

# SYLLABUS

## Academic Discipline

**Philosophy**

## Course Title

**Introduction to Ethics**

## Course Rubric and Number

**PHIL 2306 – 79929**

## Location and Meeting Days and Times

**Spring Branch Campus, Room 319  
Tuesday, Thursday – 9:30 am to 11:00 pm**

## Course Semester Credit Hours (SCH)

**3 SCH**

## Contact Hours

**48 Contact Hours**

## Course Length

**16 weeks**

## Type of Instruction

**Lecture and Web-Enhanced**

## Instructor Contact Information

**Nathan D. Smith, PhD, Instructor  
Department of Philosophy  
Voicemail/on-campus phone: 713-718-7258  
E-Mail Conferencing: [nathan.smith2@hccs.edu](mailto:nathan.smith2@hccs.edu)**

## Instructor Office Location and Hours

**Office : Spring Branch 900-D  
Office Hours: Daily, by appointment.**

## Course Description

Classical and contemporary theories concerning the good life, human conduct in society, and moral and ethical standards. (Texas ACGM – Approval Number: 38.0101.53 12)

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) CORE CURRICULUM COURSE

## CORE Requirements, Certificates, AA-Degree Plan, and Transfer Information

HCC CORE HUMANITIES or MULTICULTURAL AREAS, or Elective. **Women and Gender Studies Certificate** course. Fulfills Ethics requirement for various academic and professional four-year college majors and Philosophy AA-degree Plan.

**DISCIPLINE NOTICE:** Students who are pursuing an HCC AA-degree plan are advised that except as noted, this course may not be used to satisfy any other HCC CORE requirement, though it may satisfy certain transfer institution college major requirements. 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.

### Prerequisites

## ENGL 1301 or Departmental Permission

### 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 (HCCS Catalog) 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.

### Expected 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.

### Course 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.

### CORE Curriculum Competencies

This course stresses the HCC CORE Competencies of reading, writing, speaking, listening, critical thinking, and computer literacy.

### Course Calendar

**See Eagle Online Course Calendar** - Check course calendar regularly for updates and revisions. Depending on class learning progress, your instructor reserves the right to either accelerate, or slow the completion of course curriculum as posted in the Calendar in the upper right-hand block of your EO course.

### Instructional Methods and Internet Component

**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 NOTICE: Eagle Online works best with the latest version of Mozilla Firefox. Download is free, [here](#).

## Text Information:

### Required Texts:

Aquinas, Thomas // ***The Cardinal Virtues***//  
Hackett Publishing 1<sup>st</sup> Edition, 1988//  
ISBN: 0-87220-745-5

Bentham and Mill// ***Classical Utilitarianism***//J. Troyer ed.//  
Hackett Publishing, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition, 2003  
ISBN: 0-87220-649-1

Kant, Immanuel // ***Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals***//Mary Gregor, trsl.  
Cambridge University Press, 1997 1<sup>st</sup> Edition  
ISBN: 0521626951

Plato // ***Five Dialogues***//Hackett Publishing  
2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, 2002//  
ISBN 0-87220-633-5

Ghandi, Mahatma// ***Selected Political Writings***//Hackett Publishing  
1st Edition, 1996//  
ISBN 0-87220-330-1

## Students with Disabilities

Any student with a documented disability (e.g. physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc.) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact the Disability Services Office at the respective college at the beginning of each semester. Faculty is authorized to provide only the accommodations requested by the Disability Support Services Office, and to do so in a reasonable manner.

To visit the ADA Web site, log on to [www.hccs.edu](http://www.hccs.edu), click Future Students, then 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.

District ADA Coordinator - Donna Price - 713.718.5165  
Northwest ADA Counselor - Mahnaz Kolaini - 713.718.5422

## Academic Honesty

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 Handbook* 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, or collusion will earn a "0" for that assignment, and may cause the student to receive either an "F", or "I" in the course depending on your professor's stated requirements for the assignment and the weight it carries in determining your course grade. Students receiving an "I" for a course are ineligible for graduation until the "I" has been removed from a student's transcript. Probation or dismissal from HCC and ALL its several colleges may also result. See *Student Handbook*.

## Attendance and Withdrawal Policies

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 IF, FOR ANY REASON, THAT STUDENT IS NO LONGER ATTENDING. NEW RULES ARE IN EFFECT THAT GREATLY CHANGE HOW AND WHEN THAT CAN BE DONE. YOU WILL NOT BE WITHDRAWN FROM THIS COURSE BY YOUR PROFESSOR. FURTHERMORE, THERE ARE POSSIBLE PENALTIES OTHER THAN LOSING ONE'S PAID TUITION THAT EVERY STUDENT MUST CONSIDER CAREFULLY BEFORE WITHDRAWING. THESE INCLUDE:

- (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", which for Spring 2012 on Thursday, March 29 at 4:30 pm. 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". Your instructor will not withdraw you for non-attendance and will withdraw a student if and only if provided a written request from that student.

