General Course Description
This course is an introduction to contemporary ethical theories and their application to a number of practical issues. We will begin with an overview of ethics and discuss the nature of critical reasoning. Next we will examine several major ethical theories. These theories will provide us with a basis for exploring a number of current ethical problems and debates.

Student Learning Outcomes
Students taking the course will be expected to: (1) demonstrate an understanding of a variety of ethical theories and principles; (2) apply those theories and principles to ethical issues in tests, essays, and case-study analyses; (3) develop their reasoning skills and demonstrate that development on exam questions; (4) construct and evaluate ethical arguments in essays and exams.

Grades
Your grade will be determined by four exams, worth 60% of your final grade; in-class exercises, class participation, and homework (10%); and a final exam (30%). Late work will be accepted in only the most extraordinary circumstances, so do try your utmost to meet all due dates. If you know you will not be able to submit an assignment on time, be prepared to document your excuse, and if at all possible let me know in advance of the deadline. When an extension is granted, the assignment must be submitted no later than one week after the original due date.

I grade in 10% increments:

A: 90-100%
B: 80-89%
C: 70-79%
D: 60-69%
F: 59% and below

Attendance
You are permitted four absences during the term. Each successive absence will result in a 2% reduction in your final grade.

There is no required text for this course. Instead, all of our readings and resources will be posted on Blackboard throughout the term: http://bb9.tamucc.edu

Week of:

PART ONE: ETHICAL THEORY

1/14 - Metaethics: Benedict & Rachels
1/21 (MLK Day) - Consequentialism: Mill
1/28 - Kantian Ethics
2/4 - The Social Contract I: Hobbes, Locke & Rousseau
Exam #1: Friday, 2/8

2/11 - The Social Contract II: Nozick & Rawls
2/18 - Rawls
2/25 - Marx
3/4 - Political Violence: Walzer & Nielsen

Exam #2: Friday, 3/8

3/11 - Spring Break

PART TWO: APPLIED ETHICS

3/18 - Preferential Treatment: Wasserstrom & Pojman
3/25 - Famine Relief: Singer & Hardin
4/1 - Euthanasia: Rachels & Harris
4/8 - Abortion: Warren, Thomson & Marquis

Exam #3: Friday, 4/12

4/15 - Animal Rights: Singer, Steinbock & Bernstein
4/22 - Environmental Ethics: Goodpaster & Parfit

4/29 - REVIEW

5/8 - FINAL EXAM (8 AM - 11 AM)

E-Etiquette: Please refrain from the use of all electronic devices during class.

Friday, April 5, is the last day to withdraw from the course with a grade of 'W.'

Disabilities Accommodations
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

Academic Advising
The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.
Dropping a Class
I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class.

Grade Appeals
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, Student Grade Appeals. These documents are accessible online at: http://academics.affairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal in CLA, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html.

Classroom behavior
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom.

Academic Integrity/Plagiarism
University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in a zero on the assignment, and in some cases a failing grade in the course.

Statement of Academic Continuity
In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi, this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

Finally, this syllabus is subject to possible revision as circumstances warrant.