## Introduction to Philosophy, PHIL 1301 – 14342/14252

**Summer 1st 8 Weeks, 2016**

**Syllabus**

**HCC Online**

**Instructor:** Dr. Sally Parker-Ryan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summer, 1st 8 week Semester, 2016</th>
<th>HCC Online</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:sally.parkerryan@hccs.edu">sally.parkerryan@hccs.edu</a></td>
<td>PHONE: 214-830-6172</td>
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<tr>
<td>(I will endeavor to return messages within 24 hours)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Semester Credit Hours: 3</td>
<td>Type of Instruction: Online</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contact Hours: 48 approx. <strong>All online.</strong></td>
<td>Course Length: 8 weeks</td>
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<td>June 6 – July 31, 2016</td>
<td>Delivery: via <strong>Eagle Online</strong></td>
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<td>Learning Web:</td>
<td><a href="https://learning.hccs.edu/faculty/sally.parkerryan">https://learning.hccs.edu/faculty/sally.parkerryan</a></td>
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**Online Learning Management Software:**

This is an entirely web-based lecture course that uses **Eagle Online 2**. The **Eagle Online** login page is: https://hccs.instructure.com/login/ldap

**You MUST HAVE an HCC email account.** It is crucial that you regularly check your HCC email account, or set a rule to send it to your primary email account. I will communicate with you ONLY via this email address (i.e. not via any alternative email addresses you may have).

Your ‘home’ campus is HCC Online: [http://www.hccs.edu/online/about-us/](http://www.hccs.edu/online/about-us/)

The Student Services page links you to everything you need to know about online courses, especially to the Mandatory Online Orientation, and to the HCC Online Student Handbook: [http://www.hccs.edu/online/student-services/](http://www.hccs.edu/online/student-services/)

For Technical Support, go to: [http://www.hccs.edu/online/technical-support/](http://www.hccs.edu/online/technical-support/)
Course description:
(Prerequisite: ENGL 1301 or higher)
This course is a study of the major issues in philosophy and/or the work of major philosophical figures in philosophy. Topics in philosophy may include theories of reality, theories of knowledge, theories of value, and their practical applications (Texas ACGM). It provides a theoretically diverse introduction to the study of ideas, including arguments and investigations about abstract and real phenomena, particularly in the areas of knowledge, ethics, and religion (HCC Course Catalogue). This course stresses the HCC Core Objectives of Critical Thinking, Communication Skills, Personal Responsibility, and Social Responsibility.

HCC CORE CURRICULUM COURSE:
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.
In keeping with the guidelines of the Texas Higher Education Curriculum Board, this course will provide a solid foundation in the following Core Objectives: Critical Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, Personal Responsibility, and Social Responsibility.
NOTICE: Students who have questions about whether their enrollment in this course will satisfy their degree objectives should immediately see an HCC academic advisor who can review their academic degree plans.

Course Goals:
To examine some of the major thinkers and schools of thought through the history of philosophy, from the ancients through to contemporary authors. We will look at some traditional philosophical problems such as: How do we acquire knowledge? What is consciousness? Do we have free will? – and more. We will identify argument structures and critically examine the arguments proposed for and against particular views, and in the process gain invaluable skills in clear thinking, and understanding complex arguments. The aim is to emerge with sharper critical thinking abilities and excellent analytic skills.

Student Learning Outcomes:
1. Read, analyze, and critique philosophical texts.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of key concepts, major arguments, problems, and terminology in philosophy.
4. Present logically persuasive arguments both orally and in writing.
5. Demonstrate critical thinking skills in evaluation and application of philosophical concepts to various aspects of life.
6. Evaluate the personal and social responsibilities of living in a diverse world.

