“The Unexamined life is not worth living.” – Socrates
For no light matter is at stake: The question concerns the very manner in which human life is to be lived.  Plato, The Republic, Book I, 352-D.

What is the catalogue description of this course?

PHIL 2306 Ethics (3) This is a common course number. Former course prefix/number PHI 203.

Prerequisite: None.

Consideration of what constitutes a good and a moral life. Using classical and contemporary theories, students will weigh such ingredients as pleasure, duty, power, and love as they apply to current issues of daily living. Students may consider ethical problems in business, law, and medicine. (3 Lec.)

Coordinating Board Academic Approval Number 3802025335

Where and when does the class meet?

12:30-1:50 Tuesdays and Thursdays in D (Del Rio) 146

When do they begin and end?

They start January 17 and end May 10.
Who is the teacher?

He is Robert Bennett, originally from the small island of Vinalhaven in Penobscot Bay on the Coast of Maine. He has taught philosophy for forty-five years. He was educated at St. Lawrence University, University of Colorado at Boulder, and the University of Toronto with additional work at Middlebury College and The University of Maine at Orono. He has taught at Colorado State University, El Centro College, and Richland College.

How do I contact him?

Office: L (Lavaca) L225 – Second floor of Library

Home: 214-521-5084 (but before 9 p.m. because I go to bed early)

School: 972-761-6738

Humanities Division Office: 972-238-6250 (Leave message with secretary)

Fax: 972-238-3799

School e-mail: rbennett@dcccd.edu

What are his office hours?

8:00-9:15 and 2:00-2:00. Tuesdays and Thursdays and by appointment,

What textbook do I buy?


**Will this course transfer?**

Yes, this course will transfer easily to any college in the country. In addition, it may be used to meet the Humanities, Category III, and requirement for an Associate Degree at DCCCD colleges under the old Core Curriculum and the Tier II “Humanity, Creativity, and the Human Experience” requirement in the new Core Curriculum.

**What will I learn in Ethics that will help me?**

1) You will learn to be more critical (although hopefully not cynical) about your own ideas and the ideas of others concerning human conduct. This critical ability will help you in other courses and in your work by asking the right, pointed questions, at the right time, about the right things, to the right people.

(2) You will learn to look at the world as a whole rather than in fragments. You will learn to see “the big picture.” Many “miss the forest for the trees.” Ethics will help you not to do that and to see the world as a whole, somehow tied together.
(3) You will learn from history how an idea developed and from looking at it from different perspectives, through different sets of goggles, to appreciate differences in beliefs of people and cultures and to be more tolerant of these differences.

(4) Finally you will learn the names of people and theories in ethics, which will be useful to you in such subjects as history, English, psychology, sociology, and the humanities.

You **WILL NOT** learn how to be good, moral or happy. This course is not one in either prescriptive or didactic ethics. It is not aimed, particularly, at changing your mind about issues. It may, in fact, give you good reasons and arguments for holding the beliefs that you do. A smorgasbord of ethical opinions will be laid out for you, and you pay your money and take your choice.

**What are the rules about attendance?**

Ethics is architectonic. One day’s discussions and lectures build on the last day’s work. Therefore it is important that you attend very regularly. An attendance will be taken by different methods at different times during the class period each day. Sometimes it may be the first order of business; other days, it may be the last. You are allowed four (4) absences. These need not be explained. After the fourth absence, one point for each excessive absence is deducted from your final grade. For example, Jason has a semester average of 92, but he has eight absences, so his average drops to an 88, making the difference between an “A” and a “B.”

