

UT-TYLER COURSE SYLLABUS
PHIL 2306, 066: INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS
FALL 2026

1) Instructor Information

Instructor Name: Dr. Griffin T. Nelson, Ph.D.

Email: griffinnelson@uttyler.edu (or through the Canvas inbox)

Supervisor: Dr. Greg Bock (gbock@uttyler.edu)

2) Office Hours

By appointment only and via Zoom.

3) TA Contact

None.

4) Course Overview

This course covers the main ethical theories from the history of Western philosophy.

5) Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

1) Articulate a basic understanding of the questions and importance of ethical theories.
2) Explain ethical theories concerning virtue, pleasure, self-interests, human nature, society, duty and the greatest good.
3) Analyze ethical issues in terms of ethical theories.
6) Critically evaluate philosophical arguments.

6) Required Texts

The required texts for this course are available for FREE in PDF format. Please see the FREE COURSE TEXTS module in Canvas.

If you want a paper copy, use these editions:

Aristotle. *Nicomachean Ethics*. 3rd Edition. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2019. ISBN: 978-1-62466-815-9

Kant, Immanuel. *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*. 3rd Edition. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2019. ISBN: 978-0-87220-166-8

Mill, John Stuart. *Utilitarianism*. 2nd Edition. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2019. ISBN: 978-0-87220-605-2

7) Special Course Notes

None.

8) Assignments and Grading Scale

Assignments:

Assignment	Weight	Description
3 Exams	20% each	40 questions each, 10 true/false and 30 multiple choice.
6 Quizzes (lowest score dropped)	10%	Quiz questions will cover the information for the ethical theories.
Formatting and Citing Assignment	5%	An assignment designed to teach students the standards for citing and formatting papers.
Paper 1 on Ethical Relativism	10%	A 2-3 page paper explaining ethical relativism and then showing that it cannot work as an ethical theory.
Paper 2 on the Use of Persons	15%	A 3-4 page paper comparing and contrasting utilitarianism and deontology on the use of persons and the value of human life.

Grading Scale:

A=90-100%

B=80-89%

C=70-79%

D=60-69%

F=0-59%

9) Late Work and Make-Up Exam Expectations

You will be allowed to turn in papers (and the Formatting and Citing Assignment) up to TWO days after the due date at no penalty. You will not be allowed to submit a paper after the two-day grace period, resulting in a 0 for the assignment. The two-day grace policy does not apply to any other assignments for this class.

Late work is not accepted. For papers this means that the student has not submitted the assignment within the two-day grace period; for all other assignments this means the student has not submitted the assignment by the due date. There will be no make up of exams unless the professor approves. You will not be allowed to re-do any assignment once it has been graded.

10) Attendance Policy

None.

11) Calendar of Topics

Tentative Course Schedule:

Week 1: Start Here module; Academic Honesty Quiz; Start Here Quiz; Course Introduction.

Week 2: Unit 1: Hedonism and Unit 2: Egoism. Readings: links provided on the modules page.

Week 3: Unit 3: Relativism; Unit 1-3 Quiz; Formatting and Citing Assignment. Readings: links provided on the modules page.

Week 4: Unit 4: Utilitarianism. Readings: Mill, Chapters 1 and II.

Week 5: Unit 4: Utilitarianism; Paper 1 Due. Readings: Mill, Chapters I and II.

Week 6: Unit 4: Utilitarianism; Unit 4 Quiz; Exam 1

Week 7: Unit 5: Deontology. Readings: Kant, Preface and First Section.

Week 8: Unit 5: Deontology. Readings: Kant, First Section and Second Section.

Week 9: Unit 5: Deontology; Unit 5 Quiz

Week 10: Unit 6: Social Contract; Unit 6 Quiz. Readings: links provided on the modules page.

Week 11: Exam 2

Week 12: Unit 7: Virtue Ethics; Paper 2 Due. Readings: Aristotle, Books I and II.

Week 13: Unit 7: Virtue Ethics; Unit 7 Quiz. Readings: Aristotle, Books VII and X.

Week 14: Unit 8: Natural Law Theory. Readings: links provided on the modules page.

Week 15: Final Exam

12) UT-Tyler AI Statement and Faculty Member's Selection

UT-Tyler AI Statement

UT Tyler is committed to exploring and using artificial intelligence (AI) tools as appropriate for the discipline and task undertaken. We encourage discussing AI tools' ethical, societal, philosophical, and disciplinary implications. All uses of AI should be acknowledged as this aligns with our commitment to honor and integrity, as noted in UT Tyler's Honor Code. Faculty and students must not use protected information, data, or copyrighted materials when using any AI tool. Additionally, users should be aware that AI tools rely on predictive models to generate content that may appear correct but is sometimes shown to be incomplete, inaccurate, taken without attribution from other sources, and/or biased. Consequently, an AI tool should not be considered a substitute for traditional approaches to research. You are ultimately responsible for the quality and content of the information you submit. Misusing AI tools that violate the guidelines specified for this course is considered a breach of academic integrity. The student will be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in UT Tyler's Academic Integrity Policy. Refer to the About This Course section of the UT Tyler Syllabus Module for specific information on appropriate use of AI in your course(s).

Faculty Member's Selection

AI is not permitted in this course at all. I expect all work students submit for this course to be their own. I have carefully designed all assignments and class activities to support your learning. Doing your own work, without human or artificial intelligence assistance, is best for your efforts in mastering course learning objectives. For this course, I expressly forbid using ChatGPT or any other artificial intelligence (AI) tools for any stages of the work process, including brainstorming. Deviations from these guidelines will be considered a violation of UT Tyler's Honor Code and academic honesty values.

13) Incomplete Grade Policy

From the UT-Tyler Registrar page: "If a student, because of extenuating circumstances, is unable to complete all of the requirements for a course by the end of the semester, then the instructor may recommend an Incomplete (I) for the course. The "I" may be assigned in lieu of a grade only when all of the following conditions are met: (a) the student has been making satisfactory progress in the course; (b) the student is unable to complete all course work or final exam due to unusual circumstances that are beyond personal control and are acceptable to the instructor; and (c) the student presents these reasons prior to the time that the final grade roster is due."

"Satisfactory progress" for this course means that a student has a C (70%) average or higher and that the student has submitted at least 70% of the assignments toward the semester total (100%) at the time the request is made. This instructor is hesitant to offer incomplete grades due to having adjunct status, which means I will not have access to the UT system, including Canvas, shortly after the semester ends.