

SYLLABUS

Academic Discipline

Philosophy

Course Title

Introduction to Ethics

Course Rubric and Number

PHIL 2306 – CRN 51952 – Fall 2011

Location and Meeting Days and Times

**Spring Branch Campus, Room 319
Saturday – 9:00 am to 12 noon**

Course Semester Credit Hours (SCH)

3 SCH – Regular Term

Contact Hours

48 Contact Hours

Course Length

16 weeks

Type of Instruction

Lecture and Web-Enhanced

Instructor Contact Information

**Thomas Urban, PhD, Instructor
Department of Philosophy
E-Mail Conferencing: ethike@earthlink.net**

Instructor Office Location and Hours

**Campus: Spring Branch
Office : Spring Branch AD03
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

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 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 Blackboard Online Course Calendar - Check online course calendar regularly for updates and revisions. It is intended to be a guide, not a straight-jacket. Depending on class learning progress, your instructor reserves the right to either accelerate, or slow the completion dates of course curriculum *per the* Calendar tool. Calendar includes all reading assignments, homework assignments, availability and due dates for required discussions, examination dates, and no class days (HCC Spring Break and Holidays)

August 27, 2011

- FIRST DAY OF CLASS
- Presentation: Plato's Meno - How is virtue acquired?
- Reading Assignment: Plato - Meno (entire dialogue)
- Detailed Reading Assignment - Meno: 70a – 79e

Course Calendar (Calendar)

Sept. 3, 2011

- Detailed Reading Assignment - Meno: 80a – 86d

Sept. 5, 2011

- Labor Day Holiday: All HCC Campuses Closed

Sept. 10, 2011

- Reading Assignment: Aquinas - Justice, pp. 30 – 41
- Detailed Reading Assignment - Meno: 86e - 90e
- Discussion Topic One Available

Sept. 17, 2011

- No Class Meeting – Special Online Blog Assignment due September 18, 2011
- Discussion Topic One Initial Replies Due
- Reading Assignment: Aquinas - Justice, pp. 30 - 41

Sept. 24, 2011

- Discussion Topic One Student to Student Replies Due
- Reading Assignment: Aquinas - Justice, pp. 53 - 80

Oct. 1, 2011

- Discussion Topic Two Available
- Thomas Aquinas and Right as the Object of Justice
- Reading Assignment: Aquinas - Justice, pp. 80 - 105

Oct. 8, 2011

- Discussion Topic Two Initial Replies Due
- Reading Assignment: Kant: "What is Enlightenment?" ("Articles" folder)
- Reading Assignment: Kant – Preface and Groundwork, Section I pp. 1-18

Oct. 15, 2011

- Discussion Topic Two Student to Student Replies Due
- Examination Number One: Plato and Aquinas Scantron Test
- Midterm Essay Question Available in Blackboard "Essay Exams" folder
- Reading Assignment: Kant - Groundwork, Section I pp. 1-18

Oct. 22, 2011

- Discussion Topic Three Available
- Reading Assignment: Kant - Groundwork, Section II pp. 19-51
- Midterm Essay Due at Class-time in Stapled Hard-copy Form

Oct. 29, 2011

- Discussion Topic Three Initial Replies Due
- Reading Assignment: Bentham (Classic Utilitarianism) pp. 1-22
- Reading Assignment: Bentham (Classic Utilitarianism) pp. 92-93

Nov. 3, 2011

- Last date to withdraw from course with a "W"

Nov. 5, 2011

- Discussion Topic Four Available
- Discussion Topic Three Student to Student Replies Due
- Reading Assignment: Mill - On Liberty, pp. 193-223

Nov. 12, 2011

- Discussion Topic Four Initial Replies Due
- Homework Assignment: Review for Kant and Utilitarians Test
- Reading Assignment: Gandhi - Satyagraha, pp. 29-91

Nov. 19, 2011

- Examination Number Two - Kant and Utilitarians Scantron Test
- Homework Assignment: Complete Discussion Topic Five Student to Student Replies