**What if I have to come late or leave early?**

You should plan to arrive on time and stay for the entire class and not to leave it, except in an emergency. You should not schedule doctor’s appointments, counseling meetings, or work time during the class period. If you have a change in work hours or other commitments that cause you to miss a large number of classes, I suggest you drop the course. Unfortunately, the class is not designed to be a self-paced, self-study, or distance learning course. An important part of the
course (perhaps the most important part) is participation. You cannot participate if you are not present. The instructor has a pet peeve about starting on time, and he likes to set the stage for the day’s activities in the first few minutes of the class. If you miss this stage setting, the rest of the class may make little sense to you. If you must leave class early, please let the instructor know in advance, so he doesn’t think you are leaving in a huff. If you do plan to leave in a huff, let him call you a cab. They are more comfortable!

What will a typical class day be like?

Typically, the instructor likes to spend a minute or so telling students about things, which happened on this date, holidays being celebrated around the world and other trivia. Then he likes to make class announcements, return papers, etc. He then spends a few minutes reviewing what was said in the last class to put the day’s work in context. Next he will outline the work for the day.

The methods of instruction will be varied. The instructor believes students best learn philosophy by doing philosophy. The least effective method of teaching is “the sage on stage” lecturing as the great guru; the most effective method is for the teacher to become a learner and to question with students the ethical issues being considered. I much prefer the latter and solicit your thoughtful and active participation. There will also be some films, simulations, role-playing, etc.

How will I be graded?

The instructor must have four (4) major grades by the end of the semester for each student, with each grade counting 25%.

1. Two (2) in-class exams. Each of these exams will contain twenty-five (25) multiple-choice questions that will be answered on a Scantron sheet. Each of these multiple-choice questions will be worth 2 points for a total of fifty (50) points. There will be a short essay question (about two or three paragraphs) worth fifty (50) points. Students will have a choice of essay questions from three or four options. I will provide the Scantron sheets and #2 pencils. The dates for these exams are:
FEBRUARY 14 (EXAM I)

APRIL 12 (EXAM II)

We will hold a review session a few days before these exams. These sessions are designed to point the student in the right direction, not to give answers to the questions. A review sheet of important names, philosophies, etc. will be provided.

2. One (1) take-home creative paper for which you will probably need to use the Internet and other reference material. **However, if you do use these sources, be sure to give proper credit.** You can do this in the text of the essay by simply citing the source and the page number (e.g., (Palmer, p. 65.) and then adding a short “works cited” page. Papers containing material that is not adequately quoted or cited will receive a “0.” Please see the appendix concerning annotation at the end of this syllabus. The paper will be given at least a week in advance of its due date and a discussion session will be held to point students in the right direction for its completion. This paper is due **APRIL 28 (MAJOR GRADE III).**

(3) The final exam will be two short essays written at home and brought to your exit interview on final exam day and will be discussed with the instructor at that time. **MAY 12**

What if I miss an exam or paper?

Students are expected to make up missed exams the following class period **before** exams are returned. If other arrangements need to be made due to an emergency or extended absence, please contact the instructor immediately. No extra credit assignments are accepted late.

Do I earn any credit for class participation?
Yes, you do. A student may earn up to three (3) points added to her final average for class participation (not just attending but taking an active part in class discussion and activities and following the rules of conduct suggested in the box below. The four grades have been averaged for Jennifer, Jason’s girlfriend friend, and she has an 88 average for the course. However, her class participation has been frequent and of high quality. She earns two extra points for her class participation, giving her a 90 average and making the difference between an A and a B for the course. However, her boyfriend, Jason (you remember Jason, the dude with so many absences) already has lost four points for attendance, I do not know his name; he sleeps most of the time in class, often not awakened by his cell phone playing loudly the University of Texas Fight Song. He gets no break at all even with his 88 average. One extra point! No way, Longhorn Dude!

**How can I make a better grade in this class?**

Ask yourself every week or two the answers to the below questions about your conduct and participation in class.

- Does the instructor know your name?
- Do you come to class on time?
- Do you remain for the whole class?
- Do you participate by asking questions and making comments?
- Do you resist resting your head on your desk or sleeping during class?
- Do you refrain from talking with others during class while the instructor or a classmate is speaking?
- Do you NOT do homework for other classes during philosophy class?
- Do you NOT read a newspaper or a book during class?
- Do you put your cell phone away during class and not text it during class?
- Are you courteous to others in your remarks?

