



**Division of Philosophy, Humanities and Library Sciences
Philosophy Department**

<https://www.hccs.edu/programs/areas-of-study/liberal-arts-humanities--education/philosophy/>

Phil 2306: Introduction to Ethics | Lecture | 16344

Fall 2020 | 8 Weeks (10/18 – 12/13)

Online

3 Credit Hours | 48 hours per semester

Instructor Contact Information

Instructor: Nathan Smith, PhD	Office Phone: 713-718-2611
Office: Learning Hub, 111	Office Hours: M-F, by appointment
HCC Email: nathan.smith2@hccs.edu	Office Location: Central Campus

Please feel free to contact me at any time during the semester. I find that if a student is struggling to understand a concept or assignment, a phone call or web conference is the easiest way to clear that up. I have set up the due dates in a way that will increase your chances of success. So, you ought to try to keep up with the syllabus. However, if you are unable to complete an assignment on time, please let me know in advance. This is a short session (8-weeks). If you fall behind, you will struggle to complete the course. **Don't get overwhelmed; get in touch.**

Instructor's Preferred Method of Contact

I prefer to receive messages through the Canvas inbox. But if you need to use email, please use your HCC email account. I will respond to emails within 24 hours Monday through Friday. I will reply to weekend messages on Monday. If you have an urgent concern or something that requires more than you can express in email, don't hesitate to call or send a message through Microsoft Teams. If I'm not available, leave a message with a call-back number and time and I will get back in touch as soon as I can.

What's Exciting About This Course

Most students find this course challenging, but rewarding. Everyone has thought about ethics at some point in their lives, but in this course, you will be presented with some questions about ethics that are new. Answering these questions and thinking through ethics in the way this course requires, will take effort, critical thought, comprehension of new concepts, and a willingness to reflect on your beliefs.

Prerequisites and/or Co-Requisites

ENGL 1301

Canvas Learning Management System

This section of PHIL 2306 will be entirely conducted through [Canvas](https://eagleonline.hccs.edu) (<https://eagleonline.hccs.edu>). The most successful students will log into the course at least three or four times a week. You will complete readings, quizzes, discussion forums, and assignments in Canvas. In order to stay up with required assignments, you will be expected to complete work regularly. **Do not allow yourself to fall behind by neglecting to log in to Canvas for extended stretches of time.** However, if you do fall behind or cannot complete an assignment on time for whatever reason, please get in touch with me.

Use [Firefox](#) or [Chrome](#) as your internet browser. Make sure to keep your browser and system software up to date.

HCC Online Information and Policies

Here is the link to information about HCC Online classes including the required Online Orientation for all fully online classes: <http://www.hccs.edu/online/>

Scoring Rubrics, Sample Assignments, etc.

Look in Canvas for the scoring rubrics for assignments, samples of class assignments, and other information to assist you in the course. <https://eagleonline.hccs.edu/login/ldap>

Instructional Materials

Textbook Information

All readings will be provided in electronic form in the Eagle Online shell. If you would like a print copy of the required reading materials, they can be made available at the HCC Bookstore.

Required Readings

Course Notes and Handbook, including selections from classic texts in the history of philosophy and professor notes on basic concepts in ethics. Creative Commons License, 4.0, Attribution.

Introduction to Philosophy: Ethics, ed. by G. Matthews, series ed. C. Hendricks. Rebus Community, 2019. Creative Commons License, 4.0, Attribution.

Aristotle. *Nicomachean Ethics* (selections). translated by W. D. Ross, complete text available at: <http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/nicomachaen.1.i.html>

Dancy, Jonathan, "Moral Particularism", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2017 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2017/entries/moral-particularism/>

Kant, Immanuel. "Groundwork on the Metaphysics of Morals," Ch. 1 and 2, translated by J. Bennett, *Early Modern Texts*, <http://earlymoderntexts.com/authors/kant>

Mill, John Stuart. *Utilitarianism* (selections). London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1879. Complete text: <https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/11224>

Ross, W. D. "The Basis of Objective Judgments in Ethics," *International Journal of Ethics*, 37: 2 (1927), pg. 113-27. Permalink to library resource: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2377758>

Recommended Readings

Held, Virginia. "Feminist Transformations of Moral Theory," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 50 (1990), pg. 321-44. Permalink to library resource: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2108046>

Korsgaard, Christine. "The Right to Lie: Dealing with Evil," *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 15: 4 (1986), pg. 235-49. Permalink to library resource: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2265252>

Nussbaum, Martha. "Non-relative Virtues: An Aristotelian Approach," preprint, The World Institute for Development Economics Research, 1987. [PDF in course]

Singer, Peter. "The Singer Solution to World Poverty." *New York Times Magazine*, Sep 05, 1999, pp. 60-6, 60:1. ProQuest, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/215501119?accountid=7036>.

