. Read sections "**The Mind-Body Problem: Old and New**" and "**Property Dualism**"
2. "A Brief Introduction To The Philosophy Of Mind" by Prof. Flores. **Read section Three**

WEEK EIGHT: (March 7th): **MIND AND CONSCIOUSNESS**

1. Behaviorism (Learning Web document)
2. Identity Theory (Learning Web document)
3. Functionalism (Learning Web document)
4. **On-line Quiz**

WEEK NINE: (March 14th): **NO CLASSES: SPRING BREAK**

WEEK TEN: (March 21th): **THE PROBLEM OF FREE WILL**

1. "Chapter Four: The Problem of Free Will" by Nils Rauhut
2. <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/freewill/>
3. **Critical Response**

WEEK ELEVEN: (March 28th): **EXISTENTIALISM**

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

WEEK TWELVE: (April 4th): **CLASS CANCELLED**

WEEK THIRTEEN: (April 11th): **Group Project, Part I**

WEEK FOURTEEN: (April 18th): **Group Project, Part II**

WEEK FIFTEEN: (April 25th): **FINISHING UP & REVIEW**

1. Finishing up
2. Review

WEEK SIXTEEN: (May 2nd): **FINAL Paper Due. SAME TIME, SAME PLACE**

GRADING POLICY:

All grades will be calculated according to a percentage of total points. The total number of points for this term is 100. The term grade legend follows:

- A** = 90% to 100% (90-100 point) 4 points per semester hour
- B** = 80% to 89.9% (80-89 points) 3 points per semester hour
- C** = 70% to 79.9% (70-79 points) 2 points per semester hour
- D** = 60% to 69.9% (60-69 points) 1 point per semester hour
- F** = 0% to 59.9% (0-59 points) 0 points per semester hour

Please note that I do not give Incompletes except in the very rarest of circumstances. I also do not Withdraw students.

MAKE-UP POLICY:

Make-ups and extra time are allowed provided that they are excused. Excused absences include: a) any absence that I have approved, b) observance of religious holy days, c) required court appearances, d) naturalization and oath ceremonies, e) emergency and other health problems of student or student's family that require treatment, hospitalization, or other types of care not allowing a student to be in class, f) official school business such as team meeting, performances (where student is a performer!), and other events where the student's presence and participation is required for the success of the event or by terms of agreement. ALL EXCUSED ABSENCES WILL REQUIRE APPROPRIATE DOCUMENTATION such as a letter from a court magistrate requiring your court appearance on the day and time of exam; a letter from a doctor or other professional health care provider explaining your absence on the day and time of the exam; a letter from a coach or director of an official HCC or high school event explaining your absence on the day and time of the exam; and so on. Documentation must have appropriate contact information (Business name, contact name, telephone number, business address, etc ...) so I can call and verify. IF YOU DO NOT PROVIDE ME WITH THE DOCUMENTATION, I WILL NOT RECORD A GRADE AND YOU WILL LOSE THE POINTS FOR THE ASSIGNMENT! THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS.

Unexcused absences include, but are not limited to, oversleeping/alarm failure, needing sleep or rest, missing the bus/ride, car trouble, needed at home/babysitting, employment/job interview, shopping/errands, personal grooming appointments (hair, nails, tanning, etc), driver's education (classroom or behind the wheel), vacations, personal time, etc.

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 the section on "Scholastic Dishonesty"; p. 18)

See the following for additional information on plagiarism:

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

(These are incredible sources of information. There are simply no excuses for plagiarism!!)

ATTENDANCE AND BEHAVIOR:

Census date is Monday, January 27th. **I do not drop students for personal or academic reasons**; for instance, if you are failing, absences, etc. If you wish to drop due to personal or academic reasons, then this is your responsibility! I will drop you from a class if you are disruptive, however. See below. You must keep up with your grades.