If you answer with an honest “No” to one or more of the above your question, then these are the things you need to work on to improve your grade and perhaps visit with the instructor.
How am I expected to act in Ethics class?

Ethics is best learned by doing it. Therefore the student who benefits the most is the student who participates the most in class discussions, who asks the instructor questions, and who discusses opinions with classmates. In ethics, no question is too simple to ask. If you are wondering about something, chances are several of your classmates are wondering about the same thing, so ask.

In the South, students were raised to respect the teacher and not to challenge what he says. In ethics class, I hope I can earn your respect, but I definitely want your challenges, because many of the issues we will discuss are as fuzzy and unclear to me as they are to you.

Challenge the ideas of the instructor and your classmates. However, practice disagreeing without being disagreeable. Always leave the person you challenge in tact, with a clear knowledge that you respect her opinions but simply don’t understand why she holds them or that you disagree with them for such and such reasons. Challenge ideas, not people.

If you do not understand the meaning of a word the instructor uses or understand what he is saying because of his Maine accent, ask him to explain or repeat himself. If you cannot read what he has written on the white board, ask him to rewrite it or to spell a word for you. His handwriting is very poor; he will not be insulted. If he moves too quickly, and you do not understand a concept, ask the instructor to go into more detail or to give examples. Chances are there are others who are as confused about what he is saying as you are.

Can I do extra credit?
There will be some opportunities to do a bit of extra credit work, but your instructor believes that your primary focus should be on handing in quality assignments rather than depending on extra credit to make up for hastily done or sloppy work. Extra credit opportunities usually arise spontaneously during class and may involve research on the Internet or in the library, or perhaps a short paper. Extra credit points are added to the points total points at the end of the semester before I divide that number by four. Extra credit work is always due at the beginning of the next class and will not be accepted late.

How will the final grade be computed?

The four major grades and bonus points will be added together, and the total divided by four. The class participation will be determined and added to that total. Excessive absences, if any, will then be deducted, at the rate on one point for each absence over four. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test I</th>
<th>90</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Test II</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonus points</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL 357 divided by 4 =86, minus two hours of excessive absences = 84 (B), plus 2 points for class participation = 86 (B)

What is the grading scale?

100-90= A
80. = B
What if I must celebrate a religious holiday that is not in the college schedule?

Please let the instructor know a few days in advance of your plans to celebrate this holiday, and your absence on this day will not be counted against the four absences allotted you.

Can I eat and drink in class?

Eating and drinking in classrooms is officially against college rules. However, the instructor does not mind if students bring a light snack, a soft drink, coffee, bottle water, and that sort of thing as to class long as they dispose of their trash and bottles in proper trash cans.

Can I tape record class sessions?

Yes.

Can I use my laptop computer in class?

No.
Can I bring a guest to class?

Yes, guests are always welcome. However, the instructor does not allow guests under sixteen years old in class, because of liability issues and the nature of some of the material being discussed.

What is the last date to drop or to withdraw?

**Thursday, APRIL 12 IS THE LAST DATE TO DROP OR WITHDRAW WITH A “W”.**
**Monday, January 30 is the last day to drop and have no notation on your transcript** A student initiates the drop or withdrawal in the Enrollment Planning Area in Thunderduck Hall, T170, or online if eligible However, before you drop or withdraw, talk with the instructor to see if there is any way the semester can be salvaged for you.

