

SYLLABUS

Academic Discipline

Philosophy

Course Title

Survey of Modern and Contemporary Philosophy

Course Rubric and Number

PHIL 2317 – 79484

Location and Meeting Days and Times

**Spring Branch Campus, Room 319
Tuesday, Thursday – 12:30 am to 2:00 am**

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
E-Mail: nathan.smith2@hccs.edu**

Instructor Office Location and Hours

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

Course Description

Study of major philosophers and philosophical systems from ancient, through medieval, to modern times. (Texas ACGM – Approval Number: 38.0101.55 12)

An historic survey of critical and reflective thinking as applied to the basic problems of existence and the meaning of human life and institutions; begins with the Renaissance, continues with the major philosophers of the 16th, 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, and ends with an examination of the analytic and existential philosophers of the 20th century; a study of the nature of philosophy as applied to the development of the scientific method, the existence of god, and the political structures of society.

(HCC Catalog) CORE CURRICULUM COURSE

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

Fulfills critical thinking requirement for select four-year college majors, including many business and communications programs; and also Fulfills philosophy requirement for various academic and professional four-year college majors, and HCC Philosophy AA-degree plan. HCC CORE Humanities Area, Multicultural Area, or Elective.

Prerequisites

College Reading Level, English 1302

Course Goals

This course will focus on the set of modern philosophical issues commonly grouped under the heading “Philosophy of Mind,” though the focus on these issues will be historical, beginning with the 17th century and leading up to the 20th century. Today, philosophers who study the mind find themselves working collaboratively with cognitive scientists, psychologists, linguists, and even computer scientists. The issues studied in this field include, but are not limited to, a definition of consciousness, an answer to the mind-body problem (whether and how the mind is different than the body), the nature of mental states, content, functions, or processes, personal identity, and free will, as well as more general metaphysical and epistemological issues, such as, the nature of substance, distinctions between substances and their properties, the nature of perception and cognition, subjective vs. objective knowledge, and the extent and certainty of reductive explanation.

Expected Learning Outcomes

- 1. Recall and Identify** the major thinkers, schools, core philosophical questions, terms and concepts in the history of modern and contemporary philosophy as it relates to questions of the nature and operations of the mind.
- 2. Interpret and Explain** core questions and concepts of the philosophy of mind in terms that illustrate a comprehensive grasp of each.
- 3. Apply** core questions and concepts of the philosophy of mind to contemporary issues and personal experience.
- 4. Compare and Contrast** related core questions of knowing and concepts in the philosophy of mind, and the correlative thinkers and schools with which they are commonly associated.
- 5. Justify** a sound philosophical position on a topic, or topics of contemporary interest in the philosophy of mind that **Integrates** and **Logically Demonstrates a Synthesis** in thought.

Course Learning Objectives

- 1.1 Acquire** a broad familiarity with the names of major thinkers, and the schools of thought as they relate to the study and understanding of the mind.

1.2 Learn historically significant questions of knowing, definitions of special terms, the rules of logic, fallacies, correct reasoning, and critical thinking.

2.1 Cultivate comprehension of the nature of the mind, scientific explanation, mental content, dualism, materialism, and problems associated with each.

2.2 Distinguish various approaches to interpretation, including conceptual analysis and the use of scientific evidence in philosophy.

3.1 Articulate the relevance of philosophical questioning and critical thinking to the cognitive sciences and the ordinary ways of knowing, thinking, understanding, and acting.

3.2 Consider how philosophy may or may not apply to differing questions in psychology, neuroscience, and first-person experience.

4.1 Inventory, Summarize, and Assess correlative questions, concepts, and schools of thought found in the philosophy of mind.

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.

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:

Ariew, Roger and Eric Watkins. ***Modern Philosophy: An Anthology of Primary Sources***, 2nd edition. Hackett Publishing, 2009.
ISBN: 978-0-87220-978-7

Chalmers, David J. ***The Conscious Mind: In Search of a Fundamental Theory***. Oxford University Press, 1996.
ISBN: 0-19-511789-1

Dennett, Daniel C. ***Consciousness Explained***. Little, Brown, and Co., 1991.
ISBN: 0-316-18066-1

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, 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 is 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>

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.**
- **Quizzes (4 x 50 points each) – At the end of each learning section, we will have an online exam consisting of multiple choice, matching, and true/false questions. You may retake these tests up to a total of three times. Assessing Learning Outcome 1**

- **Papers (4 x 50 points each) – You will be assigned four short papers (2 pgs) on a topic relevant to the course. Preparing for Learning Outcomes 1 and 2.**
- **Midterm Exam (100 points) – You will complete a take-home mid-term exam treating a set of questions pertaining to the readings and discussions from the course. Assessing Learning Outcome 2; preparing for Learning Outcomes 3, and 4.**
- **Final Paper (300 total points) – This paper will involve independent study of at least three of the modern and contemporary philosophers from our required reading. It will be due the day of the scheduled final exam. You will be given some topic guidelines and requirements for citations. Your paper should demonstrate the ability to apply concepts learned to original examples, consider alternative positions, compare and contrast various philosophical views, and justify a philosophical position. There will be a thesis workshop (participation is worth 50 points) and a revised thesis, outline, and works cited page (worth 50 points), due one week prior to the end of the course. 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