

Sul Ross State University

Introduction to Ethics
PHIL 2306 Course Syllabus – Fall 2026

Course Title: Introduction to Ethics

Class Times: T/TH 10:05 - 11:35 (CST) | Blackboard Class Collaborate

Required Text: *Living Ethics: An Introduction with Readings* by Russ Shafer-Landau (Third Edition)

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The systematic examination of how we ought to live and act, and of the reasons, principles, and standards by which competing moral claims can be justified.

Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLO)

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PSLO 1	Describe and critically analyze chief doctrines, theories, and ideas of the great philosophers of the past and present.
PSLO 2	Demonstrate critical thinking by recognizing good and bad arguments and constructing cogent and sound arguments to defend or refute philosophical views.
PSLO 3	Demonstrate proficient writing skills.
PSLO 4	Demonstrate proficient reading comprehension skills of philosophical texts.
PSLO 5	Develop original arguments on philosophical issues that fairly consider different and opposing perspectives.
PSLO 6	Evaluate how philosophical concepts, ideas, theories, and principles affect one's obligations to others and society.

2306 Introduction to Ethics

	CSLO	PSLO
2306 CSLO 1	Read, analyze, and critique philosophical texts	PSLO 1 and 4
2306 CSLO2	Define and appropriately use important terms such as relativism, virtue, duty, rights, utilitarianism, natural law, egoism, altruism, autonomy, and care ethics.	PSLO 1 and 4
2306 CSLO3	Demonstrate knowledge of major arguments and problems in ethics.	PSLO 2 and 5
2306 CSLO 4	Present and discuss well-reasoned ethical positions in writing.	PSLO 3 and 5
2306 CSLO 5	Apply ethical concepts and principles to address moral concerns.	PSLO 5 and 6

2306 CSLO 6	Apply course material to various aspects of life.	PSLO 5 and 6
2306 CSLO 7	Discuss ways of living responsibly in a world where people have diverse ethical beliefs.	PSLO 6

Course Conduct. Refer to the Student Conduct and Discipline section of the [SRSU Student Handbook](#).

SRSU Disability Services. Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class. Alpine students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Mary Schwartz Grisham, M.Ed., LPC, SRSU's Accessibility Services Coordinator, at 432-837-8203 or email counseling@sulross.edu. Our office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall – room 112, and our mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas, 79832. For more information, see: <https://www.sulross.edu/counseling-and-accessibility-services/>

The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library in Alpine. Offers FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website, library.sulross.edu. Off-campus access requires logging in with your LoboID and password. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email (srsulibrary@sulross.edu), or by phone (432-837-8123).

Academic Honesty. Any instance of academic misconduct such as (1) turning in an identical written assignment for another course without approval, (2) copying from any source without proper citation, (3) crossing the boundary of what is allowed in a group project, (4) lying in connection with your academic work, (5) cheating, (6) plagiarism, (7) misrepresenting facts and/or collusion are contrary to the purpose of any educational institution and will be dealt with **most severely** to the extent of the university's disciplinary policy and/or through legal action if indicated. An instructor who determines that a student has been dishonest academically can, at a minimum, issue no credit for the assignment/exam and/or pursue more severe penalties, including but not limited to failing the course. Before the penalty is imposed, the student has the right to appeal to the division chairperson or Assistant Provost for Academic Affairs. Further information about *Academic Honesty* can be read in the [SRSU Student Handbook](#), and procedures for dealing with these acts are outlined in the [Academic Honesty Policy](#) under Undergraduate Academic Regulations.

Class Participation. This is a course that requires class participation. You should read the assignments before coming to class. You are encouraged to ask questions about the material to get a deeper insight or to understand concepts or philosophical problems better.

Class Attendance. The SRSU Undergraduate Academic Regulations policy governs attendance stated in the schedule of classes. If you are unable to participate online and in class frequently (every week), please discuss the reason with me and arrange to review the online notes, handouts, or assignments you may have missed. Excused absences entail established religious observance or providing emergency, university-authorized, legal, or medical documentation. **Excessive unexcused absences (more than 2 weeks) will result in a failing grade for the course.** Most of the course curriculum is fully online.

Distance Education Statement: Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, such as library resources, online databases, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should correspond using Sul Ross email accounts and submit online assignments through Blackboard, which requires secure login. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies on academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website. Directions for filing a student complaint are located in the [Student Handbook](#).

Regular communications with the professor: You must keep me updated on your progress and any difficulties you may have so I can respond in real-time to support your success. The most efficient way of contacting me is through email: bernie.cantens@sulross.edu. General questions are to be posted to a discussion board for all. For personal or private issues, please email me or make an appointment. I will respond as soon as possible. Please resend your email if you do not receive a reply within 24 hours during the work week.