**IMPORTANT CALENDAR DATES:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 16</td>
<td>Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – CAMPUS CLOSED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 17</td>
<td>Classes begins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 30</td>
<td>Last Day to Drop Without a “W”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2</td>
<td>Last Day for a 70% Refund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 8</td>
<td>Last Day for a 25% Refund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1-2</td>
<td>Staff Development Days – NO CLASES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 9</td>
<td>Fall Graduation Application Deadline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 12-18</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 6</td>
<td>Good Friday (Religious Holiday) – NO CLASSES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APRIL 12</td>
<td>LAST DAY TO DROP WITH A “W”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 8</td>
<td>Final Exam and Grade Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 14-June 1</td>
<td>– May Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 4 – July 3</td>
<td>Summer I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 9 – August 9</td>
<td>Summer II</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**What if I have a physical or mental ability that challenges my learning?**

Your first step is to visit the Disability Services in Thunderduck Hall, T120. If appropriate, that office will issue instructions to the instructor for special accommodations that should be made.

**How do I get my final grades?**

Richland College no longer mails grades to students. Students may receive their grades on-line or by telephone. You will need your student ID number published on your fee receipt and elsewhere as well as your password. Log on the Richland Homepage and then go to the last category in the menu on the left, “Online Services,” and check into e-Connect. Or call 972-613-1818. I will post grades on May 8. Your transcript will be immediately updated.
How will I know if the school is closed due to bad weather or another emergency?

Generally an announcement will be made on major local radio and television stations by 6 a.m. Or you may call 972-238-6196, the Inclement Weather Hotline. Notice of opening status will also be posted on the Richland Homepage. In addition, as soon as I receive information, I will leave the update on my school voice mail and I will send class members an e-mail message.

SPECIAL NOTICE TO FINANCIAL AID STUDENTS:

New regulations require instructors to report your attendance the first twelve calendar days of class. If a student fails to attend at all during these first days of the semester, financial aid may be reduced, withdrawn or withheld.

If you are receiving financial aid grants or loans, you must begin attendance in all classes. DO NOT drop or stop attending any class without first consulting the Financial Aid Office in Thunderduck Hall. Changes in your enrollment level and failing grades may require that you repay financial aid funds.

Academic Dishonesty Statement:

Scholastic dishonesty is a violation of the Code of Student Conduct. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a test, plagiarism, and collusion. As a college student, you are considered a responsible adult. Your enrollment indicates acceptance of the DCCCD Code of Student Conduct published in the DCCCD Catalogue at http://www1.dcccd.edu/cat0506/ss/code.cfm.
A student who is caught copying without proper citations of the source from a book, an internet page, or another student or is caught cheating in any other way will receive a “0” for that test or assignment and will not be allowed to make it up or to compensate for it in any way. Plagiarism and proper ways to document sources will be covered in class.

The Third Attempt to Enroll in a Course Rule:

Effective for the fall semester 2005, the Dallas County Community Colleges will charge additional tuition to students registering the third or subsequent time for a course. All third and subsequent attempts of the majority of credit and Continuing Education/Workforce Training courses will result in additional tuition to be charged. Developmental Education and some other courses will not be charged additional tuition. Third attempts include courses taken at any of the Dallas County Community Colleges since the Fall 2002 semester. Visit www.dccc.edu/ThirdCourse/Attempt for a list of courses and additional information.

A STATE REGULATION: THE SIX “W” RULE -VERY IMPORTANT!!

For students who enrolled in college level courses for the first time in the fall of 2007, Texas Education Code 51.907 limits the number of courses a student may drop.

You may drop no more than 6 courses during your entire undergraduate career unless the drop qualifies as an exception. Your campus counseling/advising center will give you more information on the allowable exceptions.

Remember that once you have accumulated 6 non-exempt drops, you cannot drop any other courses with a “W”. Therefore, please exercise caution when dropping courses in any Texas public institution of higher learning, including all seven of the Dallas County Community Colleges. For more information, you may access:

https://www1.dcccd.edu/coursedrops

EMRGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

To help ensure your safety on campus, please watch this video on keeping safe in a campus emergency at http://video.dcccd.edu/rtv/DO/emergency_dcccd.wmv
Is there anything else I should know?