Tutoring

HCC provides free, confidential, and convenient academic support, including writing critiques, to HCC students in an online environment and on campus. Tutoring is provided by HCC personnel in order to ensure that it is contextual and appropriate. Visit the [HCC Tutoring Services](#) website for services provided.

Libraries

The HCC Library System consists of 9 libraries and 6 Electronic Resource Centers (ERCs) that are inviting places to study and collaborate on projects. Librarians are available both at the libraries and online to show you how to locate and use the resources you need. The libraries maintain a large selection of electronic resources as well as collections of books, magazines, newspapers, and audiovisual materials. The portal to all libraries' resources and services is the HCCS library web page at <http://library.hccs.edu>.

Supplementary Instruction

Supplemental Instruction is an academic enrichment and support program that uses peer-assisted study sessions to improve student retention and success in historically difficult courses. Peer Support is provided by students who have already succeeded in completion of the specified course, and who earned a grade of A or B. Find details at <http://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/supplemental-instruction/>.

Course Overview

This is a systematic evaluation of classical and/or contemporary ethical theories concerning the good life, human conduct in society, morals, and standards of value. 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.

Core Curriculum Objectives (CCOs)

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.

Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs)

1. Demonstrate knowledge and 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.
5. Apply relevant ethical theories to daily activities, and to issues in contemporary debates.

Course Student Learning Outcomes (CSLOs)

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.
4. Present and discuss well-reasoned ethical positions in writing.
5. Apply ethical concepts and principles to address moral concerns.
6. Apply course material to various aspects of life.
7. Discuss ways of living responsibly in a world where people have diverse ethical beliefs.

Learning Objectives

1.1 Read canonical texts and contemporary articles in the philosophical tradition of ethics.

1.2 Analyze, discuss, and critique philosophical texts and ethical questions through open annotation exercises and discussion forums.

1.3 Analyze and critique philosophical texts and practical ethical questions in group work.

2.1 Recognize and identify basic philosophical vocabulary, major arguments, and positions in philosophical ethics.

2.2 Use basic philosophical vocabulary, major arguments, and positions in philosophical ethics through discussions, group work, and annotation exercises.

3.1 Recognize and identify the components of arguments and the standards of logical evaluation.

3.2 Paraphrase and explain philosophical arguments in assigned readings through discussion forums and group work.

3.3 Evaluate the validity of philosophical arguments in quizzes, discussions, group work, and annotations.

4.1 Discuss ethical positions in discussion forums and annotation exercises.

4.2 Present arguments for ethical positions in discussion forums and annotation exercises.

5.1 Consider the impacts of philosophical ideas on personal and social responsibility in discussion forums.

5.2 Apply philosophical concepts discussed in the course to personal and contemporary issues, demonstrating a concern for social and personal responsibility in discussion forums and group assignments.

6.1 Apply ethical theories to contemporary moral problems and various aspects of life in group work and discussion forums.

7.1 Discuss living responsibly in a diverse world in discussion forums.

Student Success

Expect to spend at least 18 hours per week doing work for this class. Additional time will be required for written assignments. The assignments provided will help you use your study hours wisely. Successful completion of this course requires a combination of the following:

- Reading the required readings
- Looking up words, concepts, or people you are unfamiliar with
- Completing assignments
- Participating in class discussions

There is no shortcut for success in this course; it requires reading (and probably re-reading) and studying the material using the course objectives as a guide.

Assignments, Exams, and Activities

First-Week Check-in

During the first week of the semester, you will be required to check in to the course by completing an introduction in the Student Lounge forum, completing your first quiz, and completing a group work survey. ***These components are necessary for being counted present in the class.***

Quizzes

Each section unit will require a quiz on the material covered in that section. You are responsible for having completed the assigned readings and understanding the key themes and concepts. You will be allowed 3 attempts per quiz.

Discussions

There will be five discussion forums throughout the course. Participation in discussion forums is graded on the basis of serious engagement with the question asked and engagement with other students in the course. I will not count words or posts, but I am looking for you to interact with your classmates in meaningful ways.

Short Written Assignments

There will be four short assignments at the beginning of the course. These assignments will be explained in detail in EagleOnline.

Group Work

There will be three, short group assignments. I will divide the class into groups prior to the first assignment and you will use collaboration tools, like Google docs, to work on assignments in your group throughout the course.

Essay

You will write a 4-5 page paper (body only, standard borders and font). You will select from among suggested topics for the paper that will be explained in detail in the course. It will be based on the readings for the course will not require external research.

