

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO



COURSE SYLLABUS

Spring 2025

PHIL 4351 (CRN: 20947): Great Philosophers: Nietzsche
PHIL 5351 (CRN: 23865): World Historical Philosophers: Nietzsche

Instructor: Dr. Noell Birondo
Department: Philosophy
Email: nbirondo@utep.edu
Method of contact: Email
Office hours: Weds 1:00 pm–3:00 pm or by appointment
Office: Worrell 304
Location & time: Cotton 201, Thurs 4:30 pm–7:20 pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course will focus on Nietzsche’s moral psychology and ‘perspectivism’—and especially his ‘affirmation of life’ in response to the threat of nihilism—and go on to consider the implications of his views for contemporary philosophy, morality, and theories of interpretation in, for instance, literature and law.

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

- Recognize and critically evaluate philosophical accounts of Nietzsche’s philosophy
- Critically evaluate scholarly arguments that interpret and defend such philosophical accounts
- Develop and defend written and verbal arguments about Nietzsche’s philosophy and its implications for contemporary philosophy, morality, and theories of interpretation.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

1. Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (BGE) (Penguin)
2. Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols/The Anti-Christ*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (TI) (Penguin)
3. Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality* (GM), 3rd Ed., trans. Carol Diethe (Cambridge University Press)

CLASS AND EMAIL PROTOCOL

Class Protocol: You will be expected to be in class and to arrive on time. If you attend class regularly and participate intelligently in class discussions, you will easily receive full credit for this 10% of your grade. Alternatively, gross negligence will bring down your final grade substantially. Any quizzes will be factored into this portion of the grade. As a barometer, students who attend all class meetings, but do not participate in class discussions, will receive a “C” for this portion of their grade. University excused absences must be brought to the attention of the instructor at least 24 hours ahead of the class meeting to be missed.

Email Protocol: Emails sent to the instructor’s email address should (1) be from your utep.edu account and include (2) a subject line that includes the course name or number, (3) a standard salutation with the instructor’s name, and (4) your name in the body of the email. (The one exception to this is the email questions assignment: see below.)

GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS

Percentages	Letter grade	Grade Points	Meaning
90–100	A	4	<i>A denotes excellent performance</i>
80–89.99	B	3	<i>B denotes good performance</i>
70–79.99	C	2	<i>C denotes average performance</i>
60–69.99	D	1	<i>D denotes below average but passing performance</i>
0–59.99	F	0	<i>F denotes not passing</i>

Assignments: Graded work will be marked and returned in class (items 3–6 below). Grades will therefore not be posted on Blackboard. You can determine your current standing in the course at any point by using the percentages above. If you are unsure about your current grade for 1 or 2 below, please be sure to ask. Graduate students will not be required to fulfill #3 or #5—instead, an end-of-term research paper (~5000 words) will be 40% of their grade.

1. Class Participation: 10% of final grade.
2. Written email questions: 10% of final grade. **See due dates below.**
3. Written assignment 1: 20% of final grade. **2/20/25**
4. Midterm exam: 20% of final grade. **3/20/25**
5. Written assignment 2: 20% of final grade. **4/17/25**
6. Cumulative final exam: 20% of final grade. **On the date and time assigned by the Registrar**

Graduate students will not take exam 1 and exam 3; they will instead write a traditional final term paper on the topic of their choosing: 40% of the final grade, due date TBD. All students will take the midterm and final exams.

Email Questions: You will be required to submit five (5) sets of your own email questions, two questions per set, on the assigned readings for the week the assignment is due (see due dates below). They can be questions of clarification or questions that challenge various claims or lines of reasoning found in the assigned readings. They should not be questions that can be answered by a more careful re-reading of the text or by consulting a good dictionary. The more illustrative questions will be distributed, read aloud, and discussed in class. You should always be prepared to defend whatever you’ve written. The submitted questions must be written by you, otherwise a zero will be assigned for this entire portion of the class grade (10%). The questions are due on **Wednesday by 11:59 pm** local time, allowing me to read them before our Thursday meetings. Only questions that arrive on time will be given credit, but questions that arrive late will be welcome for class discussion. The subject line for the email should be: **“Nietzsche Group A/B Questions,”** depending on which group you are in.

Group A: Last name beginning A–M
 Group B: Last name beginning N–Z

Group A Due Dates: Weds 1/29; Weds 2/12; Weds 2/26; Weds 3/26; Weds 4/29
Group B Due Dates: Weds 2/5; Weds 2/19; Weds 3/5; Weds 4/2; Weds 4/23

COURSE SCHEDULE

The following schedule is subject to mild revisions. Any changes will be posted on Blackboard and/or announced in class. It is your responsibility to be aware of the assigned readings and due dates. You are expected to read the week's assigned readings carefully before coming to class and to be prepared to discuss what you've read.