You should know that studying ethics is a lot of fun. So enjoy it. You should know that to some of the questions we ask, there are a multitude of answers, some in direct opposition to each other, and that you will not be given “the right answer” in this class. You must decide many of these answers for yourself. And know that such ambiguity and vagueness can sometimes be frustrating for the person who wants closure, ready-made, sudden answers.

For some students ethics is intimately tied up with religion. That is to be expected. Answers to Plato’s question “how to live one’s life” have been provided by religions as well as by philosophies. It is not the instructor’s attempt to change anyone’s religion or to alter anyone’s faith. However, ethics class is like a visit to the ophthalmologist; you try on different sets of glasses, seeing the world differently through each pair. The assumption should not be that you must cast away your old goggles; they may be perfectly fine. However, the instructor does request that you maintain what the poet Coleridge called “a willing suspension of disbelief.” What he meant was give a theory a fair hearing in court before you discount it – suspend disbelief.

To complicate matters, some religions teach that it is improper to question the religion’s ethical tenets. After all, for Martin Luther it was faith by justification alone. Reason and good works played an insignificant, if any, role at all. Ethics is going to employ reason. It is the hope that the tool of reason will bolster rather than diminish a student’s faith.

In this ethics course, the first half is a survey of some classical (both ancient and modern) ethical theories. The second half is an application of those theories to what we might call “practical ethics.” We consider such issues as euthanasia, abortion, drug use, computer use, automobile driving practices, and a host of other issues. For some students, some of these practical considerations touch spots very deep in their lives. Perhaps they have had an abortion; perhaps they have lost a loved one through suicide. You will never be asked to reveal more about yourself than you want to reveal. The philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein saw ethics (and philosophy as a whole) as a sort of psychotherapy. If he was correct, perhaps an examination of the issues, which are sensitive, will help with the healing. As we discuss sensitive issues, please try to keep an intellectual distance between yourself and the philosophy. Don’t personalize too much at the start. Let it sink in.

Please maintain confidences of what is said in class. Do not spread gossip about students who choose to share personal information. Keep it among class members.
COMPETENCIES FOR PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION COURSES

Reading: Students will be asked to read from philosophy and religion textbooks written for students reading at the 12th grade level or above. Students may be asked to read some short passages from primary sources. Student achievement will be measured by such methods as exams, quizzes, and in-class discussion of the material.

Writing: Students will be given opportunities to write essays and papers about philosophical and religious issues. The student’s progress in improving academic writing will be communicated by such methods as instructor remarks written on papers and individual student conferences.

Speaking: Students are expected to participate in such speaking activities as class discussions, small group discussions, and class presentations. The instructor will evaluate their speaking skills.

Listening: Students will enhance their listening skills by practicing speaking one at a time and attending to the speaker. Students may be asked to summarize or repeat an argument they have just heard.

Critical Thinking: Students’ writing and class participation will be evaluated continually by such criteria as clarity, consistency, coherence, comprehensiveness, compatibility, and fairness in thought and expression.

Scope and Variety in Philosophy and Religion: By studying a wide range of ideas, purported by different historical periods, ages, and cultures, the student will demonstrate through written and spoken work an awareness of the scope and variety of issues and ideas studied in philosophy and religion. Some non-western ideas may be presented and discussed.

Expressions of Individual and Human Values within a Social and Historical Context: In class ideas will generally be presented within a historical, cultural, and social context, so students can understand why and how the ideas emerged. Students will be encouraged, in class discussions and in written work, to relate the ideas studied in philosophy and religion to ideas studied in other courses (e.g., literature, psychology, history, etc.).

Critical Response: Students will practice, in speech and writing, giving reasoned, critical responses to the ideas and theories presented. Unsupported statements of likes or dislikes will be treated as seminal material by the instructor for the development of a reasoned, critical response to a theory,
idea, or religion.

**Informed Personal Reaction:** Students will be encouraged by the instructor to personalize the material studied and to react to it. The instructor, however, may ask students to support reactions by such means as the use of logic, reason, and bibliographical research.

