

## Introduction to Ethics

PHIL 2306 – 73442 Summer 1, 2018

Stafford Learning Hub Room 204 – MWTThF 10 to 11:45 am

Office Hours and Location: Room 305 Stafford Learning Hub; by appointment

Instructor: Lamont Rodgers, Ph.D.

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### Course Description:

Classical and contemporary theories concerning the good life, human conduct in society, and moral and ethical standards (Texas ACGM). 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 Course Catalog).

Fulfills – unless otherwise noted – the HCC CORE Humanities Area credit. May fulfill Ethics requirement for various academic and professional four-year college majors and Philosophy AAdegree

**Plan. Students who are in doubt about their enrollment in this course should immediately see an HCC academic counselor who can review his or her AA-degree plan.**

### Course Goals:

This course provides a practical, community-minded introduction to questions of character and human excellence in a multi-cultural, global environment. Traditional and contemporary views concerning the nature of goodness, happiness, duty, and freedom serve as points of departure for this largely thematic inquiry into right conduct and ways of thinking that leads to that conduct. Particular emphasis is placed on the scope and problems of sound reasoning and decision-making and may include correlative inquiries into current social, workforce, and professional moral issues.

Title IX Discrimination: 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 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:

David Cross - Director EEO/Compliance - Office of Institutional Equity & Diversity

[3100 Main - Houston, TX 77266 \(Links to an external site.\)](#)[Links to an external site.](#)-7517 or [Institutional.Equity@hccs.edu](mailto:Institutional.Equity@hccs.edu) (713) 718-8271

Open/Campus Carry of Handguns: 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 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.

### **Student Learning Outcomes:**

1. **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. **Interpret and Explain** core ethical questions and concepts in terms that illustrate a comprehensive understanding of each.
3. **Apply** core ethical questions and concepts to contemporary issues and personal experience.
4. **Compare and Contrast** related core ethical questions and concepts, and the correlative thinkers and schools with which they are commonly associated, and with professional codes.
5. **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 ethics, definitions of special terms, and concepts of ethics and ethical decision-making.
- 2.1 **Cultivate** reading comprehension of writings specific to ethics and cultivation of character.
- 2.2 **Distinguish** various approaches to ethics, including conceptual analysis and practical bases for ethical decision-making.
- 3.1 **Articulate** the relevance of ethics and questioning about ethics to everyday life.
- 3.2 **Consider** how ethics may or may not apply to differing ways of thinking and cultural influences.
- 4.1 **Inventory, Summarize, and Assess** correlative questions, concepts, and schools of thought found in the history of ethics, both personal and professional.
- 5.1 **Create and cultivate** alternative ethical 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.

**ETIQUETTE: Put your cell phones on vibrate when you enter the classroom. Do not speak while someone else has the floor. Disrupting a college classroom is a misdemeanor in the state of Texas. Disruptive students will receive one warning. If the student is disruptive again, he or she will be asked to leave. Any student who disrupts the class three times will be told to leave, and if necessary, aided by campus police. The instructor will then initiate charges against the student.**

**Students who are late receive neither extra time nor special treatment. Information and time you miss via tardiness are lost and gone forever. If you arrive late and miss an assignment or lack time to complete it, nothing will be done to make up for that lost time.**

Required Texts: All Readings are available in Canvas.

#### GRADING COMPONENTS:

In-Class Assignments: 10 in-class assignments worth 45points each. (450 points) These will be completed in-class. We will do them at the beginning of the meeting. If you arrive after I begin scoring the assignments, you have a zero. If you leave before we finish scoring the assignment, you receive a zero. Period. Students must both complete the assignment in the classroom and participate in the in-class grading process to receive credit. We do roughly 13 of these, but I count only the highest 10. **There are no excused assignments**, since I ultimately count only 10.

I will implement surprise measures to prevent cheating during the grading phase of these assignments. If you are caught cheating, you will receive a zero on the assignment and lose the opportunity to count only your 10 highest grades. I will count all 16 at value of 28 points each. I know this does not quite add up to 450, but that is yet another great reason for you not to cheat.

See class etiquette for further details.

Three Exams: These exams are worth 100 points each. (300 points) These exams test knowledge of basic course concepts. They are completed on scantron. The dates of each exam is on the reading schedule. If you arrive one second late, you may not take the exam. If you miss one of the first two exams, your next one will count double. If you miss both the first two exams, you get a zero on them. You may not miss the final.

Term Paper: A term paper on a topic assigned by the instructor. The due date is listed on the reading schedule. No late papers are accepted. This is a writing intensive course. You must submit a term paper to pass the class. If you plagiarize your term paper, you will receive a zero on it. There are no second chances not to plagiarize. (200 points)

Writing Workshop: Students will be a rough draft of their term papers to class and complete a peer review session. For credit, each student must have a draft of his/her paper and participate in the two-part evaluation process. (50 points)

Note: If you cheat on one assignment, you fail the assignment. If you cheat on two assignments, you fail the class.

#### GRADING:

900 TO 1,000 POINTS = A

800 TO 899 POINTS = B

700 TO 799 POINTS = C

600 TO 699 POINTS = D

<600 POINTS = F

#### Students with Disabilities:

To visit the ADA Web site, log on to [www.hccs.edu](http://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 Central College.

#### Course Calendar:

Treat this calendar as follows: the date listed is the absolute last day by which you should do the reading. If there is an assignment, we will do the assignment in the classroom, unless otherwise instructed.

June 4: Introduction and Survey

#### SECTION 1: ARGUMENTS AND MORAL REASONING

June 5: Do Reading 1 in Canvas

June 6: Read Benedict in Canvas; In-Class 1

June 7: Read James Rachels in Canvas; In-Class 2

June 8: Macbrayer in Canvas; In-Class 3

June 11: Read Augustine and Bundy in Canvas; In-Class 4

June 12: Read James Rachels on the Divine Command Theory in Canvas; In-Class 5

June 13: Rachels again; In-Class 6/Review

June 14: EXAM 1

## ETHICAL THEORIES

June 15: Read Bentham and Mill in Canvas

June 18: Read Bentham 2 in Canvas; In-Class 6

June 19: Read Mill 2 in Canvas; In-class 7

June 20: Read Kant in Canvas

June 21: Kant again; In-Class 8

June 22: Finish Kant; In-Class 9

June 25: Review for Exam 2

June 26: EXAM 2

## MICRO-THEORY

June 27: Read Mill 3

June 28: Read Mack; In-Class 10

June 29: Mack continued; In-Class 11

July 2: Read Rights Article in Canvas; In-Class 12

July 3: Read Wenar Article in; In-Class 13

July 4: NO CLASS

July 5: WORKSHOP; Review for Final

July 6: Final Exam and term paper submission. A PHYSICAL COPY OF YOUR TERM PAPER IS DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF OUR MEETING. IF I LEAVE THE CLASS BEFORE YOU SUBMIT YOUR PAPER, YOU WILL RECEIVE A ZERO ON YOUR PAPER. NO EXCEPTIONS. DO NOT ARRIVE LATE. SEE THE SYLLABUS FOR MY POLICY.