Personal Project

You will be required to complete a personal project of your own choosing. I am willing to consider any proposal for a project submitted to me. You will be required to submit a proposal and complete draft of your project. Project options include: creating a public website, completing a digital story (short video), fix and supplement a Wikipedia entry related to the content in this course, update or edit the textbook that was used in this class. Additional project ideas can be proposed.

Final Exam

Multiple Choice Final

An online final quiz will be generated using the questions from each of the unit quizzes. This final will consist of 50 questions and you will only be allowed 1 attempt.

Written Final

The final exam will consist of two long-form reflections on the semester. They will center around your work, your ethical views, and your interactions with your classmates. Grading criteria and detailed descriptions are provided in EagleOnline.

Extra Credit / Bonus Points

Up to 10 bonus points will be awarded for the following: participation in an additional applied ethics discussion forum OR completion of an additional personal project. The total points any individual can receive is 10 points.

BONUS FOR EGLS3 COURSE EVALUATION: I will award points to *everyone* in the class based on meeting a percentage of participation in the course evaluation. If 85% of the class completes the course evaluation, everyone will receive 5 points. If 100% of the class completes the course evaluation, everyone will receive 10 points.

Late policy: Late work will be accepted with penalty, unless I have receive a valid excuse or the student has arranged for late submission *prior to the deadline*. I will deduct 10% of the grade for the first day and 10% every week it is late after that.

Grading Formula

First Week Check-in Assignments	5 points
8 x Quizzes	80 points
4 x Short Assignments	80 points
5 x Discussion Forums	100 points
3 x Group Work	60 points
Essay	100 points
Personal Project	100 points
Final Exam	100 points
Total:	625 points

A = 90% to 100% (562 to 625 points)
B = 80% to 89.9% (500 to 561 points)
C = 70% to 79.9% (437 to 499 points)
D = 60% to 69.9% (375 to 436 points)
F = 0% to 59.9% (000 to 374 points)

All point totals are rounded up to the next whole number. Borderline scores will be assessed on a case by case basis.

Incomplete Policy:

I will allow a student to take an Incomplete in this class only if they have met all of the following conditions:

1. The student has a medical, legal, family, or personal emergency that prevents them from completing work for the course.
2. This issue occurs after the last day to withdraw.
3. The student has maintained good academic standing in the course up to that point.
4. The student completes an **Incomplete Contract** prior to the end of the term.

Additionally, any student who is unable to complete the course due to pregnancy can receive an incomplete, even if she does not meet the previous conditions.

HCC Grading Scale can be found on this site under Academic Information:
<http://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/student-handbook/>

Course Calendar

Please pay attention to due dates. I have tried to make the due dates uniform, but in order to accommodate holidays and the term length, assignments may be due on a different day in any given week.

Class Check-in Assignments

Completion of these assignments is necessary in order for you to be counted as present and attending the course by the "Official Day of Record" on 10/26

Module 1: Basic Concepts

Readings: Course Notes and Handbook; *Introduction to Philosophy: Ethics*, Ch. 1.

Quiz 1	10/23
Assignment 1 (Moral Dilemmas)	10/23
Quiz 2	10/30
Group Work 1 (Overview of Ethics)	10/30

Module 2: Moral Reasoning

Readings: Course Notes and Handbook

Quiz 3	
Assignment 2: Moral reasoning quiz	11/4
Group Work 2 (Reasoning through disagreement)	11/4

Module 3: Divine Command Theory

Readings: Plato, *Euthyphro*; *Introduction to Philosophy: Ethics*, Ch. 2.

Quiz 4	11/11
Discussion 1 (Moral foundations and moral realism)	11/11
Assignment 3 (Divine Command Theory)	11/11

Module 4: Virtues Ethics:

Readings: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, selections; *Introduction to Philosophy: Ethics*, Ch. 3.

Recommended reading: Nussbaum, "Non-Relative Virtues: An Aristotelian Approach"

Quiz 5	11/15
Discussion 2 (Virtue)	11/15
Essay Proposal and Outline	11/15

Module 5: Kantian Ethics:

Required reading: Kant, *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*, selections; *Introduction to Philosophy: Ethics*, Ch. 6.

Recommended: Korsgaard, "The Right to Lie: On Dealing with Evil"

Quiz 6	11/22
Discussion 3 (Kant)	11/22
Assignment 4 (Consequentialism or deontology)	11/22
Essay Final	11/22

Module 6: Utilitarianism:

Required reading: Mill, *Utilitarianism*, selections; *Introduction to Philosophy: Ethics*, Ch. 5.

