



Phil 2306 Introduction to Ethics (Honors)
Tim Cowan
Lone Star College System
Montgomery Campus

Syllabus

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Course description

This course explores the systematic evaluation of classical and/or contemporary ethical theories concerning the good life, human conduct in society, morals, and standards of value.

CREDIT: 3 hours

PREREQUISITES: ENGL 0305 or 0316 and ENGL 0307 or 0326

Texts

Rachels and Rachels. The Elements of Moral Philosophy Sixth Edition.
(Recommended)

Course Structure

Each class will consist of discussion and analysis of readings, lectures by the instructor, and collaborative work.

Attendance

More than six absences will require you to go to registration and withdraw from the class. In the case of an absence, it is your responsibility to try and catch up, e.g. contacting a fellow student or the instructor for missed handouts, notes, and assignments. In class assignments cannot be made up.

Participation

Participation is crucial for success in this class. If a student is not in class he/she cannot participate, therefore absences, tardiness, and leaving class early **will** have a negative on effect your grade. Class participation is strongly encouraged and will be rewarded.

Grading

Grades are based on three exams, writing assignments*, in-class assignments, and class participation. The weight of your grade will break down as follows.

Exams will account for 75% of your final grade, each one being worth 25% including a comprehensive oral final examination. Your honors project (details forthcoming) will account for 20% of your grade. The remaining 5% of your grade will be based on Philosophy Bites papers.**

Keep track of your grade, and meet with me to make sure our records are consistent. If a discrepancy should arise take care of it immediately, by bringing it to my attention.

If at any time you feel overwhelmed don't wait to address the issue, ask for help as soon as you feel you need it.

The course grade will be assigned according to the following scale:

90-100 = A
80-89 = B
70-79 = C
60-69 = D
Below 60 F

Withdrawals

To withdraw from the course, students must initiate an official withdrawal in person through the campus drop/add procedure. Check the schedule for posted dates. Students who do not complete the class but do not officially withdraw will receive an "F".

This link to the Lonestar website provides dates for the last day you can drop a class.

www.lonestar.edu/schedule/

Class Cancellations

If the instructor is not present fifteen minutes after class is scheduled to begin, the class is cancelled for the day.

ADA/Special Needs

If you require reasonable accommodations because of a physical, mental, or learning disability, please notify the instructor of the course within the first two weeks of class.

Counseling

If you find yourself in any kind of personal 'distress' during the semester, please see a Lone Star counselor. A possible contact is Rachel Trackey (936-271-6157) C227D. Counselor's offer personal, academic, and career counseling and can put you in touch with other helpful campus resources.

Rationale for PHIL 2306 Honors

What is the primary content component of this course?

This course explores the systematic evaluation of classical and/or contemporary ethical theories concerning the good life, human conduct in society, morals, and standards of value.

What is the primary research/analytical thread of this course?

The style of this class specifically allows the student to delve into the analytic tradition of western philosophy with an obvious emphasis on morality. While examining the most prominent arguments through reading both primary and secondary text, students are expected to digest and critique the conclusions of these arguments. In addition students are prompted to notice similarities and differences in theories, as well as to speculate how the practical application of the theories they research may impact the society we live in today.

How does this course differ from a non-Honors course?

There are several differences between this honors course and a traditional course (non-honors/nonors course). In honors there is a much larger emphasis on reading primary text, where a nonors course depends equally on primary and secondary text. This emphasis allows the honors student to mix their hands with the earth so to say, giving them an unadulterated insight into the material prior to our discussions. Another major difference is the discussions we have in honors. Nonors classes are lecture driven with room for questions and discussion, while the honors classes are driven by group discussion, in the fashion of Socratic/Dialectic method. In honors we truly work together to figure out any problems that we raise as a group. Further, there are no required presentations in any of my nonors sections. In honors students do present the results of their research, and are encouraged to share their work with one another as a way to measure just where they stand among their peers, rather than just instructor based critique.

Rationale/explanation for final research project/presentation.

The final project in honors ethics is a three part research paper which includes research into a particular normative ethical theory, a pressing practical dilemma, and finally the critical analysis of how the normative theory researched may or may not resolve the practical dilemma presented. As noted above, students are encouraged to share their papers and research with one another to boost awareness and confidence concerning their own project prior to presenting both in class and on honors day. This research project gives students direct insight as to how philosophers move from the purely theoretical to the practical, giving acumen not only to the notion of what moral codes may be in place but more importantly why moral codes may be in place.

