

**CONTEMPORARY MORAL PROBLEMS**  
**PHIL 1304 – Sections 001, 002, 003 & 004**

**FALL 2018**

**Instructor:**     **Dr. Shaun D. House**  
                         **Department of Philosophy & Humanities**  
                         309 Carlisle Hall  
                         (817) 272-2764 (Department Office)  
                         (817) 723-1029 (Personal Cell)  
                         [sdhouse@uta.edu](mailto:sdhouse@uta.edu)  
                         <http://www.uta.edu/philosophy/>

**Course Period:** August 22 – December 4, 2018

**Meeting Times & Places:**

Section 001	Geo-Science (GS) 109	(MWF 9 – 9:50 a.m.)
Section 002	College of Business Admin (COBA) 153	(MWF 11 – 11:50 a.m.)
Section 003	Trimble Hall (TH) 20	(TTH 5:30-6:50 p.m.)
Section 004	College of Business Admin (COBA) 151	(TTH 3:30-4:50 p.m.)

**Office Location & Hours:** 309 Carlisle Hall, T/TH 2:30-3:20 p.m. & By Appointment

**I.       Text**

**Hugh LaFollete, Ethics in Practice (\*not required)**

*\*Reading assignments will be posted on BlackBoard.*

**II.       Course Description**

This course is a survey of different major ethical problems and the arguments supporting opposing sides. In each section students will read two opposing views on a topic. The purpose of the is not to change the student's position about ethical issues, but rather to encourage greater contemplation about the reasons behind those beliefs. Topic covered during this course will include: abortion, euthanasia, gun control, animal rights, affirmative action, death penalty, and war and terrorism.

**III.      Course Objectives**

Students will gain a better understanding of arguments supporting different ethical positions. In the process, we will stress the importance of being receptive to an opposing viewpoint. Students will also improve their ability to evaluate the strength of arguments and some of the common mistakes that occur in reasoning. Since a significant portion of the class will be devoted to

discussion, students will develop their ability to more effectively communicate about challenging issues.

#### IV. Course Requirements and Grading

This course will be graded by a series of brief writing assignments on recent readings, attendance, and a Comprehensive Final Papers. Each of these will count 33.3% of the final grade. Class participation (**in-class & weekly assignments**) will count an addition 33.3% of the final grade.

<b>Attendance</b>	<b>33.4%</b>
<b>Assignments/Class Participation (Random)</b>	<b>33.3%</b>
<b>Comprehensive Final Exam</b>	<b>33.3%</b>
	-----
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Class Participation:** Each student is required to participate regularly in class discussions, AND submit **weekly discussion** questions.

Percentage	Grade
90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
59 or less	F

#### Policy on Late Exams, Quizzes, and Assignments

All late work must be accompanied with appropriate written documentation from a health care provider unless the student has another legitimate excuse, e.g. religious holiday, university obligation, etc. When these conditions are satisfied, appropriate accommodations will be made for the student to complete the missed assignment. When these conditions are not satisfied, the student will receive and reduction of 10 points per weekday on papers and exams.

- ***If, for any reason, students have a problem and are unable to turn an assignment in on time, they should contact the instructor before the assigned work is due, in order to help ensure the best possible solution.***

#### V. Attendance and General Student Responsibilities

This class will cover essential material very rapidly. Students who miss class on a regular basis should not expect a passing grade. Students are expected to be respectful of each other. If entering class late, please try to avoid overly disturbing the class. When engaged in discussions,

please be respectful. Together, we will foster an environment where controversial issues, such as abortion, can be discussed in a respectful manner.

**Attendance:** At The University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required but attendance is a critical indicator in student success. Each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students' academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. As the instructor of this section, I will take attendance daily – it is an essential portion of your final grade. However, while UT Arlington does not require instructors to take attendance in their courses, the U.S. Department of Education requires that the University have a mechanism in place to mark when Federal Student Aid recipients “begin attendance in a course.” UT Arlington instructors will report when students begin attendance in a course as part of the final grading process. Specifically, when assigning a student a grade of F, faculty report the last date a student attended their class based on evidence such as a test, participation in a class project or presentation, or an engagement online via Blackboard. This date is reported to the Department of Education for federal financial aid recipients.

## **VI. Review of University Policies**

### **Course Policies**

**Classroom Participation Policy:** College level behavior, courteousness, and attentiveness are expected from each student. **Please turn off all cell phones, pagers, and other electronic equipment.** Students that neglect to turn off their phones will be asked to leave class for the remainder of the class period and will be assessed absence deductions accordingly. Put away newspapers, magazines and assignments from other classes before the beginning of class. Each student is expected to keep up with course assignments, readings, and to attend class. An attitude of cooperation, a willingness to contribute ideas and experiences, and openness to new concepts and theories will enhance your collegiate experience.

Disruptions and/or distractions to the learning environment are not acceptable. Students who interfere with learning will be asked to leave class immediately and to schedule an instructor conference to discuss re-admission to class. Students with behavior or attitudes deemed inappropriate to the university setting will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct.

**Drop Policy:** Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering.

**Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance.** Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://web.uta.edu/aao/fao/>).

