

## PHIL 1301-\_\_: Introduction to Philosophy

Time and Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_

Office: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Office Hours: \_\_\_\_\_

Office Phone: (956) 326-\_\_\_\_\_

## What is needed for this course:

1. Melchert, Norman. *The Great Conversation: a Historical Introduction to Philosophy*. Sixth Ed. New York: Oxford UP, 2011. (ISBN# 978-0-19-539761-1)
2. Vaughn, Lewis. *Writing Philosophy: A Student's Guide to Writing Philosophy Essays*. New York: Oxford UP, 2006. (ISBN# 978-0-19-517956-9)
3. All students must obtain a TAMU e-mail address as required by the Registrar.
4. Access to a computer and the internet.

## These requirements are sold separately:

5. Jump-drive.

## Recommended, but Optional:

6. A portable American-English dictionary.

**\*Note: This course is "paperless" which means that assignments will be submitted electronically.**

**Course Outcome:** Student coursework must demonstrate effective written and oral communication of critical thought of a philosophical nature.

## Student Learning Outcomes:

1. To effectively communicate through writing and speech an awareness of scope and variety of theories spanning the history of philosophy.
2. To identify types of philosophical theories and corresponding schools of thought.
3. To analyze and evaluate the influence of these theories on literature, history, global politics, science, etc.
4. To articulate verbally and in writing an informed personal reaction to said theories and their ethical consequences.
5. To implement inquiry and the argumentation process in order to compose and defend own viewpoints.
6. To evaluate the reasoning process by assessing the logical strengths and weaknesses of theories.

## Important Dates:

Mid-point of the Semester: \_\_\_\_\_

Last Day to Drop a Course or to Withdraw from the University: \_\_\_\_\_

Last Class Day: \_\_\_\_\_

Final Exam: \_\_\_\_\_

**Required Coursework:** This course operates from a perspective that writing is a process. This includes generating ideas, sketching, drafting, peer-reviewing, and editing, all of which lead to a final product that is evaluated by the instructor.

Therefore, there are several components to this course:

- **Journal:** This is a collection of writing assignments (kept in an electronic journal) that will ask students either to make observations about or reflect on an assigned topic or reading, analyze assigned readings for effective argument strategies

or research, make connections to other readings, or engage in the process of writing (prewriting, sketching, and drafting). The purpose of the Journal is to allow space for students to explore ideas, practice composing strategies, and have free range in expression. The journal will be evaluated, and will be counted toward the final course grade, by the instructor based upon his/her established parameters.

- **Essay:** Students are required to compose 1 major writing assignment, as well as other writings (see below), and are required to compose drafts that will be peer-reviewed and/or commented on by the other students and the instructor, to revise those drafts based upon those comments, to correct grammatical and syntactical errors, and to turn in final products that will be evaluated. (Revising means that students will not only change the grammatical and usage errors, but they will develop their paper by adding more examples, removing poor examples, or unnecessary sentences, or the student might supply a more focused thesis, clearer topic sentences, or better organization throughout the assigned piece of writing.) A rubric (available on Angel) will be used to assess the student's mastery of the outcomes and skills. No "recycled" essays—essays written in other classes or in other sections of this course—are permitted, with the exception of a shared assignment in the Learning Communities.

- **Format:** All final drafts must be typed or word-processed. All work submitted for grading should be saved as a "Word 2003" (or RTF) document so that documents will open on all campus computers. If students are using a Macintosh computer, they should save work as a "Word 95/6.0" document (to ensure computer lab compatibility). Students will use MLA or APA formatting, and the format will be determined by assignment. *The LB Brief provides* examples of essays that conform to both MLA and APA guidelines.

- **Topic:** After explaining, analyzing, and evaluating the theory from class the student has chosen (defining key terms, explaining the theory and its arguments/evidence used to support, assessing its strengths and weaknesses, building argument and evidence in support of the assessment, taking a position in relation to the theory, etc.), the student must inquire as to how the theory influenced the outcome of a major intercultural event in history and engage the moral, political, and historical ramifications of the theory discussed as played out in this historical context.

- **Turnitin:** This is web-based anti-plagiarism software that all students must incorporate into their submission process for all essays. Work that is not submitted to *Turnitin* will not be accepted for grading. The instructor will evaluate the report generated by the software to determine if there are any plagiarism infractions. NOTE: Working drafts (all drafts that are composed to final essay submission) must include all necessary and appropriate citations for source material.

- **Other Assignments:** In addition to the reading and writing assignments designated on the course schedule, students will be expected to complete any in-class assignments, such as pre-writing activities, in-class drafting, quizzes, and peer reviews.

- **Exams:** Since this is a writing course, the emphasis will be placed on the production of a number of pieces of writing that demonstrate a variety of writing techniques. There will be a final exam/oral presentation. There will also be pop quizzes as deemed appropriate by the instructor.

