



# Introduction to Ethics

Introduction to Philosophy, PHIL 2306  
CRN: 36195

Fall 2017, Web-Enhanced (3 Credit Hours)

Spring Branch Campus

Tues., Thurs., 11:00 am - 12:20 pm

Instructor: J. Christopher Jenson, Ph.D.

Learning Web Page: <https://learning.hccs.edu/faculty/jason.jenson>

Email: [jason.jenson@hccs.edu](mailto:jason.jenson@hccs.edu)

Phone: 713-718-6771

Office hours: Mon., Wed., 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm Alief Hayes Campus. Room C413.

## Hurricane Harvey:

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 (713/718-5611). Furthermore, please notify me if you are comfortable doing so.

Further resources for help in the aftermath of Harvey can be found at [www.hccs.edu/harveystudentresources](http://www.hccs.edu/harveystudentresources).

## Course Description:

A philosophical reflection of the basic principles of the moral life, including the nature of goodness, happiness, duty, and freedom as they apply to individual right, business, medicine, and community well being. (HCC Catalog)

This course satisfies the **Philosophy, Language, and Culture** component area or the **Component Area Option** in the HCC Core Curriculum.

PREREQUISITE(S):

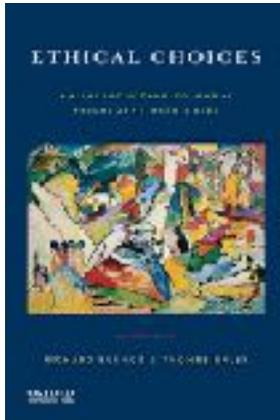
- ENGL 1301 or higher

## Student Learning Outcomes:

1. **Read, analyze, and critique** philosophical texts.
2. **Define** and appropriately use important terms such as relativism, virtue, duty, rights, utilitarianism, natural law, egoism, altruism, autonomy, and care ethics.

3. **Demonstrate knowledge** of major arguments and problems in ethics. Present and discuss well-reasoned ethical positions in writing.
4. **Apply ethical concepts** and principles to address moral concerns. Apply course material to various aspects of life.
5. **Discuss** ways of living responsibly in a world where people have diverse ethical beliefs.

## Required Reading:



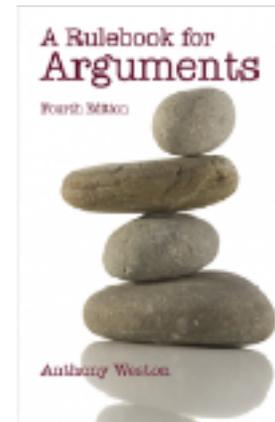
**Burnor, R. & Raley, Y. *Ethical Choices. 2nd ed.*, Oxford University Press, 2017.**

**ISBN: 9780190464509**

**IMPORTANT:** You must get the 2nd edition which is substantially different from the 1st edition because..

**Weston, A. *A Rulebook for Arguments. 4th ed.*, Hackett, 2009.**

**ISBN: 9780872209541**



Additional reading in the form of pdf documents available for download and the schedule is in MODULES, in Canvas.

One of the most important professional development skills you will achieve in college is reading comprehension and your ability to evaluate arguments, and reinterpret them in your own words. Please embrace this challenge! You are expected to carefully read the assigned material before class. It helps to take notes when you are reading, and to formulate argument outlines and objections. The reading material will also provide background information, and aid in the quality of informed discussions. Quizzes on reading will be counted towards your assignments grade.

## Notice About Online Learning Management Software:

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

<https://eagleonline.hccs.edu/>

Your Eagle Online username is your HCC email address. 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 [www.hccs.edu/district/students/student-e-maileagle-id/](http://www.hccs.edu/district/students/student-e-maileagle-id/).

NOTE: Eagle Online works best with the latest version of Mozilla Firefox or Chrome. Download Mozilla for free, [www.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/new/](http://www.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/new/). (Please check your operating system to determine if you have Firefox in your applications.) Eagle online does not work well with Microsoft Explorer.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT: <http://www.hccs.edu/online/technical-support/> or 713-718-5275

## Assessments and Grading:

There are three types of assignment.