Statement of Student Responsibilities

In order to promote an acceptable learning environment, students enrolled at Lone Star Community College are expected to conduct themselves as responsible individuals. No student shall behave in a manner, which, in the opinion of the instructor endangers the rights and/or safety of other students or staff.

1. Students are expected to be in class on time and to remain until the class session is completed, except in emergencies or illness (which can be documented). No student shall leave or re-enter a classroom during class except for emergencies or illness, or engage in any other disruptive classroom behavior. Disruptive classroom behavior includes sleeping, coming in late, cell phones, and laptops not intended for classroom purposes (engaging in any of the aforementioned will result in being marked absent for the day, as well as the removal of all extra credit possibilities).

2. No student shall engage in behavior, which, in the judgment of the instructor of the class may be construed as cheating. This may include, but is not limited to, plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty such as the acquisition (without permission) of tests or other academic material and/or distribution of the same. This includes students who assist or attempt such behavior.

3. No student shall engage in harassment of another student or staff member of the college. This shall include, but not be limited to sexual or racial harassment, and may include verbal and/or physical action.

4. No student shall threaten or commit a physical or verbal attack on faculty, staff, or another student.

Failure to adhere to any of these responsibilities will result in disciplinary action according to the disciplinary policy presented in the Lone Star College Systems catalogue.

Learning Outcomes

1. Read, analyze, and critique philosophical texts.

2. Define and appropriately use important terms such as relativism, virtue, duty, rights, utilitarianism, natural law, egoism, altruism, autonomy, and care ethics.

3. Demonstrate knowledge of major arguments and problems in ethics.

4. Present and discuss well-reasoned ethical positions in writing.

5. Apply ethical concepts and principles to address moral concerns.

6. Apply course material to various aspects of life.

7. Discuss ways of living responsibly in a world where people have diverse ethical beliefs.

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Tim Cowan, Instructor

The following is a tentative schedule, which is subject to change at the instructor's say so and sanction.

| Week | Topic | Assignments |
|------|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1 | Introduction/What is morality? | Read: Prometheus and Gyges Dscs: Why be Moral |
| 2 | Foundations of modern ethics. | Read: Apology Dscs: Terminology |
| 3 | Socrates and Plato | Read: Crito (#1PB) Dscs: Socrates or Crito |
| 4 | Aristotle/Virtue Ethics | Read: Ethics Book I (proposals Due) Dscs: What is Happiness |
| 5 | Virtue Ethics Cont... | Read: Anscombe Dscs: Study |
| 6 | Exam #1 Casuistry | Read: William Brown (#2PB) Dscs: Who is culpable/best rule |
| 7 | Deontology/non-consequentialism | Read: Kant (SEP) Dscs: Grocer A or Grocer B |
| 8 | Utilitarianism/Consequentialism | Read: Mill (SEP) (Peer Edits Due) Dscs: Kant, Mill, You. |
| 9 | Moral Luck and Determinism | Read: Moral Luck (#3PB) Dscs: Why do we punish bad luck? |
| 10 | Meta-Ethics (relative vs. absolute) | Read: Moral Luck Dscs: Study |
| 11 | Exam #2 Presentations | Read: Papers (Papers Due) Dscs: topics |
| 12 | Presentations | Read: Papers (#4PB) Dscs: Topics |
| 13 | Presentations | Read: Papers Dscs: Topics |
| 14 | Presentations | Read: Papers Dscs: Topics |
| 15 | Presentations | Read: Papers (#5PB) Dscs: Topics |
| 16 | Exam #3 | ORAL FINAL |

*This class will embrace some discussion from the Socratic tradition, with that being said, each student will be responsible for 3 questions based on each reading.

**You are required to listen to 5 Philosophy Bites interviews and type a short (1-2 page) reaction paper for each Bite. Extra credit can be attained by turning in up to 4 extra Philosophy Bites papers.