**Disability Accommodations:** UT Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including *The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*, *The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA)*, and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation*

Act. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of disability. Students are responsible for providing the instructor with official notification in the form of a **letter certified** by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD). Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting: **The Office for Students with Disabilities, (OSD)** [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or calling 817-272-3364. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability).

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) [www.uta.edu/caps/](http://www.uta.edu/caps/) or calling 817-272-3671 is also available to all students to help increase their understanding of personal issues, address mental and behavioral health problems and make positive changes in their lives.

**Non-Discrimination Policy:** *The University of Texas at Arlington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, genetic information, and/or veteran status in its educational programs or activities it operates. For more information, visit [uta.edu/eos](http://uta.edu/eos).*

**Title IX Policy:** The University of Texas at Arlington (“University”) is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from discrimination based on sex in accordance with Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs or activities; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), which prohibits sex discrimination in employment; and the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE Act). Sexual misconduct is a form of sex discrimination and will not be tolerated. *For information regarding Title IX, visit [www.uta.edu/titleIX](http://www.uta.edu/titleIX) or contact Ms. Jean Hood, Vice President and Title IX Coordinator at (817) 272-7091 or [jmhood@uta.edu](mailto:jmhood@uta.edu).*

**Academic Integrity:** Faculty are encouraged to discuss the Honor Code and the consequences of cheating, including plagiarism with their students.

*I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington’s tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.*

*I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.*

UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code in their courses by having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System *Regents’ Rule* 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university’s standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. **Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student’s suspension or expulsion from the University.** Additional information is available at <https://www.uta.edu/conduct/>. Students are encouraged to review these guides on plagiarism <http://libguides.uta.edu/researchprocess/plagiarism>

<http://libguides.uta.edu/copyright/plagiarism>

**Electronic Communication:** UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

**Campus Carry:** Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes as prohibited. Under the new law, openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/news/info/campus-carry/>

**Student Feedback Survey:** At the end of each term, students enrolled in face-to-face and online classes categorized as “lecture,” “seminar,” or “laboratory” are directed to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student’s feedback via the SFS database is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. Students’ anonymity will be protected to the extent that the law allows. UT Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law and aggregate results are posted online. Data from SFS is also used for faculty and program evaluations. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

**Final Review Week:** for semester-long courses, a period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

**Emergency Exit Procedures:** Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist individuals with disabilities.

**Student Support Services:** UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include [tutoring](#), [major-based learning centers](#),

developmental education, [advising and mentoring](#), personal counseling, and [federally funded programs](#). For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to [resources@uta.edu](mailto:resources@uta.edu), or view the information at <http://www.uta.edu/universitycollege/resources/index.php>.

**University Tutorial & Supplemental Instruction** (Ransom Hall 205): UTSI offers a variety of academic support services for undergraduate students, including: 60 minute one-on-one [tutoring](#) sessions, [Start Strong](#) Freshman tutoring program, and [Supplemental Instruction](#). Office hours are Monday-Friday 8:00am-5:00pm. For more information visit [www.uta.edu/utsi](http://www.uta.edu/utsi) or call 817-272-2617.

**The IDEAS Center** (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of Central Library) offers **FREE** tutoring to all students with a focus on transfer students, sophomores, veterans and others undergoing a transition to UT Arlington. Students can drop in, or check the schedule of available peer tutors at [www.uta.edu/IDEAS](http://www.uta.edu/IDEAS), or call (817) 272-6593.

**The English Writing Center (411LIBR)**: The Writing Center offers **FREE** tutoring in 15-, 30-, 45-, and 60-minute face-to-face and online sessions to all UTA students on any phase of their UTA coursework. Register and make appointments online at <https://uta.mywconline.com>. Classroom visits, workshops, and specialized services for graduate students and faculty are also available. Please see [www.uta.edu/owl](http://www.uta.edu/owl) for detailed information on all our programs and services.

The Library's 2<sup>nd</sup> floor Academic Plaza offers students a central hub of support services, including IDEAS Center, University Advising Services, Transfer UTA and various college/school advising hours. Services are available during the library's hours of operation. <http://library.uta.edu/academic-plaza>

## **VII. Reading Assignments**

### Moral Duty

Dr. King's <i>Letter from a Birmingham Jail</i>	Handout
<i>The Value of Philosophy</i>	Handout

### Euthanasia

Justifying Physician-Assisted Deaths	72-81
Against the Right to Die	81-90

### Abortion

A Defense of Abortion	117-125
An Argument that Abortion is Wrong	126-136

### Animal Rights

All Animals are Equal	171-180
-----------------------	---------

### Gun Control

The Liberal Right to Bear Arms	345-356
Gun Control	347-370

### Affirmative Action

The Case Against Affirmative Action	473-485
Affirmative Action as Equalizing Opportunity	492-504

### Death Penalty

In Defense of the Death Penalty	544-553
Against the Death Penalty	554-561

### Economic Justice

The Entitlement Theory of Justice	578-590
Famine, Influence, and Morality	613-622

### War and Terrorism

Nipping Evil in the Bud	715-725
The Justifiability of Humanitarian Intervention	726-734