



PHIL 1301: Introduction to Philosophy

CRN: 33297

Summer 2023

Time and Location: Blackboard Online (ASYNCHRONOUS)

Professor Pablo P. Olivas

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(915) 213 9639

Office Hours: Virtually via Blackboard Collaborate: W 1-2 pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION

PHIL 1301 is a required 3-credit core course for all majors. This **ASYNCHRONOUS** course aims to introduce students to Western philosophy, and its major subfields. This course will cover major and historical issues in the subfields of Metaphysics, Epistemology, Value Theory, and Political and Social Philosophy. Among these topics are debates of good and evil, knowledge and reality, and ethics and society. Aside from main philosophical subjects, the course aims to present students with questions and issues that are deeply relevant to the human condition, and to their existence as people living in a complex world that is always changing in a myriad of ways.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Understand the major subdisciplines in philosophy (Metaphysics, Epistemology, Value Theory, Political and Social Philosophy).
- Be familiar with major debates on philosophy (Good and Evil, Knowledge and Reality, Ethics and Society).

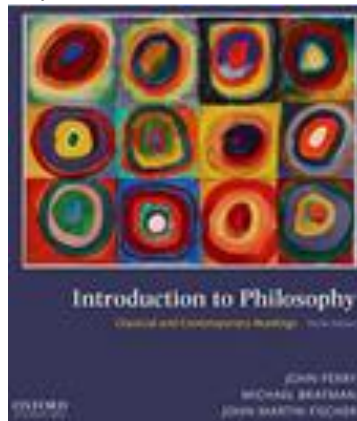
- Be able to construct philosophical essays.
- Engage in philosophical discourse with other students.

MODULES

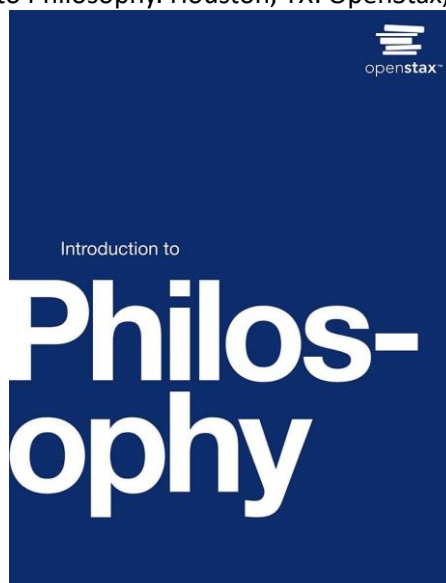
This course consists of four one-week modules. Each module consists of the material being covered that week. In other words, each module contains the readings, video lectures, discussion posts and essay of that week.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

- Introduction to Philosophy: Classical and Contemporary Readings (9th Edition) Edited by Perry, Bratman & Fischer, Oxford University Press. ISBN-13: 9780197543818



- Smith, Nathan, Introduction to Philosophy. Houston, TX: OpenStax, 2022



- Additional readings posted on Blackboard under "Readings."

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

- Discussion Board (20%): Students are required to post and answer to other students on the discussion board each week. Students must give 100-150 words post to a question provided by the instructor based on the material of that week, and a 50 word respond to the posts of at least two other students. Original posts must be uploaded by Thursday midnight (11:59 pm), and answers to students by Sunday midnight (11:59 pm).
- Weekly Essay (80%): Students are required to upload four essays during the course, one for each module and each worth 20% of the student's total grade. The students will be presented with a question or topic based on the material for that week and write a 500-600-word essay. Every essay requires students to use at least one citation of the material from the class in any format, and a works cited section in the format used for the citations. Essays will be graded based on their organization and clarity, on the consistency of the ideas or analysis presented, and on the grammatical quality of the essay.
- Every assignment must be uploaded by Sunday midnight (11:59 pm) of each module/week. That means the discussion board and the weekly essay must be uploaded to Blackboard by 11:59 pm of July 16, July 23, July 30, and August 6.
- Grade Distribution: 100-90 = A, 89-80 = B, 79-70 = C, 69-60 = D, 59 and below = F

COURSE COMMUNICATION

Students will be able to contact the instructor via email, office hours, discussion board, and announcements. If you try to communicate by email, you can expect a respond within 24-48 hours.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Course content is delivered through Blackboard, so a working computer with access to internet is required to complete this course. Students will also use need a text software such as Microsoft Word, or Google Docs to work on their essays. **ESSAY FILES MUST BE SUBMITTED ONLY VIA PDF.**

OFFICE HOURS

This course will provide two one-hour sessions of office hours per week where students can come to ask questions pertaining to the course. Office hours will be held virtually via Microsoft Teams on Wednesdays 1-2 pm. Any change to this schedule will be let known via Blackboard and UTEP email announcements.

NETIQUETTE

This is a college level course, so students are expected to behave as such.

- Be respectful to classmates and instructor.
- Harassment of any way will not be tolerated.
- The contents of this course are private and confidential. Do not copy any content from the course and upload it to other websites.
- Any student misconduct will be directed to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR).

DEADLINES

Both the Discussion Board and Weekly Essay must be uploaded by Sunday midnight (11:59 pm). Late works will be deducted points. Each day missing will mean 10 points deducted. Students should contact the instructor in advance if there is any difficulty with submitting all assignments by the due date. Students must present proof of a documented emergency to be excused (doctor's note, etc). Make up work will be allowed if a student provides proof of documented emergency.

COURSE DROP POLICY

I will not drop you from the course. You are responsible to contact the Registrar's Office if you feel you are unable to complete the course successfully. If you will drop the course, please let me know and then contact Registrar's Office. If not, you are at risk of receiving an "F" for the course.

ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY

The University 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 Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008. Reasonable accommodations will be made unless it is determined that doing so would cause undue hardship on the University. Students requesting 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.

SCHOLASTIC INTEGRITY

Any student found to be engaging in scholastic dishonesty (plagiarism), will be subjected to disciplinary action as stated in UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. In such a case, the student will be directed to The Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR).

SCHEDULE

Week 1 (July 11-14): Introduction and Metaphysics

Oxford: Intro to Philosophy

- Thomas Aquinas, "The Existence of God", pg. 54
- Gottfried Leibniz, "God, Evil and the Best of All Possible Worlds", pg. 104

OpenStax: Intro to Philosophy

- 1.1 What is Philosophy? Pg. 8
- 1.4 An Overview of Contemporary Philosophy, pg. 32
- Chapter 6, Metaphysics pg. 171

Week 2 (July 17-21): Epistemology

Oxford: Intro to Philosophy

- Plato, "The Allegory of the Cave", pg. 157
- David Hume, "An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding", pg. 193

OpenStax: Intro to Philosophy

- Chapter 7, Epistemology, pg. 203

Week 3 (July 24-28): Value Theory

Oxford: Intro to Philosophy

- The Trolley Problem, pg. 773
- Ducking Harm and Sacrificing Others, pg. 774

OpenStax: Intro to Philosophy

- 8.1 The Fact Value Distinction, pg. 238
- 8.2 Basic Questions about Values, pg. 242
- Chapter 9, Normative Moral Theory, pg. 269

Week 4 (July 31-Aug. 4) Political and Social Philosophy

Oxford: Intro to Philosophy

- John Rawls, "A Theory of Justice", pg. 570
- Kwame Anthony Appiah, "Racisms", pg. 636
- Elizabeth Anderson, "What's Wrong with Inequality?", pg. 605

OpenStax: Intro to Philosophy

- Chapter 11, Political Philosophy, pg. 341