

# SYLLABUS

## Academic Discipline

Philosophy

## Course Title

Introduction to Ethics

## Course Rubric and Number

PHIL 2306 – CRN 85612

## Location and Meeting Days and Times

Spring Branch Campus, Room 319

Monday thru Friday – 10 AM to 12 Noon

## Course Semester Credit Hours (SCH)

SCH

## Contact Hours

48 Contact Hours

## Course Length

5 Weeks

## Type of Instruction

Lecture and Web-Enhanced

## Instructor Contact Information

Robert M. Louis, DMin, Instructor

Department of Philosophy

E-Mail: [robert.louis@hccs.edu](mailto:robert.louis@hccs.edu); [Wolrml@aol.com](mailto:Wolrml@aol.com)

## Instructor Office Location and Hours

Campus: Spring Branch

Office: Before and after class in Room 319

Office Hours: Before and after class in Room 319; and 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 1302 or 2311 with a grade of “D” or higher 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 concern-

ing 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](#)

The course calendar with due dates for reading and written assignments is below. Students should regularly check online announcements for this course for updates and revisions. Depending on class learning progress, your instructor reserves the right to either accelerate or slow the completion dates of course curriculum. Calendar includes all presentations, reading assignments, homework assignments, in-class writings, discussions, reading quizzes and the mid-term and final examinations, and no class days.

#### **Week 1 (July 11-14)**

Reading Assignment: Plato's *Meno*  
Study Questions are Online

Analysis

Discussion Forum on Wednesday

Reading Quiz on Thursday on Plato

Reading Assignment: Weston's *A Rulebook for Arguments*, Num 1-12

Class Writing

*Prologomena*

This Course: Web-Enhanced; Friday Class is Online

Syllabus Review

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

How to Study for This Class

Taking Class Notes and Reviewing Them Daily

How to Read the Course Books

Protections: Mobility, Communications Network, Computer

Socrates (c 470-399 BCE): The Examined Life

Video: What Is Philosophy? (Optional)

Philosophy, Ethics, Morality

Preview: Basic Ethical Theories and Principles

Ethical Subjectivism

Cultural Relativism

Ethical Absolutism

Ethical Egoism

The Myth of the Ring of Gyges

Aristotle (384-322 BCE): Virtue Ethics and Becoming a Virtuous Person

Video: Is Ethics Based on Virtue? (Optional)

Franklin's Thirteen Virtues

People of Character

## **Week 2 (July 18-21)**

Reading Assignment: Kant's *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*

Study Questions are Online

Analysis

Discussion Forum on Wednesday

Reading Quiz on Thursday on Kant

Reading Assignment: Weston's *A Rulebook for Arguments*, Num 13-28

Class Writing

Mid-Term Examination Essay Question available on Monday

St Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274 CE): The Cardinal Virtues

Natural Law Ethics

A Very Short Primer

Morality and Religion

Virtues and Talk

Immanuel Kant (1724-1804 CE): Moral Duty Is Based on Reason

Becoming an Ethical Person  
 Your Moral Compass  
 Excellence

### **Week 3 (July 25-28)**

Mid-Term Examination on Monday, July 25; Cumulative in Class and Essay due  
 Reading Assignment: Mill's *On Liberty*  
 Study Questions are Online  
 Analysis  
 Discussion Forum on Wednesday  
 Reading Quiz on Thursday on Mill  
 Reading Assignment: Weston's *A Rulebook for Arguments*, Num 29-39  
 Class Writing  
 Final Examination Essay Question available on Monday

John Stuart Mill (1806-1873 CE): The Greatest Good for the Greatest Number  
 The Field of Values

### **Week 4 (August 1-4)**

**(Wednesday, August 3, 2011, at 4:30P.M.: Last Date for Student Withdrawals)**

Reading Assignment: Gandhi's *Selected Political Writings*  
 Study Questions are Online  
 Analysis  
 Discussion Forum on Wednesday  
 Reading Quiz on Thursday on Gandhi  
 Reading Assignment: Weston's *A Rulebook for Arguments*, Num 40-45  
 Class Writing

Existential Ethics: Living an Authentic Life  
 Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980)  
 Ethics of Care  
 Stages of Moral Development  
 Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948 CE)  
 Video: Gandhi (Optional)  
 Being Good in Eastern Ethics

### **Week 5 (August 8-9)**

Tying Up Dangling Ends  
 Hanging Things Together

Final Examination on Thursday, August 11, 2011, at 10:00 A.M.: Cumulative in Class and Essay due

### Instructional Methods and Internet Component

This is a web-enhanced lecture course that uses *Blackboard Vista*. The HCC *Blackboard Vista* logon page is:

<http://hccs.blackboard.com>

Your *Blackboard Vista* 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, there is a link on the logon page that you can click on to retrieve it. Your default *Blackboard Vista* password at the beginning of the term is "distance." You will be asked to change it the first time you logon. Select a new password you will remember! This password is independent of your Online Registration password. It is your responsibility to change your password. Once logged on, you will come to a page that shows this course and all other courses in which you are enrolled that have online sections, including those designated as either hybrid, or DE. To enter this course, click on the course name and you will be taken to the course homepage.