Attendance (in-class)	30% of total course grade
Weekly Response Assignments & Reading Quizzes (Canvas)	30% of total course grade
Argument Essay & Case Analyses	40% of total course grade

## Grading Policy:

The term grade legend follows:

A = 90% to 100%	4 GPA points per semester hour
B = 80% to 89.9%	3 GPA points per semester hour
C = 70% to 79.9%	2 GPA points per semester hour
D = 60% to 69.9%	1 GPA point per semester hour
F = 0% to 59.9%	0 GPA 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.

NOTE: Philosophy Tutoring is available at <https://hccs.upswing.io> **Please use it if you need it.**

## Attendance:

Philosophy cannot be done by simply memorizing facts. The history of philosophy can be thought of as one long conversation. In order to do philosophy, one must participate in this conversation by discussing philosophical issues in class. ***It is vital that you attend class.*** The lectures will go well beyond assigned reading. **You will get 2 excused absences no questions asked, no excuse necessary.** Any additional absences will only be excused for emergency situations or official HCC events and I will require appropriate documentation. For example, a doctor's note excusing you on the day and time of class (NOTE: HIPAA guidelines protect the privacy of you and other's medical information. I am not asking for specifics of illness or other personal information. I am asking that your medical professional provide a note saying you could not attend class as a matter of a Doctor's directive); a letter from a court magistrate requiring your appearance on the day and time of class; a letter from a coach/director of an official HCC event explaining your absence on the day and time of class; a towing receipt with location and time for your broken down car; a letter/flyer from a funeral home; and so on. Oversleeping, missing the bus/ride, needed at home, having to be at work, personal appointments, vacations, etc., do not count as emergencies. Your attendance percentage will be calculated using the following formula:  $(\text{number of class sessions attended}) / (\text{total number of class sessions} - \text{excused absences})$ . That percentage will be weighted as **30% of your overall course grade.**

HCC Students are expected to attend class regularly. 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:

- (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. 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.

## Academic Calendar:

Find last day for refund and withdrawal dates here. <http://www.hccs.edu/district/events-calendar/academic-calendar/>

## Response Assignments & Reading Quizzes:

Each week you will complete one or two response assignments in the ASSIGNMENTS in CANVAS. The responses will ask you to construct an argument, write a few paragraphs on an

assigned activity, such as watching a YouTube, listening to a podcast, doing logic puzzles, or taking interactive quizzes. All instructions are found in ASSIGNMENTS on Canvas.

Reading quizzes are composed of multiple choice and true/false questions about the week's assigned readings. These are designed to encourage you to read the assigned reading and highlight important people, concepts, and definitions. These will be taken online on Canvas.

Unless stated otherwise, **all Response Assignments ARE DUE SUNDAY by 11:59 pm.** (NOTE: Canvas time stamps your submissions. Do not wait until the last minute. Give yourself plenty of time to make sure your assignment is submitted properly so that the time stamp shows that you have completed the assignment on time.) Any assignment submitted after this time will be considered late. **Reading Quizzes will generally be due 1 minute prior to the class session for which the reading was assigned.** See a detailed reading schedule on Canvas.

Together these assignments and quizzes will be weighted at 30% of your grade.

## Argument Essay & Case Analysis:

An argument essay involves summarizing an argument from a philosopher or other thinker and developing your own arguments in response. You will write 1 argument essays. The essay will be approximately 1000 words long (3 typed double-spaced pages). Topics, instructions, tips, and due dates will be posted on Canvas.

At the end of the semester you will produce a moral analysis of several cases and present your analysis in a group discussion/debate activity in class. The number of cases will range from 2 to 4 to be determined by available class time.