Nov. 24 – Nov. 27, 2011

- Thanksgiving Holiday: All HCC Campuses Closed

Dec. 3, 2011

- Discussion Topic Four Student to Student Replies Due
- Reading Assignment: Gandhi - Swaraj, pp. 97-151
- Homework Assignment: Complete all Point Recoveries

Course Calendar (Continued)

Dec. 11, 2011

- Last Day of Class
- Final Exam Essay Question Available
- All Point Recoveries Due at Class-time - No Exceptions

Dec. 17, 2011

- Scheduled Final Exams
- Final Essay due in Hard-copy Stapled Form - No Extensions - 10 am - 11 am

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. **PLEASE 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, simply click on the course name and you will be taken to the course homepage.

Text Information:

Required Texts:

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

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

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

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

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

Text Information: (Continued)

Weston, Anthony//*A Rule Book for Arguments*
Hackett Publishing, 4th Edition, 2010
ISBN: 978-0-87220-954-1

Recommended Additional Sources:

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

Wollstonecraft, Mary//*A Vindication of the Rights of Women*
Dover Publications
Dover Thrift Edition, 1996//ISBN 0-48629-036-0

Kant, Immanuel // *Lectures On Ethics*//Hackett Publishing//1st 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, trsl.
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.

Students with Disabilities (Continued)

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

Attendance and Withdrawal Policies (Continued)

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 Fall 2011 is Thursday, November 3, 2011 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

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

8:30am–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

- Discussion Forum Participation – 20 % (200 points) – Five BLACKBOARD discussion topics adhering to a two-phase format of threaded discussions and complying to announced minimum length and entry requirements for each phase. Each topic will require an initial reply to the topic question, plus five subsequent replies to fellow student posts. All Points will be awarded for completed topics. No points are awarded for missing, or partial entries. Each completed topic will earn 40 points, or 4 % of your total semester grade. Learning Outcomes 2 and 3.
- Examinations - 20 % (Two exams, each worth 100 points, for a total of 200 points) These are graded assignments, e.g. A, A-, B+, B, B-. C+. C. C-, D+, D, D-, and F. Learning Outcome 1.
- Midterm Essay – 30 % (300 points) An essay on an assigned question to be completed at home and turned at class-time. This is a graded assignment, e.g. A, A-, B+, B, B-. C+. C. C-, D+, D, D-, and F. Learning Outcome 4.
- Major Essay – 30 % (300 points) Due on the scheduled Final Exam Date. This is a graded assignment, e.g. A, A-, B+, B, B-. C+. C. C-, D+, D, D-, and F. Learning Outcomes 2, 3, and 5.

Grading Components and Weights (Continued)

* **Essays** – *will be completed out of class and submitted at the time specified on the course calendar. Please note, these examinations are essays in answer to a specific question that seeks your understanding of the course content. These essays are not to be construed as being research papers and all questions are to be addressed as asked. The grading of exams follows established standards of critical thinking and philosophical argumentation. All references to texts and other copyrighted sources are to follow MLA, APS, or APA style guides, including a “Work’s Cited” page if and only if they are not included on the list of required texts for this course. Links to these online style-guides can be found in the “Student Resources” folder on your Blackboard Homepage. Plagiarism on either essay will result in a “0” for the assignment; plagiarized assignments MUST be rewritten to the satisfaction of the instructor and will then be eligible to be awarded 50% credit. Plagiarism on the Final Essay will result in an “I” being awarded 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 first two exams may “recover” up to one-half the points missed by completing a thorough prescribed review of all questions missed, or in the case of the Midterm Essay, a total rewrite. This opportunity applies only to exams and the Midterm Essay, NOT the final Major Essay

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 (AFTER CHECKING THE ONLINE BLACKBOARD COURSE CALENDAR). In addition, any student who is absent on posted

Make-up policy (Continued)

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 classtime. 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.

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 for required Blackboard Vista discussion forum posts and essay examinations. 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 during office hours, 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 7 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. 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.

EGLS3 – Evaluation for Greater Learning Student Survey System

At Houston Community College, professors believe that thoughtful student feedback is necessary to improve teaching and learning. During a designated time, 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 division 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.