



PHIL 2306-202CL
Introduction to Ethics
Fall 2023
Tuesday Evening 6:00pm-8:50pm

Instructor Information: Alan Milam, amilam1@com.edu, 409-933-8214

Student hours and location:

Monday 3:30- 4:30

Friday: By appointment only

Required Textbook/Materials:

Living Ethics: An Introduction with Reading. By Russ Shafer-Landau. Oxford University Press, 2019

Any additional readings will be distributed by me.

Course Description: The systematic evaluation of classical and/or contemporary ethical theories concerning the good life, human conduct in society, morals, and standards of value.

Course requirements: 2 Exams, 2 Essays, and a discussion grade will determine your grade in this course.

Exams:

- **There will be two exams in this course.**
- **The exams will consist of multiple choice, short constructed, and extended constructed responses.**
- **The exams will not be timed.**
- **The exams will be open book.**

Essays:

- **Essay 1 is a 4–6-page research paper that analyzes an ethical controversy, fairly summarizing its background, recency, and the various perspectives that make up that ethical controversy.**
- **Essay 2 is a 4-6 pages argumentative essay where you will be arguing and defending your position in a particular ethical controversy. You may continue to research an aspect of the topic you analyze in Essay 1 for Essay 2.**

Class Discussion: We will be discussing many of the readings in class as a way to help brainstorm and draw out the various aspects of ethical controversies. You will need to contribute to these conversations weekly as a part of your grade in this course.

WRITING AN ANALYTICAL PAPER – some tips and guidelines A good philosophy paper takes an analytical approach. This means that it must: identify and clearly state a philosophical claim, state the reasons backing up that claim, and make a critical evaluation of this claim. All three aspects are essential for a good paper. The first thing you should do is identify the claim; it may be stated or implied. Once the philosophical claim is identified and stated, and the author's reasons for it made clear, the claim must be critically evaluated. Some questions or things to consider: (0) Is the claim vague or ambiguous? If so, can it be restated in a clear and rigorous manner? (1) Is the claim logical? (2) Does it follow from the stated premises? (3) Are those stated premises coherent and plausible? (4) Does the claim rest on any unjustifiable assumptions? (5) Is the claim consistent with other things the author claims? (6) Does the author commit any fallacies in presenting his/her case? For instance, does he or she beg the question (assume or take as a premise something that should be proven first)? (7) If he or she makes factual claims, are they actually true? Each paper must have a Works Cited. Complete bibliographical details of each work must be given. The title, author, publisher (or journal title), date, place of publication (or Internet address), and page number(s) should be given. Use as many sources as you want from the Internet but see cautionary note below. Whenever you quote a source, paraphrase it, refer to it, or use it to support or document a claim, you must cite that source.

Determination of Course Grade/Detailed Grading Formula:

A cumulative average for grading is used in this course. The breakdown of assignment and corresponding average is listed below.

Exam x 2: 17% each

Essay 1: 26%

Essay 2: 30%

Class Discussion: 10%

Grade Scale A = 100 - 90 B = 89 - 80 C = 79 - 70 D = 69 - 60 F = 59 and below.

Late Work, Make-Up, and Extra-Credit Policy: No late work is acceptable in this class. Please make sure you are aware of the exam times and deadlines for the essay projects and class debates.

Attendance Policy: This is a weekly class, which means that the normal class work you would do in a MWF or TTH is done on one day a week. Fort this reason, you must attend class regularly. Students who miss two classes will be considered to have excessive absences. This will result in

an FN for the final course grade. Per the State of Texas, the only acceptable absences are religious holidays and military service. Please see your college handbook for additional information regarding class attendance. Please be on time with assignments as there is no make up policy for this course.

Communicating with your instructor: ALL electronic communication with the instructor must be through your COM email. Due to FERPA restrictions, faculty cannot share any information about performance in the class through other electronic means. For this reason, you will only be able to contact be via my COM email amilam1@com.edu.

Student Learner Outcome	Maps to Core Objective	Assessed via this Assignment
1. Read, Analyze, and critique philosophical texts	Critical Thinking Skill (CT)	Exam 1
2. Define and appropriately use important ethical terms to analyze an ethical controversy.	Communication skills (CS)	Essay 1
3. Demonstrate knowledge of Major philosophical terms and perspectives on a variety of topics.	Critical Thinking Skills (CT)	Exam 2
4. Demonstrate a knowledge of major arguments and problems on a given ethical topic.	Critical Thinking Skill (CT)	Discussions
5. Define and appropriately use important ethical terms in order to argue and defend your own position.	Communication skills (CS)	Essay 2

Academic Dishonesty: Any incident of academic dishonesty will be dealt with in accordance with college policy and the Student Handbook. Academic dishonesty – such as cheating on exams or any other assignment– is an extremely serious offense and will result in a grade of zero on that assignment and the student will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for the appropriate discipline action. Any additional occurrence after the first instance of academic dishonesty will result in failure of the course.