### Text Information

#### Required Texts:

Grube//***Plato: Five Dialogues***  
Hackett Publishing, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, 2002  
ISBN 978-0-87220-633-5

Kant, Immanuel//***Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals***//Mary Gregor, trsl.  
Cambridge University Press, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition, 1997  
ISBN 0-521-62695-1

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

Gandhi, Mahatma//***Selected Political Writings***  
Hackett Publishing, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition, 1996  
ISBN 0-87220-330-1

Weston, Anthony//*A Rule Book for Arguments*  
 Hackett Publishing, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2008  
 ISBN 978-0-87220-954-1

## Recommended Additional Sources:

Aristotle//*Nicomachean Ethics*  
 Prentice Hall, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition, 1962  
 ISBN 0-02-389530-6

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

Wollstonecraft, Mary//*A Vindication of the Rights of Women*  
 Dover Publications  
 Dover Thrift Edition, 1966  
 ISBN 0-48629-036-0

Kant Immanuel//*Lectures on Ethics*  
 Hackett Publishing, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition, 1997  
 ISBN 0-915144-26-3

Nietzsche, Friedrich//*Genealogy of Morals*  
 Doubleday & Co., Anchor Edition, 1980  
 ISBN 0385-09210-5

De Beauvoir, Simone//*Ethics of Ambiguity*//B. Frechtman, transl.  
 Carol Publishing Group, 1990  
 ISBN 080650160X

### [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, 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 this trap. The HCCS *Student Handbook* lists cheating, plagiarism, and collusion as scholastic dishonest. 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.”

Any work submitted for this course that is determined by the professor to be the result of either cheating, plagiarism or collusion will earn a zero for that assignment, and may easily 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 of its several colleges may also result. See the Student Handbook for further information.

### 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 or 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 Summer II – 2011, is Wednesday, August 3, 2011, at 4:30 P.M. After that date and time, a student can only be given a grade earned, or "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

NORTHWEST COLLEGE STUDENT SERVICES provides master's and doctoral-level counseling for high-quality support services for the Northwest College student body. Counselors are available at each campus to assist students in creating class schedules, evaluating college transcripts and completing degree/certificate plans.

### STUDENT SERVICES LOCATIONS AND HOURS:

Katy Campus, Suite 104  
713-718-5751

8:30 A.M. – 6:30 P.M., Monday thru Thursday  
9:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M., Friday

Spring Branch Campus  
713-718-5669

9:00 A.M. – 7:00 P.M., Monday thru Thursday  
9:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M., 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. 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

- **DISCUSSION FORUM** (4 discussions x 25 points each) = 100 points total (16.5% of final grade)

Discussions are oral, in class, on announced dates, and then written reports are submitted for grading. Students must be present on the appointed dates for the class discussions, in order to receive credit. There are no make-ups for discussions, when students are absent.

SLOs 2, 3, 5.

- **IN CLASS WRITINGS** (4 writings x 25 points each) = 100 points total (16.5% of final grade)

In class writings are individual writings, in class, and they are not announced. Students must be present for the in class writings, in order to receive credit. There are no make-ups for in class writings, when students are absent.

SLOs 2, 3, 4

- **READING QUIZZES** (4 quizzes x 25 points each) = 100 points (16.5% of final grade)

Reading quizzes are written, in class, on announced dates. Students must be present on the appointed dates for taking the reading quizzes. There are no make-ups for reading quizzes, when students are absent.

SLO 2

- **MID-TERM EXAMINATION: CUMULATIVE AND ESSAY** = 150 points total (24.75% of final grade)  
SLO 1 applies to the cumulative part of this examination; SLO 4 applies to the essay portion.

The cumulative portion (SLO 1) is true/false, multiple choice, fill in the blank. It has a value of 50 points (8.25% of the final grade). The essay portion has a value of 100 points (16.5% of the final grade).

The essay question will be given one week before the mid-term examination.

The essay should be typed, with normal margins, 12-point font, double-spaced. This writing is to be between 4-5 pages in length. All sources require full citations.

- **FINAL EXAMINATION: CUMULATIVE AND ESSAY** = 150 points total (24.75% of final grade)

SLO 1 applies to the cumulative part of this examination; SLO 5 applies to the essay portion.

The cumulative portion (SLO 1) is true/false, multiple choice, fill in the blank. It has a value of 50 points (8.25% of the final grade). The essay portion has a value of 100 points (16.5% of the final grade).

The essay question will be given one week before the final examination.

The essay should be typed, with normal margins, 12-point font, double-spaced. This writing is to be between 4-5 pages in length. All sources require full citations.