## HCC Student Services Information

<http://northwest.hccs.edu/northwest/campus-services>

## HCC Student Services Information (Continued)

STUDENT SERVICES LOCATIONS AND HOURS:  
Katy Campus, Suite 104

(713) 718-5751

8:30am–6:30pm Monday thru Thursday

9:00am–1:00pm Friday

Spring Branch Campus

(713) 718-5669

9:00am–7:00pm Monday thru Thursday

9:00am–1:00pm Friday

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

<http://northwest.hccs.edu/northwest/campus-services>

EARLY ALERT: HCC has instituted an Early Alert process by which your professor will “alert” you through counselors of concerns that you might fail a class because of excessive absences and/or poor academic performance.

ALL STUDENTS ARE ADVISED: Contact your professor/counselor about opportunities for private tutoring and other assistance prior to considering withdrawal, or if you are not receiving passing grades. There are many opportunities available to assure your success!

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS: Receiving either a “W”, or “I” in a course may affect the status of your student Visa. Once a W is given for the course (after you have formally submitted a withdrawal form), it will not be changed to an F because of the visa consideration. An “I” does convert to an “F”, but only after six months have passed from the end of the term it was received. Please contact the International Student Office at 713-718-8520, if you have any questions about your visa status and other transfer issues.

### Grading Components and Weights

- **Participation (100 points)** – Calculated based on attendance, preparation for class (ability to answer when called upon), and contribution to in-class discussion.
- **Discussion forums (4 x 50 points each)** – There will be online discussion topics. You are required to participate. Instructions will be clearly posted in discussion forum. Prepares for Learning Outcomes 2, 3, 4, and 5.
- **Quizzes (5 x 50 points each)** – At the end of each unit, there will be an online test consisting of multiple choice, matching, and fill-in-the-blank questions. You may take each test up to three times in order to improve your score Assessing Learning Outcome 1
- **Text Summaries (7 x 25 points each)** – You will be required to submit a 1-2 page written summary of each text we read for this course. Summaries should be completed in your own words and submitted to the text summary assignment online. (Lowest score will be dropped.) Prepares for Learning Outcomes 1 and 2.
- **Mid-Term Paper (100 points)** – You will be assigned a short (3 pg.) paper on a list of possible topics from the readings. This paper will be graded for

both substance and style. Assessing Learning Outcome 2; preparing for Learning Outcomes 3, and 4.

- **Final Exam (200 points)** – The final exam will be composed at home and turned in on the day of the scheduled final exam. You will be given some options of topics to address. Your responses should demonstrate the ability to apply concepts learned to original examples, consider alternative positions, compare and contrast various philosophical views, and justify your own position Assessing Learning Outcomes 3, 4, and 5.

\* **Extra Credit** – You may earn 50 points extra credit for attending a number of on-campus student events, including: participation in a scholastic club, attending a speaker or films series event, or participating in a volunteer activity. In order to receive the extra credit, you must provide evidence of participation AND a one-page summary and reaction to your experience.

#### Minimum Writing Requirement (Per Philosophy Discipline)

**4,000 Words (Required discussions, blogs, essays, exams)**

#### Grading Policy

**All grades will be figured according to a percentage of *total points*. The total number of points for this term is 1000. The term grade legend and analysis are as follows:**

**A = 90% to 100% (900 to 1000 point)**  
**B = 80% to 89.9% (800 to 899 points)**  
**C = 70% to 79.9% (700 to 799 points)**  
**D = 60% to 69.9% (600 to 699 points)**  
**F = 0% to 59.9% (000 to 599 points)**

#### Make-up policy

Students are responsible for materials covered in-class and online during their absences, and it is the student's responsibility to contact and consult with the instructor for make-up assignments. In addition, any student who is absent on posted exam dates should be prepared to schedule the make-up of missed examinations on the first day of returning to class. Make-up examinations are taken by appointment at the campus Testing Center. This scheduling cannot occur during class time. Any other assignments not turned in on time (due to absences) must also be either turned in, or scheduled for late submission on the first day of returning to class. Finally, there will be no extension of due dates and/or make-ups for Online Requirements. Except for a medical excuse or documented family or personal emergency, there is no exemption from these rules.

#### Tutoring Information

[www.hccs.askonline.net](http://www.hccs.askonline.net)