Learning Objectives
Acquire a broad familiarity with the names of major thinkers, the schools they represent, geographical location, and historical periods.
Learn historically significant questions of philosophy, definitions of special terms, and concepts of knowledge, ethics, and human condition.
Cultivate reading comprehension of philosophical writings.
Distinguish various approaches to interpretation, including conceptual analysis, testing for validity, determining if sound or not sound.
Articulate the relevance of philosophy and philosophical questioning to everyday life.
Consider how philosophy may or may not apply to differing ways of thinking and cultural influences.
Inventory, Summarize, and Assess correlative questions, concepts, and schools of thought found in the history of ideas.
Create and cultivate alternative philosophical positions on presented course content.
Develop coherent arguments for chosen positions, bringing to bear the rules of logic, written expression and disciplined thinking.
Critique chosen positions and adequately Defend against possible objections, both theoretical and applied.
Course Materials:
I will make all of the **required readings** available via links in Eagle Online to Open Access material. I do, however, recommend buying the following book, as it’s inexpensive and very useful (if you don’t buy it, I will have the relevant chapter online anyhow):


Notes on resources and supplementary reading:
One of the best resources for research is your own library. Try this link for ideas: [http://library.hccce.edu/research_writing](http://library.hccce.edu/research_writing)

HCC Writing Centers
The Houston Community College Writing Centers provide a student-centered environment where professional tutors support student success for all HCC students. The primary goal of the Writing Centers is to offer free, convenient, and personalized assistance to help students improve their writing at any stage of the writing process required in any courses at HCC. Tutors will also assist students with their job application letters, resumes, and scholarship/transfer essays.

Each session lasts about 30 minutes. Students should bring the professor’s assignment sheet or notes about the requirements, a printed rough draft, their textbook, if necessary & a flash drive. Consult Find-A-Tutor at [http://ctle3.hccce.edu/alltutoring/index.php?link=stu](http://ctle3.hccce.edu/alltutoring/index.php?link=stu) for Writing Center locations and times.

At HCC Writing Centers, each tutoring session becomes a learning experience.

I also recommend, for each topic we cover, looking it up on either, or both, of the following online encyclopedias:
- and the Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy (IEP) [http://www.iep.utm.edu/](http://www.iep.utm.edu/)

Also very useful is the following philosophy website: [http://www.philosophypages.com/index.htm](http://www.philosophypages.com/index.htm) - this site has a dictionary, study guides, history, individual philosophers as well as notes on logic and writing philosophy essays (in study guide section).

Don’t forget to look for resources on the Philosophy discipline page of the Learning Web [https://learning.hccce.edu/programs/philosophy](https://learning.hccce.edu/programs/philosophy)

Grading Components:
All grades will be calculated according to a percentage of total points. The total number of points for this term is 100. The term grade legend follows:

- **A** = 100 - 90
- **B** = 89 - 80
- **C** = 79 - 70
- **D** = 69 - 60
- **59 and below = F**
- **FX** (Failure due to non-attendance) = 0 points
- **W** (Withdrawn) = 0 points
- **I** (Incomplete) = 0 points
- **AUD** (Audit) = 0 points

**IP (In Progress)** is given only in certain developmental courses. The student must re-enroll to receive credit. **COM (Completed)** is given in non-credit and continuing education courses.

**FINAL GRADE OF FX**: Students who stop attending class and do not withdraw themselves prior to the withdrawal deadline may either be dropped by their professor for excessive absences or be assigned the final grade of “FX” at the end of the semester. Students who stop attending classes will receive a grade of “FX”, compared to an earned grade of “F” which is due to poor performance. Logging into a DE course without active participation is seen as non-attending. Please note that HCC will not disperse financial aid funding for students who have never attended
Students who receive financial aid but fail to attend class will be reported to the Department of Education and may have to pay back their aid. A grade of "FX" is treated exactly the same as a grade of "F" in terms of GPA, probation, suspension, and satisfactory academic progress.

To compute grade point average (GPA), divide the total grade points by the total number of semester hours attempted. The grades "IP," "COM" and "I" do not affect GPA.

### Discussion Board Posts (DPs)

Addresses SLO 1, 2 & 3: You will be required to do TWO things: 1) respond to a question with a short post of a minimum 250 words, and 2) respond to a classmate's post with a minimum of 100 words. You can earn a maximum of 8 points per post, and I will drop your lowest score, to count only the top 5 posts - and these will accumulate to represent 40% of your grade. You will post to the appropriate discussion via the class website. The post must be completed by the due date and time. Late posts MAY be accepted at the discretion of the instructor. Please contact me BEFORE the post is due to discuss.