I. Background

1. Thurs 1/23: Course Introductions; Ethics Overview
2. Thurs 1/30: Schopenhauer WWR, Bk. III, 36–38, Bk. IV, 68; Williams “Introduction to *The Gay Science*”
3. Thurs 2/6: Reginster, *The Affirmation of Life* (AL) “Introduction”; Williams, “Why Philosophy Needs History”; Euripides, *The Bacchae* [the Bacchae are the followers of Bacchus=Dionysus]

II. Genealogy

4. Thurs 2/13: GM Essay 1; AL ch. 1, “Nihilism”
5. Thurs 2/20: GM Essay 2, **Written assignment 1 (in class 6:00-7:20 pm)**
6. Thurs 2/27: GM Essay 3; Acampora, “Nietzsche’s GM: Moral Injury and Transformation”
7. Thurs 3/6: Williams, “Philosophy as a Humanistic Discipline”; Ameriks, “The Very Idea of Innovation”

Optional: MacIntyre, “Epistemological Crises, Dramatic Narrative, and the Philosophy of Science”

Week of 3/10–3/14: Spring Break, No Class Meeting!

8. Thurs 3/20: Tanner, “Introduction” (BGE); BGE 31-54; **Midterm Exam**

II. Moral Psychology

9. Thurs 3/27: BGE 55-89; AL ch. 2, “Overcoming Disorientation,” 54-77
10. Thurs 4/3: BGE 90-146; AL ch. 2, “Overcoming Disorientation,” 77-102
11. Thurs 4/10: BGE 147-169, 192-222; AL ch. 3, “The Will to Power”
12. Thurs 4/17: TI 31-77; AL ch. 4, “Overcoming Despair,” 148-184
Class Meeting? Written Assignment 2
13. Thurs 4/24: TI 78-122; AL ch. 4, “Overcoming Despair,” 185-200
14. Thurs 5/1: AL ch. 6, “Dionysian Wisdom”

COURSE POLICIES

Academic Honesty: Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. Use of AI technologies on assignments is prohibited. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another as one’s own. Collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All suspected violations of academic integrity at The University of Texas at El Paso must be reported to the [Office of Community Standards \(previously OSCCR\)](#) for potential disciplinary action. Please visit [HoOP II.1: Student Conduct and Discipline](#).

Class Recording: Recording of class meetings is prohibited. Doing so may result in disciplinary action.

Copyright Statement: All materials used in this course are protected by copyright law. The course materials are only for the use of students currently enrolled in this course and only for the purpose of this course. They may not be further disseminated.

Drop Policy: According to UTEP Curriculum and Classroom Policies: “When, in the judgment of the instructor, a student has been absent to such a degree as to impair his or her status relative to credit for the course, the instructor may drop the student from the class with a grade of “W” before the course drop deadline and with a grade of “F” after the course drop deadline.” See academic regulations in the UTEP Undergraduate Catalog for a list of excused absences. If you feel you are unable to complete the course successfully, notify the instructor and contact the [Registrar’s Office](#) to initiate the drop process. If you not, you risk receiving an “F” for the course.

Make-up Work: Make-up work will be given only in the case of a documented emergency. Note that make-up work may be in a different format than the original work, may require more intensive preparation, and may be graded with penalty points. If you miss an assignment and the reason is not considered excusable, no credit will be given. It is therefore important to reach out to the instructor (in advance if at all possible) to explain with proper documentation why you missed a given course requirement. Once a deadline has been established for make-up work, no further extensions or exceptions will be granted.

Incomplete Grade: Incomplete grades may be requested only in exceptional circumstances after you have completed at least half of the course requirements. Talk to me immediately if you believe an incomplete is warranted. If granted, we will establish a contract of work to be completed with deadlines.

Accommodations: UTEP is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and auxiliary services to students, staff, faculty, job applicants, applicants for admissions, and other beneficiaries of University programs, services and activities with documented disabilities in order to provide them with equal opportunities to participate in programs, services, and activities in compliance with sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008. Reasonable accommodations will be made unless it is determined that doing so would cause undue hardship on the University. Students requesting an accommodation based on a disability must register with the [UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services](#) (CASS). Contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services at (915) 747-5148, or email them at cass@utep.edu, or apply for accommodations online via the [CASS portal](#).

TECHNOLOGY AND ACADEMIC RESOURCES

Help Desk: Students experiencing technological challenges (email, Blackboard, software) can submit a work ticket to the UTEP Helpdesk for help. Contact the Helpdesk via phone, email, chat, website, or in person if on campus.

UTEP Library: Access a wide range of resources, including online, full-text access to thousands of journals and eBooks plus reference service and librarian assistance for enrolled students.

University Writing Center (UWC): Submit papers here for assistance with writing style and formatting, ask a tutor for help and explore other writing resources.

History Tutoring Center (HTC): Receive assistance with writing history papers, get help from a tutor and explore other history resources.

RefWorks: A bibliographic citation tool; check out RefWorks tutorial and Fact Sheet and Quick-Start Guide.

2. Individual Resources

Military Student Success Center: Assists personnel in any branch of service to reach their educational goals.

Center for Accommodations and Support Services: Assists students with ADA-related accommodations for coursework, housing, and internships.

Counseling and Psychological Services: Provides a variety of counseling services including individual, couples, and group sessions as well as career and disability assessments.