But note that there are severe difficulties with not attending class (logging on and participating in Discussions and Assignments for DE courses) on a regular basis. It is a popular idea that philosophy and 'doing philosophy' is simply a matter of one's opinion about or how one feels about some subject. This cannot be further from the truth. This course has nothing to do with your opinion and I will rarely ask you for your opinion. You are here to understand and properly interpret certain material. This being said, the material covered in this course is generally difficult and requires your intellectual attention during and outside of class. You are expected to come to class every day having read the assignment ahead of time. Lectures are intended to help students understand the reading assignments and to begin clarifying and working out ideas and arguments. Not spending time studying and attending class will only diminish the quality of your work. It is easy to be lazy, watch TV, shop, do laundry, nap, not pay attention in class by sleeping, texting, talking, and so on, or getting caught up in any number of activities rather than doing one's schoolwork. I urge you to take responsibility for yourselves and your work. This is college and you will be treated as a college student.

See page 3 of the student handbook: <http://www.hccs.edu/district/students/student-handbook/>

HCC Students are expected to attend class regularly, this includes logging on regularly for DE courses. A daily record of absences will be maintained throughout the semester. 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: 6

- (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.

NOTICE ABOUT ONLINE MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE:

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

<https://hccs1.mrooms3.net/login/index.php>

Your Eagle Online ID is now the same as your HCC User ID which is used for Online Registration (for example: W0034567). If you don't know your HCC User ID, you can retrieve it here. Your default Eagle Online password at the beginning of the term is: "distance". This password is independent of your Online Registration password or Blackboard Vista password. You will be required to change your password when you first log in.

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

COLLEGE GRADING POLICY:

All grades will be calculated according to a percentage of total points. The total number of points for this term is 100. The term grade legend follows:

A = 90% to 100% (90-100 point) 4 points per semester hour

B = 80% to 89.9% (80-89 points) 3 points per semester hour

C = 70% to 79.9% (70-79 points) 2 points per semester hour

D = 60% to 69.9% (60-69 points) 1 point per semester hour

F = 0% to 59.9% (0-59 points) 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.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Recall and Identify the major thinkers, schools, core philosophical questions, terms and concepts found in the history of ethics cross-culturally construed, from ancient times to the contemporary world.
- Interpret and Explain core ethical questions and concepts in terms that illustrate a comprehensive understanding of each.
- Apply core philosophical questions and concepts to contemporary issues and personal experience.
- Compare and Contrast related core ethical questions and concepts, and the correlative thinkers and schools with which they are commonly associated.
- Justify a sound philosophical position on a topic, or topics of contemporary human interest in the area of ethics, including its relation to freedom and human rights, that Integrates and Logically Demonstrates a Synthesis in thought.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- 1.1 Acquire a broad familiarity with the names of major thinkers, the schools they represent, geographical location, and historical periods. 1.2 Learn historically significant questions of philosophy, definitions of special terms, and concepts of knowledge, ethics, and human condition.
 - Interpret and Explain core ethical questions and concepts in terms that illustrate a comprehensive understanding of each.
 - Recall and Identify the major thinkers, schools, core philosophical questions, terms and concepts found in the history of ethics cross-culturally construed, from ancient times to the contemporary world.
- 2.1 Cultivate reading comprehension of philosophical writings.
- 2.2 Distinguish various approaches to interpretation, including conceptual analysis, testing for validity, determining if sound or not sound.
 - Apply core philosophical questions and concepts to contemporary issues and personal experience.
- 3.1 Articulate the relevance of philosophy and philosophical questioning to everyday life.
- 3.2 Consider how philosophy may or may not apply to differing ways of thinking and cultural influences.
 - Compare and Contrast related core ethical questions and concepts, and the correlative thinkers and schools with which they are commonly associated.
- 4.1 Inventory, Summarize, and Assess correlative questions, concepts, and schools of thought found in the history of ideas.
 - Justify a sound philosophical position on a topic, or topics of contemporary human interest in the area of ethics, including its relation to freedom and human rights, that Integrates and Logically Demonstrates a Synthesis in thought.
- 5.1 Create and cultivate alternative philosophical positions on presented course content. 5.2 Develop coherent arguments for chosen positions, bringing to bear the rules of logic, written expression and disciplined thinking. 5.3 Critique chosen positions and adequately Defend against possible objections, both theoretical and applied.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

To visit the ADA Web site, log on to www.hccs.edu, click Future students, scroll down the page and click on the words Disability Information. For questions, please contact Donna Price at 713.718.5165 or the Disability Counselor at YOUR COLLEGE.

STUDENT SERVICES POLICY:

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

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.

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