### Essays

Addresses SLO 2, 3, 4 & 5: (Minimum 750 words EACH PAPER - you may write more if you wish) You will be required to write a short essay, choosing from the questions offered. The essay should be typed, formatted to 12 point font, and you must use either MLA or Chicago Style conventions for citing works (see the Style Guides linked to in Eagle online).

I will also post links to sites that have proven very helpful to students for writing essays, and I will provide some other guidance materials. You should let me know if you need extra help with essay writing – I am very happy to help here as it is not easy to write a philosophy paper! But the skills you will acquire in learning how to communicate effectively in writing are invaluable to you in your professional life, so well worth improving. Each paper is worth 15 points, or 15% of your final grade. Late Essays MAY be accepted at the discretion of the instructor. Please contact me BEFORE the post is due to discuss. Documentation may be required.

### Final Exam

Addresses SLO 1, 3 & 5: An exam comprised of a series of short and/or long answer questions will be made available online in the Finals week. It will go online the morning of WEDS JULY 27 and will be due THURS JULY 28 by midnight. The Final Exam is worth 30 points, or 30% of your final grade. NO LATE EXAMS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Online Philosophy Tutoring is available at http://hccs.askonline.net/ Please use it if you need it.

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**How to proceed with this course:**

- Go to our course page on Eagle Online, make yourself familiar with it.
- Watch videos on PLAGIARISM if you have not already.
- **Post in the “Who We Are” Forum: to get to know each other AND this is what I count to mark you as “present” for the course. You may be dropped if you do not post here.**
- For each week of the course, the basic procedure is to do the required reading, and then complete the assessment by the Sunday night of each week. There are new readings and an assessment for every week.
- The Calendar and Upcoming Events boxes to the right will alert you to upcoming Due Dates – keep an eye on these.
- The column on the left of your home page is where you can access all of the Discussion Forums, Essays and eventually the Exam.
- In the opening sections of the course, you will find links to your style-guides and other helpful links and guides.
• Browse the links in the RESOURCES section for hint and advice on essay writing – especially writing for philosophy.
• Be sure to understand what PLAGIARISM is – and do not commit it during this, or any other course.
• Consult the Discussion Post and Essay Rubrics. These tell you what is expected for each form of assessment, and will help you understand the grades you get (and how to aim higher!)

Please communicate with me if you are having problems with the work, or need some extra help – I am here to help you succeed, so let me know EARLY so we can work together on the problem. You can always email me or call me. I am available to talk about philosophy, to offer help and advice about the course, and to help you find ways to get the most out of your studies and to help solve problems that might get in the way of these. So, please don’t hesitate to get in touch – I am online every day and will get back to you within hours, most of the time.

Course Schedule:
Please note that this schedule is subject to change; although you will always be informed in adequate time if it does. You will be issued with a more detailed schedule when you begin the course.

Pre-course reading: you should have already read this:
If not, go ahead and read it now!

WEEK 1: Introduction
Required reading:
1. Plato, 'The Apology': Click here.
2. Week 1 Lecture Notes (online)

Topics: the point and purpose of philosophy; the method of philosophy, introduction to Plato and Socrates.
Assessment: You MUST post on the Who We Are discussion board. This lets me see who to count as ‘active’ in the course. If you do not post here, you may be dropped from the course.
Discussion Post #1 (hereafter DP #): Due: Sunday June 12 by midnight.

WEEK 2: Logic
Required reading:
2. Notes on Logic, Dr. Parker-Ryan. (online)

Topics: An introduction to formal logic: validity and soundness, some argument forms, truth-tables; Informal fallacies and clear reasoning.
Assessment: DP #2: Due: Sun June 19 by midnight.