## Late Work:

Learning a high degree of professionalism ought to be one of your goals during your college career. Getting your work done on time is and should be a priority. I understand that things happen, though. Late work must be submitted no later than two weeks after the original deadline, and will be marked down one full letter grade. **No late work will be accepted after the last day of instruction.**

## Course Schedule:

The following schedule is tentative and subject to change. A more up-to-date schedule will be posted on Canvas. Go to the "modules" tab on Eagle Online Canvas. It is the students responsibility to make sure they find the most up to date reading assignments for each class on Canvas.

Week	Reading & Assignments
Week 1: Ethics and Values	Syllabus Ice Breaker Activity  Burnor & Raley, Ch. 1

Week	Reading & Assignments
Week 2: Truth and Argumentation	Hales - Knowledge (pdf available on canvas) Weston, Ch. I-II
Week 3: Argumentation, Fallacies, and Cognitive Biases	Weston, Ch. III - VI
Week 4: Argumentation and Moral Reasoning	Weston, Appendix I David McRaney - Confirmation Bias (pdf available on Canvas) Burnor & Raley, Ch. 4
Week 5: Religion, Morality, & Moral Relativism	Morrow - Moral Reasoning and Religion (pdf available on Canvas) (optional) Plato - Euthyphro <a href="http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/euthyphro.html">http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/euthyphro.html</a> Burnor & Raley, Ch. 2
Week 6: Act Utilitarianism	Finish up Moral Relativism Burnor & Raley, Part II Introduction Burnor & Raley, Ch. 6 Mill- What Utilitarianism Is (pdf available on Canvas)
Week 7: Deontological Ethics	Burnor & Raley, Ch. 8 Kant - Excerpt from Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals (pdf available on Canvas)
Week 8: Social Contract and Rights	Burnor & Raley, Ch. 10
Week 9: Virtue Ethics	Burnor & Raley, Ch. 11
Week 10:	Catch-up week
Week 11:	Case 1: Topic TBA

Week	Reading & Assignments
Week 12:	Case 2: Topic TBA
Week 13:	Case 3: Topic TBA
Week 14:	Finals Week

### **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 Honesty:**

Learning to give credit through proper citations is an important skill you may need throughout your chosen career. The currency of academics and scientists is their ideas. This means that if you do not give them credit for their ideas, you are stealing. I will provide instruction for proper citation and bibliography. I will be vigorously looking for plagiarism in your assignments. Be advised that I may be employing Turnitin plagiarism detection software ([http://turnitin.com/en\\_us/higher-education](http://turnitin.com/en_us/higher-education)). Its database includes 60+ billion websites, 600 million+ student papers, and 154 million+ journal articles, periodicals, and books. The first time you are caught plagiarizing you will automatically fail the assignment and receive a warning. The second time you are caught plagiarizing you will fail the course and be subject to disciplinary action within HCC guidelines. The following website explains HCC's stance on plagiarism and other forms of cheating.

<http://www.hccs.edu/district/students/student-handbook/> (See the section on “Scholastic Dishonesty”)

Other useful websites on this topic are <http://plagiarism.org/> and <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/1/>

### **Students with Disabilities:**

The HCC Disabilities website is located at the following url: <http://www.hccs.edu/district/students/disability-services/>. 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.

## **Title IX Policy:**

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: The Office of Institutional Equity, <http://www.hccs.edu/district/departments/institutionalequity/title-ix-know-your-rights/title-ix-complaint-form/>

## **Campus Carry Law:**

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/>.

## **Student Services:**

For information on student services including counseling, academic advising, financial help, child care, library services, etc. I encourage you to go to the student handbook website <http://www.hccs.edu/district/students/student-handbook/>

## **PHILOSOPHY PROGRAM INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN**

**Supplemental Instructional Activities:** To be determined by the instructor if needed.

**Instructional Content:** SLOs are listed above. Faculty align their assignments with the SLO's when preparing their syllabi. These are addressed through a variety of assignments determined by the instructor.

### **Evaluation Procedures:**

SLOs are determined to have been met upon successful completion by students of pre-determined outcome aligned assessments. Successful completion is a grade of 70 or higher.