The mid-term and final examination essays will be completed out of class and submitted on the dates specified in the syllabus. These writings are to answer specific questions, in compliance with SLOs per each writing, that seek the student's understanding of the course content. Questions are to be addressed as asked. The grading of written material follows established standards of critical thinking and philosophical argumentation.

All references to texts and other copyrighted sources are to follow MLA style guides, including a "Works Cited" page, if they are not included in the required texts for this course. See the Citations Folder on the Blackboard Homepage.

Plagiarism on the mid-term and final examination essays will result in a "0" for the essay. This includes copying a classmate's writing and submitting it as one's own. Plagiarized writings must be rewritten to the professor's satisfaction and will then be eligible to be awarded a 50% credit. Plagiarism on the final examination essay will

result in an “I” for the course, until either the deficit is made up, or the “I” turns into an “F” at the end of the established six months following the term’s end.

- **POINT RECOVERY**

Students who are disappointed in their performance on the mid-term essay may recover up to one-half the points missed by completing a total rewrite that demonstrates a significant improvement. This opportunity applies only to the mid-term essay.

### Late Essays & Make-Up Policy

Students are responsible for materials covered in-class and online during their absences. It is the students’ responsibility to obtain notes from their classmates for class material. Online material remains on line the whole semester. Consult with the professor if you need guidance.

Essays not turned in on the assigned dates will be reduced in grade ten points per each class session, following the due date, from the initial value of the writing.

Any student who is absent on the mid-term examination date should be prepared to schedule the make-up of the first part of the mid-term examination with the professor. The essay portion will be accepted, but there will be a late submission grade penalty of ten points, from the initial value of the writing, per each class session, following the date of the mid-term examination.

There are no extensions for reading quizzes, in class writings or discussions that are missed due to students’ absences.

Except for a written medical excuse (by a medical doctor or hospitalization evidence) submitted to the professor of this class, there is no exception from these directives.

### Make-Up Policy

If you think that you are not going to complete an expectation for a written assignment for this class on time, contact your professor before the due date/time by Blackboard email. In certain situations an extension will be granted, but there will be a deduction for the late submission. There are no extensions for reading quizzes, in class writings or discussions that are missed due to students’ absences.

### Minimum Writing Requirement (Per Philosophy Discipline)

4,000 words (required discussions, in class writings, 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 600. The term grade legend and analysis are as follows:

- A=90% to 100% (540-600 points)
- B=80% to 89.9% (480-539 points)
- C=70% to 79.9% (420-479 points)
- D=60% to 69.9% (360-419 points)
- F=0% to 59.9% (000 to 359 points)

## Course Content

This is a course about the origins of philosophical discourse and history of ideas, including the formalization of logic and sound argument, and their relation to our concept of knowledge and learning, particularly as that concept impacts on our judgment involving values and morality. The standards of thinking and expression found in philosophy embrace every principle and method found in core critical thinking competencies. Readings are taken from a range of primary sources beginning with ancient philosophers, then to the medieval period, the moderns, and finally to thinkers on the contemporary scene. Selected readings must include works by women and non-western thinkers and are assessed by exams, quizzes, presentations, and discussions. Students must write at least 4,000 words during this course. This number is achieved in a variety of ways, including online submissions. The evaluation of written work adheres to the professional teaching standards of philosophy for content and correct grammar. Students are advised that computer knowledge, word processing skills, and data base learning and research skills are necessary to complete this course. Help is available for students who lack these skills.

## Tutoring Information

Limited face-to-face tutoring is available from the course instructor before and after class or by appointment. In addition, all philosophy students are encouraged to use HCC's online tutoring system for help with any philosophy class. Questions submitted to the ASK queue will be answered within 24 hours – and usually much before that. Tutors are on duty seven days a week, 365 days a year. Online tutors will not do homework for you, but they will guide you in the right direction. To maximize the effectiveness of the system, be specific when you ask questions, and let the tutor know what class you are taking. You will receive two responses – one from an English tutor and one from a philosophy tutor.

Registering for online tutoring is easy. Go to [www.hccs.askonline.net](http://www.hccs.askonline.net). Select a user name and password that you will remember. Use any e-mail address, and add your student ID number (W number). It will probably take five minutes to set up your Askonline account. After that, you can submit questions in seconds. Tutor responses are not e-mailed to you. To see the answers, log back in to the system and click the

bright yellow NEW button.

Online tutoring is also available for accounting, history, government, chemistry, physics, biology, math, English, and papers in all disciplines.

### Cellular Phones and Pagers

Cellular phones and beepers are allowed in class only if they are turned off or turned to a silent mode. Under no circumstances are telephones to be answered in class. Students who ignore this policy may be asked to leave the class. When there are extenuating circumstances that require that a student be available by phone or beeper, the student should speak to the instructor prior to class, so that together they can arrive at an agreement concerning the device.