Influence of Philosophy/Religion on Intellectual Experiences: Through such means as written papers and exams, class participation and discussions, oral presentations, and small group activities, students will relate the ideas and theories studied in religion and philosophy to various related intellectual experiences.

**EXEMPLARY EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES**

1. To demonstrate awareness of the scope and variety of works in the arts and humanities.
2. To understand those works as expressions of individual and human values within an historical and social context.
3. To articulate an informed personal reaction to works in the arts and humanities.
4. To demonstrate knowledge of the influence of literature, philosophy, and/or the arts on intercultural experiences.

**THE DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Philosophy/Religion Department at Richland College is to provide to students and teachers alike interactive and cooperative learning environments in which they may examine ideas related to their cultural, philosophical, and religious heritages. The Department further strives to develop skills in analysis and evaluation of arguments and the ability to write and to speak clearly about philosophic and religious issues, which pertain to values, knowledge, reality, human nature, and God. The Department aims at translating these skills into considered actions in the lives of those involved and into reasoned interactions with the greater global community.
January 17 – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – CAMPUS CLOSED

January 18 – Introductions, Review of Syllabus, and Definition of Ethics

   No Reading

January 20 – What is Morality?

   William Golding, Except from *Lord of the Flies*, p.8

January 25 – Continua, Axioms, and Assumptions in Ethics

   No Reading

January 27 – Ethical Subjectivism and Ethical Relativism

   Herodotus, “Custom Is King,” p. 150


January 31 - Last Day to Drop Without a “W”

February 1 – Egoistic Hedonism

   Plato, “The Ring of Gyges,” p. 541


February 3 – Last Day for a 70% Refund
February 8 – Utilitarianism


February 9 – Last Day for a 25% Refund

February 10 – Utilitarianism Concluded

Aldous Huxley, “The Social Engineer and the Savage,” p. 269

Ursula LeGuin, “The Ones Who Walked Away from Omelas, p. 262

February 15 – Kant and Deontological Ethics


February 17 – Staff Development Day – NO CLASSES

February 22 – Kant Concluded


February 24 – FIRST EXAM

March 1 – Ethics of Love and Friendship: Plato and

Aristotle

No Readings
March 3 - Divine Command Ethics


Abraham and Isaac (Handout)

March 10 – Ayn Rand and Objectivism

Ayn Rand, “In Defense of Ethical Egoism,” Handout

March 14-18 SPRING BREAK

March 22 – Aristotle and Virtue Ethics


March 29 – Rights, Their Nature and Kind

Maya Angelou, “Graduation” (Handout)

March 31 – Animal Rights: A Paradigm

Peter Singer, Animal Liberation, “All Animals are Equal,” p. 832.

Immanuel Kant, “We Have Only Indirect Duties to Animals,” p. 830.


April 5 – Suicide and Euthanasia

Seneca, “On Suicide,” Handout

James Rachels, “Active and Passive Euthanasia,” (Handout)

April 7 – Abortion


Hippocratic Oath (Handout)

Catholic Church Directive to Hospitals (Handout)

April 12 – SECOND EXAM

April 14 – LAST DAY TO DROP WITH A “W”

April 19 – Marxism

Leo Tolstoy, “How Much Land Does a Man Need?” p. 462,

April 21 – Capitalism

No Readings

April 22 – Good Friday, Religious Holiday. CAMPUS CLOSED
April 26 – Should Drugs Be Legalized?


April 28 – Sexual Ethics (Sara Reddick)

John Barth, “Pnsexuality,” p. 668.

April 28 – TAKE HOME PAPER DUE

May 3 – Distributive Justice and Deserts

No Readings.

May 5 - Theories of Punishment

No Readings

May 12 – Take-Home Final Exam and Exit Interviews

Disclaimer: The instructor reserves the right to make changes in this syllabus as circumstances demand.