WEEK 3: Knowledge
Required reading:
1. Descartes, Meditations 1 & 2 (online)
2. Locke, John (1690), An Essay Concerning Human Understanding (online)
3. Week 3 Lecture Notes (online)

Topics: The Theory of Knowledge: do we have it? If so, how can we be certain? We will look at Descartes Skepticism and his Method of Doubt. Then we turn to Locke: a different view of how we acquire knowledge; The Rationalism-Empiricism divide.
Assessment: DP #3: Due: Sun June 26 by midnight.

WEEK 4: Review
Assessment: Essay #1: Due Sun July 3 by midnight.
WEEK 5: Mind

Required reading:
1. Descartes, *Meditation 6* (online)
2. Turing’s ‘Intelligent Machines’ and Searle’s ‘Minds, Brains, and computers’ (online)

Topics: Philosophy of Mind: we know the brain is made of physical, biological matter, but what about the mind? If the mind is not made of physical matter, then what kind of thing is it? If it is made of physical matter, does it count as a kind of ‘machine’, like a computer?

Assessment: DP #4: Due Sun July 10 by midnight.

WEEK 6: Free Will

Required reading:
2. Week 6 Lecture Notes (online)

Topics: Do we really have freedom of will? Or are we completely pre-determined by a kind of causal chain of events – so that we really have no say?

Assessment: DP #5: Due Sun July 17 by midnight.

WEEK 7: Ethics

1. Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, W.D.Ross (Trans), on MIT Internet Classics Archive, Book 1 & 2 (online)
2. Week 7 Lecture Notes (online)

Topics: How should be treat others? We explore the classic Aristotelian approach to an ethical life; known as ‘virtue ethics’.

Assessment: DP#6 and Essay #2: NOTE TWO ASSESSMENTS DUE: Sun July 24 by midnight.

WEEK 8: Finals

Assessment: Final Exam (Online) Goes online: Morning of Weds July 27, and is due to be uploaded by Thurs May July 28 by midnight. NO LATE EXAMS ACCEPTED.

The Distance Education Student Handbook contains policies and procedures unique to the DE student. Students should have reviewed the handbook as part of the mandatory orientation. It is the student’s responsibility to be familiar with the handbook’s contents. The handbook contains valuable information, answers, and resources, such as DE contacts, policies and procedures (how to drop, attendance requirements, etc.), student services (ADA, financial aid, degree planning, etc.), course information, testing procedures, technical support, and academic calendars. Refer to the DE Student Handbook by visiting this link:

DE Student Handbook

PLEASE ALSO REVIEW THE FOLLOWING IMPORTANT POLICY ABOUT PLAGIARISM:

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. Please be aware that ever-evolving applications exist that detect plagiarism, and your instructor will run your work through them.
Be sure to watch the videos on plagiarism that I have placed on the Resources page of our class web site.

My policy on plagiarism: first count, I will give a warning and ask you to redo the assignment. If you do not redo the assignment, you get a zero. Second count, you get a zero – no redo. Third count you fail the course.

Withdrawal Policies:
HCC DE Students are expected to check in to the course site regularly, and to complete all work by noted due dates. NOTE: It is the responsibility of the student to drop, or officially withdraw from this course. Your instructor will withdraw a student if and only if provided a written request from that student. Additionally, system-wide rules affect withdrawals:
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 is **July 11, usually by 5pm** for this course. 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”. Students receiving an “I” for a course are ineligible for graduation until the “I” has been removed from a student’s transcript.

Students with Disabilities:
The HCC Accessibility website is located at the following url: [http://www.hccs.edu/district/departments/accessibility/](http://www.hccs.edu/district/departments/accessibility/). You will find information about the types of assistance offered to students with special instructional needs on that web page. You will also find contact information for your college’s ADA compliance and accessibility office.
For questions, please contact Donna Price at 713.718.5165 or the ADA counselor at your college campus. You can find a list of counselors [here](http://www.hccs.edu/district/departments/accessibility/).

EGLS3:
At Houston Community College, professors believe that thoughtful student feedback is necessary to improve teaching and learning. During a designated time near the end of the term, you will be asked to answer a short online survey of research-based questions related to instruction. The anonymous results of the survey will be made available to your professors and department chairs for continual improvement of instruction. Look for the survey as part of the Houston Community College Student System online near the end of the term.