Plagiarism:

Writing your own exams and doing your own work is mandatory; submitting anyone else’s writing or other work as your own constitutes fraud and is illegal. If you turn in a piece of writing which has been plagiarized from another writer (and this includes fellow students), you will receive a 0 (zero) for that assignment. Possible referral to the Judicial Coordinator and other consequences are possible.

College of the Mainland's definition of Academic Dishonesty and associated policies are available in the 2022-2023 Catalog or 2022-2023 Student Handbook in print form and online.

HUMANITIES DEPARTMENT POLICY STATEMENT:

Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty. To plagiarize is to steal the words or ideas of another and pass them off as one's own. Two forms of plagiarism are common. In the first form, the writer incorporates published or otherwise recorded material without properly acknowledging its sources. In the second form, the writer submits work actually done by someone else. (The student who allows his or her work to be used by others is also guilty.) Any student who plagiarizes will receive a grade of "0" on his or her plagiarized work and may, as a result, receive a failing grade in the course. Ignorance will not be an acceptable defense: all students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the rules of documentation. Violation of the Plagiarism Policy may result in a referral to the College of the Mainland Judicial Coordinator or further disciplinary actions as stated in the current Student Handbook.

Student Concerns: If you have any questions or concerns about any aspect of this course, please contact me using the contact information previously provided. If, after discussing your concern with me, you continue to have questions, please contact Humanities Department Chair Brian Anderson at (409) 933-8186 or banderson@com.edu.

Course outline: TBD

Institutional Policies and Guidelines

Grade Appeal Process: Concerns about the accuracy of grades should first be discussed with the instructor. A request for a change of grade is a formal request and must be made within six months of the grade assignment. Directions for filing an appeal can be found in the student handbook https://www.com.edu/student-services/docs/Student_Handbook_2023-2024_v2.pdf. *An appeal will not be considered because of general dissatisfaction with a grade, penalty, or outcome of a course. Disagreement with the instructor's professional judgment of the quality of the student's work and performance is also not an admissible basis for a grade appeal.*

Academic Success & Support Services: College of the Mainland is committed to providing students the necessary support and tools for success in their college careers. Support is offered through our Tutoring Services, Library, Counseling, and through Student Services. Please discuss any concerns with your faculty or an advisor.

ADA Statement: Any student with a documented disability needing academic accommodations is requested to contact Kimberly Lachney at 409-933-8919 or klachney@com.edu. The Office of Services for Students with Disabilities is located in the Student Success Center.

Textbook Purchasing Statement: A student attending College of the Mainland is not under any obligation to purchase a textbook from the college-affiliated bookstore. The same textbook may also be available from an independent retailer, including an online retailer.

Withdrawal Policy: Students may withdraw from this course for any reason prior to the last eligible day for a “W” grade. Before withdrawing students should speak with the instructor and consult an advisor. Students are permitted to withdraw only six times during their college career by state law. The last date to withdraw from the 1st 8-week session is October 11. The last date to withdraw from the 16-week session is November 28. The last date to withdraw for the 2nd 8-week session is December 7.

FN Grading: The FN grade is issued in cases of *failure due to a lack of attendance*, as determined by the instructor. The FN grade may be issued for cases in which the student ceases or fails to attend class, submit assignments, or participate in required capacities, and for which the student has failed to withdraw. The issuing of the FN grade is at the discretion of the instructor. The last date of attendance should be documented for submission of an FN grade.

Early Alert Program: The Student Success Center at College of the Mainland has implemented an Early Alert Program because student success and retention are very important to us. I have been asked to refer students to the program throughout the semester if they are having difficulty completing assignments or have poor attendance. If you are referred to the Early Alert Program you will be contacted by someone in the Student Success Center who will schedule a meeting with you to see what assistance they can offer in order for you to meet your academic goals.

Resources to Help with Stress:

If you are experiencing stress or anxiety about your daily living needs including food, housing or just feel you could benefit from free resources to help you through a difficult time, please click here <https://www.com.edu/community-resource-center/>. College of the Mainland has partnered with free community resources to help you stay on track with your schoolwork, by addressing life issues that get in the way of doing your best in school. All services are private and confidential. You may also contact the Dean of Students office at deanofstudents@com.edu or communityresources@com.edu.