All readings and further information can be found at the following web-site.
[Lonestar.edu/blogs/ticowan](http://lonestar.edu/blogs/ticowan)

Additional Honors Course Outcomes:

1. To develop effective written communication skills (including the ability to make effective use of the information and ideas they learn);
2. To develop effective oral communication skills (while recognizing that not all students are comfortable talking a lot in class);
3. To develop their ability to analyze and synthesize a broad range of material;
4. To understand how scholars think about problems, formulate hypotheses, research those problems, and draw conclusions about them; and to help students understand how creative artists approach the creative process and produce an original work;
5. To become more independent and critical thinkers, demonstrating the ability to use knowledge and logic when discussing an issue or an idea, while considering the consequences of their ideas, for themselves, for others, and for society

As Part of The Honors College at LSC-Montgomery, you are expected to meet the following requirements during the semester:

1. Pursue honors academic course credit, (which you are doing by being enrolled in this class!)
2. Maintain a 3.25 academic GPA each semester.
3. Participate in three or more honors college forums. For more info visit our Honors Calendar at (<http://www.lonestar.edu/honors-montgomery.htm>) or stop by the Honors College Student Center, located in The University Center. The Honors Student Center is dedicated to all honors students at LSC-Montgomery and offers free computer access, printing, student lockers, conference table, and lounge area that can be used to study, meet or visit with fellow honors students.
4. Attend one or more Honors College Student Organization (HCSO) meetings. These are held every two weeks in the Honors College Student Center and dates/times can be found on the honors calendar. HCSO meetings a great opportunity to meet, greet, and eat with other honors students, as well as get plugged into volunteer service, honors field trips and leadership opportunities.
5. Present honors research in class and if invited by the honors faculty, present at Honors Undergraduate Research Day.
6. Participate in the end of the semester Honors Undergraduate Research Day, either through presenting or volunteering.

Additional dates will be provided as the semester moves forward.

The Texas Legislature enacted campus carry by passing Senate Bill 11, effective at LSC on August 1, 2017. Senate Bill 11, known as the "Campus Carry" law, amends Texas law to allow license holders to carry concealed handguns on college campuses. To carry a concealed handgun on LSC campuses, an individual must have a valid License to Carry issued by the Texas Department of Public Safety.

LSC has established rules and regulations regarding enforcement of Campus Carry. Lone Star College prohibits concealed carry in some areas of LSC campuses. For more information about Campus Carry, visit the LSC Campus Carry website at <http://www.lonestar.edu/campuscarry>.

Important Spring 2020 Honors College Dates for Students

Spring 2020

1/31: 12:30-3: Honors College Student Forum #1

2/14: DEADLINE – Campus-based Honors Project IRB Submissions to Honors Director

2/28: 12:30-3: Honors College Student Forum #2

3/1-15: Honors Capstone Trips.

3/20-22: Great Plains Honors Conference

3/25-28: National Conference on Undergraduate Research, Montana State University

3/27: 12:30-3: Honors College Student Forum #3

4/17: Honors College Student Forum #4

4/24: DEADLINE - Honors Abstracts Due

5/1: Honors Undergraduate Research Day: 1-5pm

5/13: DEADLINE – Honors Project Papers and PPT

*****In addition to the above dates, please check your email and the LSC-Montgomery Honors College calendar (<http://www.lonestar.edu/honors-montgomery.htm>) frequently for upcoming campus co-curricular opportunities and Honors College Student Organization meetings/events!***

Students who do not attend class by the ODR date will be dropped for non-attendance and this could affect your financial aid status. Federal regulations require Lone Star College to maintain records showing that you began attendance for each semester during which you received financial aid. Instructors are required to submit multiple attendance reports each term. If you never attend, or stop attending a course, you may be administratively withdrawn from that course. Tuition, fees, and financial aid disbursements will be revised based on the enrollment changes and monies may be returned to the appropriate Federal, State, and/or Institutional program(s). This could result in a balance owed to the college that could affect your future enrollment plans.

Useful Links/Information

(Dean's Contact) Brandy Harvey 936.273.7265 Office: G-120B
(FERPA) lonestar.edu/ferpa.htm
(TITLE IX) lonestar.edu/departments/generalcounsel/Policy%20Manual%20Web%20Copy%202017-10-5.pdf
(ACADEMIC INTEGRITY) lonestar.edu/instructional-resources.htm
(ACADEMIC APPEALS) lonestar.edu/instruc-contracts-w-outside-agencies.htm
(ACCOMADATIONS AND SERVICES) lonestar.edu/27404.htm
(EMERGENCY PROCEDURES) lonestar.edu/11953.htm
(CAMPUS CARRY) lonestar.edu/CampusCarry.htm

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Specific Dates

Spring Semester 2020

| Event | Date |
|--|---------------|
| Classes Begin | January 13 |
| Martin Luther King Jr. Day (<i>Offices Closed</i>) | January 20 |
| Spring Break (<i>Offices Closed</i>) | March 9 - 15 |
| Last Day to withdraw | April 1 |
| Spring Holiday (<i>Offices Closed</i>) | April 10 - 12 |
| Final Exams | May 4 - 10 |