



# Philosophy Syllabus

Introduction to Philosophy, PHIL 1301-0047

Instructor: Steven Aspenson, PhD

Spring 2018, Course 60254 (3 Credit Hours)

Learning Web Page:

HCC – System College

Email: Steven.Aspenson@hccs.edu

Northline Campus, Room 216

Phone: 612-804-6464

M, W 9:30 – 10:50

Office hours: M, W 11:00-11:30

## Course Description:

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.

## PREREQUISITE(S):

- ENGL 1301 or higher

## HCC CORE CURRICULUM:

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.

## Faculty Bio:

Steve Aspenson, PhD, Philosophy, The University of Iowa, 1996. BS in Biology and Philosophy, The University of Wisconsin, La Crosse, 1988. Publications include articles in ethics, medieval philosophy, philosophy of religion, and a textbook, *The Philosopher's Tool Kit*.

## Course Goals:

### Student Learning Outcomes:

1. **Read, analyze,** and **critique** philosophical texts.
2. **Demonstrate knowledge** of key concepts, major arguments, problems, and terminology in philosophy.

3. **Present** logically persuasive arguments orally.
4. **Demonstrate critical thinking skills** in evaluation and application of philosophical concepts to various aspects of life.
5. **Evaluate** the personal and social responsibilities of living in a diverse world.

**Learning Objectives:**

**Students will be able to:**

1. **Describe** the nature of Logic, Metaphysics, Ethics, and Epistemology.
2. **Discuss** the Problem of Universals and the Great Chain of Being.
3. **Describe** the differences between a number of Ethical Theories.
4. **Explain** how skepticism affected and contributed to the three worldviews of modern western civilization.

**Notice About Online Learning Management Software:**

This course will have all examinations delivered in-class.

**Adopted Texts:**

*All readings are public domain online, via links in PowerPoint files. All PowerPoints are available at: <http://www.philosophicaladvisor.com/intro930.html>*

**Course Calendar** (Note well: Quiz dates may change):

1/17	<a href="#">Informal Logic</a>	
1/22-24	<a href="#">Informal Logic 2</a>	
1/29-31	<a href="#">Allegory of the Cave</a>	Quiz 1: Informal Logic 1/31
2/5-7	<a href="#">Analogy of the Sun</a>	
2/12-14	<a href="#">Hobbes' Leviathan - Hobbes Excerpts</a>	Quiz 2: Cave, Sun 2/14
2/21	<a href="#">Aristotle Virtue Ethics</a>	
2/26-28	<a href="#">Aristotle Excerpts</a>	Quiz 3: Hobbes 2/28
3/5-7	Review	Midterm Exam 3/7
3/12-14	SPRING BREAK	
3/19-21	<a href="#">Utilitarianism</a>	
3/26-28	<a href="#">Descartes Meditations - Foundationalism</a>	Quiz 4: Aristotle & Utilitarianism 3/26
4/2-4	<a href="#">Locke Berkeley Hume</a>	
4/9-11	<a href="#">Phenomenology / Existentialism</a>	Quiz 5: Skepticism 4/11
4/16-22	<a href="#">Naturalized Epistemology</a>	
4/23-25	<a href="#">Reformed Epistemology</a>	
4/30-5/2	Review	Quiz 6: 3 Worldviews 4/30
5/7	Final Exam 5/7 at 9am (not 9:30)	

## Grading Components and Weights:

Participation	75pts	75pts
6 Quizzes	40pts each	200pts (drop low)
Midterm Exam	100pts	100pts
Final Exam	125pts	125pts
Total		500pts

## Grading Policy:

All grades will be calculated according to a percentage of *total points*. The total number of points for this term is 500. The grade legend follows:

A = 90% to 100% (450 to 500 point)	4 points per semester hour
B = 80% to 89.9% (400 to 449 points)	3 points per semester hour
C = 70% to 79.9% (350 to 399 points)	2 points per semester hour
D = 60% to 69.9% (300 to 349 points)	1 point per semester hour
F = 0% to 59.9% (000 to 299 points)	0 points per semester hour
FX (Failure due to non-attendance)	0 points per semester hour
IP (In Progress)	0 points per semester hour
W (Withdrawn)	0 points per semester hour
I (Incomplete)	0 points per semester hour
AUD (Audit)	0 points per semester hour

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 class.

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.

**Late policy:**

See Make-up policy.

*!! Philosophy Tutoring is available at <http://hccs.askonline.net/> Please use it if you need it !!*

**Student Support:**

Any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable us to provide any resources that HCC may possess.

**Academic Dishonesty:**

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. A student who is academically dishonest is claiming an advantage not available to other students. The instructor is responsible for measuring each student's individual achievements and also for ensuring that all students compete on a level playing field. Thus, in our system, the instructor has teaching, grading, and enforcing roles. You are expected to be familiar with HCC's policy on Academic Dishonesty located at <http://www.hccs.edu/about-hcc/procedures/student-rights-policies--procedures/student-procedures/>

Pleading ignorance of the rules, including improper documentation (MLA, APA, etc....) is no justification for academic dishonesty.

Students who plagiarize, collude, or cheat may not have an opportunity to resubmit their work and they may receive a grade of 0 for the first assignment, an F in the course for a second assignment, and a report in our Maxient system which could lead to dismissal from the college.

**Make-up Policy:**

Late Test Policy (a test is either a quiz, midterm, or final): Missed tests receive an automatic deduction (5pts for quizzes, 10pts for midterm, 15pts for final) and must be made up in the Testing Center.

**Attendance and Withdrawal Policy:**

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. 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 for Spring 2017 on XXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXX XX at X:XX XX. 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/>. 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](#).

**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 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.

**Philosophy Program Instructional Plan**

**Supplemental Instructional Activities:** To be determined by the instructor if needed.

**Instructional Content:**

SLOs are listed above. Faculty align their assignments with the SLO's when preparing their syllabi. These are addressed through a variety of assignments determined by the instructor.

**Evaluation Procedures:**

SLOs are determined to have been met upon successful completion by students of pre-determined outcome aligned assessments. Successful completion is a grade of 70 or higher.

**Title IX Discrimination:**

Houston Community College is committed to cultivating an environment free from inappropriate conduct of a sexual or gender-based nature including sex discrimination, sexual assault, sexual harassment, and sexual violence. Sex discrimination includes all forms of sexual and gender-based misconduct and violates an individual's fundamental rights and personal dignity. Title IX prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex including pregnancy and parental status-in educational programs and activities. If you require an accommodation due to pregnancy please contact an Abilities Services Counselor. The Director of EEO/Compliance is designated as the Title IX and Section 504 Coordinator. All inquiries concerning HCC policies, compliance with applicable laws, statutes, and

regulations (such as Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504), and complaints may be directed to:

David Cross - Director EEO/Compliance - Office of Institutional Equity & Diversity

3100 Main - Houston, TX 77266-7517 or Institutional.Equity@hccs.edu (713) 718-8271

**Open/Campus Carry of Handguns:**

At HCC the safety of our students, staff, and faculty is our first priority. As of August 1, 2017, Houston Community College is subject to the Campus Carry Law (SB11 2015). For more information, visit the HCC Campus Carry web page at <http://www.hccs.edu/district/departments/police/campus-carry/>.