

**CONTEMPORARY MORAL PROBLEMS
PHIL 1304 – Sections 004, 007 & 008**

SPRING 2019

Instructor: **Dr. Shaun D. House**
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 <http://www.uta.edu/philosophy/>

Course Period: January 14 – May 4, 2019

Meeting Times & Places:

| | | |
|-------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Section 004 | Science Hall (SH) 330 | (TTH 3:30-4:50 p.m.) |
| Section 007 | Science Hall (SH) 333 | (MWF 9:00-9:50 p.m.) |
| Section 008 | Science Hall (SH) 333 | (MWF 8:00-8:50 p.m.) |

Office Location & Hours: 309 Carlisle Hall, T/TH 5:00-5:30 p.m. & By Appointment

I. Text

Hugh LaFollete, Ethics in Practice

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 periodic, brief writing assignments on recent topics and readings, and two papers.

Calculation of Grades

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| Attendance/Class Participation Assignments | 33.4% |
| Midterm Paper | 33.3% |
| Comprehensive Final Exam | 33.3% |
| | ----- |
| Total | 100% |

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

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| 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 a 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.

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 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.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) 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.*

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 or contact Ms. Jean Hood, Vice President and Title IX Coordinator at (817) 272-7091 or jmhood@uta.edu.*

Academic Integrity: Students enrolled all UT Arlington courses are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

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/>.

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, [which is located \[insert a description of the nearest exit/emergency exit\]](#). 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, 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 or call 817-272-2617.

The IDEAS Center (2nd 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, 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 for detailed information on all our programs and services.

The Library's 2nd 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>

Emergency Phone Numbers: In case of an on-campus emergency, call the UT Arlington Police Department at **817-272-3003** (non-campus phone), **2-3003** (campus phone). You may also dial 911. Non-emergency number 817-272-3381

LIBRARY library.uta.edu

RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

Research or General Library Help

Academic Plaza Consultation Services library.uta.edu/academic-plaza

Ask Us ask.uta.edu/

Library Tutorials library.uta.edu/how-to

Subject and Course Research Guides libguides.uta.edu

Librarians by Subject library.uta.edu/subject-librarians

Research Coaches <http://libguides.uta.edu/researchcoach>

Resources

A to Z List of Library Databases libguides.uta.edu/az.php

Course Reserves pulse.uta.edu/vwebv/enterCourseReserve.do

FabLab fablab.uta.edu/

Scholarly Communications (info about digital humanities, data management, data visualization, copyright, open educational resources, open access publishing, and more)
<http://library.uta.edu/scholcomm>

Special Collections library.uta.edu/special-collections

Study Room Reservations openroom.uta.edu/

Teaching & Learning Services for Faculty

Copyright Consultation library-sc@listserv.uta.edu

Course Research Guide Development, Andy Herzog amherzog@uta.edu or your subject librarian

Data Visualization Instruction, Peace Ossom-Williamson peace@uta.edu

Digital Humanities Instruction, Rafia Mirza rafia@uta.edu

Graduate Student Research Skills Instruction, Andy Herzog amherzog@uta.edu or your subject librarian

Project or Problem-Based Instruction, Gretchen Trkay gtrkay@uta.edu

Undergraduate Research Skills Instruction, Gretchen Trkay gtrkay@uta.edu or your subject librarian.

OTHER RESOURCES

Environmental Health & Safety (<http://www.uta.edu/ehsafety>)

VII. Reading Assignments

Moral Duty

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

Euthanasia

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

Abortion

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

Animal Rights

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| All Animals are Equal | 171-180 |
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Gun Control

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

Affirmative Action

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

Death Penalty

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

Economic Justice

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

War and Terrorism

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