Course Behaviors - Respect and Disruptions. Watch the VIDEO on NETTIQUETTE - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWMk_Zy7nB8 and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=80uRE972uQ0>. You are encouraged and expected to openly engage in discussions, ask questions, share ideas, and express your thoughts in this web-based course in the same manner as in a face-to-face course. Please treat each other with dignity and respect and avoid disruptive behaviors. You are responsible for knowing what behaviors are acceptable versus unacceptable, as referred to in the Student Conduct and Discipline section of the SRSU Student Handbook (http://www.sulross.edu/sites/default/files/sites/default/files/users/docs/stulife/student_conduct_discipline.pdf).

Cell phone and computer use. You should be fully engaged in the class's activity during the entire class period. Laptop computers or phones are welcome for academic purposes, such as note-taking or following along with the instructor's lesson. Off-topic activity (e.g., reading texts or posts, checking email, game playing) not directly related to the class is considered highly disrespectful. It will be noted and can result in being marked "absent" for the day.

Late Assignments. You are expected to meet the deadlines. Assignments submitted after their due dates without a legitimate excuse will be marked down 25%

Grading. Students are expected to complete reading assignments before class sessions and engage in thoughtful discussions considering these assignments. In addition, students will take an in-class midterm and an in-class final exam (objective short answer, multiple choice and/or essay).

Weekly Quizzes	20 points (10 quizzes @ 2 points each) Due every Friday at 11:59 PM
Weekly Essays	20 points (5 essays @ 4 points each)
1 Exam	15 Points. Thursday, October 8, 2026.
2 Exam	15 Points. Final exam week: Date: Tuesday, December 8, 2026
1 Reflection Paper	15 points. Due Friday, October 16, 2026
2 Reflection Paper	15 Points. Due Friday, December 4, 2026
Final Exam	30 Points. Due Tuesday, December 8, 2026

TOTAL 130 points

Course Outline

(This schedule and the topics listed below are subject to modification by the instructor.)

PART I MORAL THEORY			
WEEK	DATES	READINGS	DUE DATES
Week 1	Aug. 25	Syllabus Review, Introductions	
	Aug. 27	Chapter 1: What is Morality?	
Week 2	Sep. 1	Chapter 1: What is Morality?	Quiz 1 Due: Friday, September 4, by 11:59 PM
	Sep. 3	Chapter 2: Moral Reasoning	

Week 3	Sep. 8 Sep. 10	Chapter 2: Moral Reasoning Chapter 3: Skepticism About Morality	Quiz 2 Due: Friday, September 11, by 11:59 PM Essay 1 Due: Friday, September 11, by 11:59 PM
Week 4	Sep. 15 Sep. 17	Chapter 3 – Skepticism about Morality Chapter 4: The Good Life	Quiz 3 Due: Friday, September 18, by 11:59 PM Essay 2 Due: Friday September 18, by 11:59 PM
Week 5	Sep. 22 Sep. 24	Chapter 4 – The Good Life Chapter 5: Consequentialism	Quiz 4 Due: Friday, September 25, by 11:59 PM
Week 6	Sep. 29 Oct. 1	Chapter 5 – Consequentialism Chapter 6: Kantian Ethics	Quiz 5 Due: Friday, October 2, by 11:59 PM
Week 7	Oct. 6 Oct. 8	Chapter 6 – Kantian Ethics Review for Exam 1 Exam 1 - In Class	Quiz 6 Due: Friday, October 9 by 11:59 PM
Week 8	Oct. 13 Oct. 15	Chapter 9: Virtue Ethics Chapter 9: Virtue Ethics	Quiz 7 Due: Friday, October 16, by 11:59 PM Reflection Paper 1 Due: Friday, October 16, by 11:59 PM
PART II APPLIED ETHICS			
Week 9	Oct. 20 Oct. 22	Chapter 11: Abortion Chapter 11: Abortion	Quiz 8 Due: Friday, October 23, by 11:59 PM
Week 10	Oct. 27 Oct. 29	Chapter 12: Animals Chapter 12: Animals	Quiz 9 Due: Friday, October 30, by 11:59 PM Essay 3 Due: Friday, October 30 by 11:59 PM
Week 11	Nov. 3 Nov. 5	Chapter 13: Environment Chapter 13: Environment	Quiz 10 Due: Friday, November 6, by 11:59 PM
Week 12	Nov. 10 Nov. 12	Exam 2 Review Exam 2 - In Class	Essay 4 Due: Friday, November 13, by 11:59 PM

Week 13	Nov. 17 Nov. 19	TBD	Essay 5 Due: Friday, November 20, by 11:59 PM
Week 14	Nov. 24 Nov. 26	TBD Thanksgiving Holiday - No Class	
Week 15	Dec. 1	Last Day: Review	Reflection Paper 2 Friday, December 4 by 11:59
Week 16	Dec. 8	Final Exam in Class	