Recommended: Singer, "The Singer Solution to World Poverty"

Personal Project Proposal	11/25
Quiz 7	11/30
Discussion 4 (Utilitarianism)	11/30
Group Work 3 (Summarizing moral theories)	11/30

Module 6, Applied Ethics

Quiz 8	12/4
Discussion 5 (Applied ethics)	12/4
Personal Project Draft	12/6

Multiple Choice Final Exam	12/9
Written Final Exam	12/9

Personal Project Final Draft	12/11
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Syllabus Modifications

The instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabus at any time during the semester and will promptly notify students in writing, typically by e-mail, of any such changes.

Instructor's Practices and Procedures

Missed Assignments

Students are responsible for all due dates. It is the student's responsibility to contact and consult with the instructor for make-up assignments. Any student who is unable to complete a quiz or assignment on the scheduled date must make arrangements *prior to the due date*. If assignments are submitted after the scheduled due date, they will receive a point deduction in the amount of 10% for the first day and 10% for each subsequent week. Except for a medical excuse or documented family or personal emergency, there is no exemption from these rules.

Academic Integrity

The pressure to earn high grades and belief that *a good end can justify any means whatsoever* leads many students to try cutting corners by resorting to less than honest methods. Do yourself a favor by avoiding that trap. The HCC *Student Rights and Responsibilities* lists cheating, plagiarism, and collusion as scholastic dishonesty. It defines *plagiarism* as "the appropriation of another's work and the unacknowledged incorporation of that work in one's own written work offered for credit." It defines *collusion* as "the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing work for credit."

Work submitted for this course that is determined to be the result of either cheating, plagiarism, collusion, or any other behavior that is deemed to be academically dishonest will earn a '0' for that assignment; two instances will result in an automatic 'F' for the course. Probation or dismissal from HCC and ALL its several colleges may also result.

Here's the link to the HCC information about academic integrity (Scholastic Dishonesty and Violation of Academic Scholastic Dishonesty and Grievance):

<http://www.hccs.edu/about-hcc/procedures/student-rights-policies--procedures/student-procedures/>

HCC Policies

Here's the link to the HCC Student Handbook <http://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/student-handbook/> In it you will find information about the following:

- Academic Information
- Academic Support
- Attendance, Repeating Courses, and Withdrawal
- Career Planning and Job Search
- Childcare
- disAbility Support Services
- Electronic Devices
- Equal Educational Opportunity
- Financial Aid TV (FATV)
- General Student Complaints
- Grade of FX
- Incomplete Grades
- International Student Services
- Health Awareness
- Libraries/Bookstore
- Police Services & Campus Safety
- Student Life at HCC
- Student Rights and Responsibilities
- Student Services
- Testing
- Transfer Planning
- Veteran Services

EGLS³

The EGLS³ ([Evaluation for Greater Learning Student Survey System](#)) will be available for most courses near the end of the term until finals start. This brief survey will give invaluable information to your faculty about their teaching. Results are anonymous and will be available to faculty and division chairs after the end of the term. EGLS³ surveys are only available for the Fall and Spring semesters. EGLS³ surveys are not offered during the Summer semester due to logistical constraints.

<http://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/egls3-evaluate-your-professors/>

Campus Carry Link

Here's the link to the HCC information about Campus Carry:

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

HCC Email Policy

When communicating via email, HCC requires students to communicate only through the HCC email system to protect your privacy. If you have not activated your HCC student email account, you can go [to HCC Eagle ID](#) and activate it now. You may also use Canvas Inbox to communicate.

Housing and Food Assistance for Students

Any student who faces challenges securing their foods or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Dean of Students at their college for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so.

This will enable HCC to provide any resources that HCC may possess.

Office of Institutional Equity

Use the link below to access the HCC Office of Institutional Equity, Inclusion, and Engagement (<http://www.hccs.edu/departments/institutional-equity/>)

disAbility Services

HCC strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including long and short term conditions, 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/support-services/disability-services/>

Title IX

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:

David Cross
 Director EEO/Compliance
 Office of Institutional Equity & Diversity
 3100 Main
 (713) 718-8271
 Houston, TX 77266-7517 or Institutional.Equity@hccs.edu
<http://www.hccs.edu/departments/institutional-equity/title-ix-know-your-rights/>

Office of the Dean of Students

Contact the office of the Dean of Students to seek assistance in determining the correct complaint procedure to follow or to identify the appropriate academic dean or supervisor for informal resolution of complaints.

<https://www.hccs.edu/about-hcc/procedures/student-rights-policies--procedures/student-complaints/speak-with-the-dean-of-students/>

Department Chair Contact Information

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