- **The Writing Center:** All students must attend the Writing Center (Coward Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor) at least TWICE during the semester, for a *minimum* of 30 minutes, to seek writing consultation on one of the assigned writings in this course. Students will receive credit once they have submitted a "writing center" attendance form to the instructor.

**\*The instructor reserves the right to add/modify reading/writing assignments as needed.**

**Writing Requirements and Grade Values:**

The work for this course is carefully sequenced and grows out of ongoing classwork as well as class participation/discussion. Staying on top of the assignments, doing them seriously, and being prepared for class is crucial for student success in this course. Students should come prepared with all relevant texts and on time every day. The following will allow students to have a basis for how grades will be calculated in this course.

1. 10 % – Ancient Greeks Exam
2. 10 % – Medieval Exam
3. 25 % – Research Essay, with secondary sources (1250 words; approx. 5-7 pgs.) MLA format
4. 15 % – Journals and homework
5. 10 % -- Writing Center Visit and Peer-Mark Editing of essay drafts
6. 10 % – Quizzes and in class assignments
7. 20% - Final Exam

**Essay Grading:** The most important consideration for all essays is content; however, grammar and usage are also important. If writers have too many grammatical errors or have too many errors in general mechanics and usage, they will fail to communicate effectively. Furthermore, a person's literacy is often judged according to the number of distracting sentence errors that appear in writing. Therefore, students will work on proofreading and editing skills. As the semester progresses, so should students' ability to find and correct their own errors prior to turning in a final draft for grading. Uncorrected errors will affect final paper grades. The grading rubric for the essays can be found in Angel's Lessons as "Essay Rubric".

**Final Grade:** All essays will be graded on the usual A, B, C, D, or F scale. The instructor will grade *holistically*. This means that a student's *total progress* in the course is analyzed when final grades are assessed. Therefore, doing badly on one assignment does not guarantee a low grade for the course, nor does doing excellent on one assignment guarantee a high grade for the course.

**Late Papers:** Regardless of the assignment, deadlines are deadlines. If there are extreme circumstances—or a sudden, serious situation—that prevents a student from meeting deadlines, the student should communicate with the instructor so that a solution to the problem can be found. A student may request an extension by communicating with the instructor, in person or via e-mail, AT LEAST 48 hours in advance, but the granting of an extension is dependent upon the circumstances. If an essay is turned in late without prior negotiation, the essay will be lowered a letter grade for each weekday's delay, and a student has up to three (3) days (including weekends) to present the late work. Since the writing in this course will be submitted electronically, there is really no excuse for late or missing work due to absence. It is better to turn-in the essay late than not at all, for a missing research paper at the end of the semester will result in failure to complete the course requirements.

**Attendance and Tardiness:** If there are extreme circumstances—or a sudden, serious situation—that prevents a student from arriving to class on time, the student should communicate with the instructor so that a solution to the problem can be found. If students are more than 10 minutes late to class, this will count toward attendance. Three (3) late arrivals equal one (1) absence. If students have excessive, unexcused absences from class, they will fail this course. "Excessive unexcused absences" are determined as follows: four (4) or more in a MW or TR course, five (5) or more in a MWF course, and three (3) or more in a MTWR summer course. If students have missed the respective number of classes before the final date of withdrawing from courses, then they must initiate their own withdrawal from the course in the Registrar's Office to avoid earning an "F" in the course. Instructors do not drop students. NOTE: By Texas law, students may not withdraw from (or receive a "W" in) more than 6 total courses unless they qualify for certain exemptions to the law.

All absences are considered unexcused until and unless the student persuades the instructor that the absence merits being excused. Instructors may require documentation. Acceptable excuses include, but are not limited to:

1. Participation in University sponsored activity at the request of University Authorities;
2. Death or major illness in a student's immediate family;
3. Illness of a dependent family member;
4. Participation in legal proceedings or administrative procedures that require a student's presence;
5. Religious holy days;
6. Required participation in military duties;
7. Mandatory admission interviews for professional or graduate school which cannot be rescheduled; and
8. Doctor visits that cannot be rescheduled or that require travel.

If a student misses class, it is the student's responsibility to meet with the instructor to discuss anything that was missed. If a student misses class when an assignment is due, the student must still submit the work (see "Late Papers" policy above).

**Attendance Policy for Students Involved in University Events:** Often students who participate in sporting events, musical programs, or other university-sanctioned activities miss class more than the required number of absences allowed for other students. These students must produce written documentation prior to leaving class for such events. All assignments are still due on the dates assigned in the syllabus. Students with documented "excused" absences due to university sanctioned events must notify and negotiate due dates for any other writing assignments done in-class. This policy is in effect to maintain equity among students.

**Classroom Etiquette:** The College of Arts and Sciences encourages classroom discussion and academic debate as an essential intellectual activity. It is essential that students learn to express and defend their beliefs, but it is also essential that they learn to listen and respond respectfully to others whose beliefs they may not share. The College will always tolerate diverse, unorthodox, and unpopular points of view, but it will not tolerate condescending or insulting remarks. When students verbally abuse or ridicule and intimidate others whose views they do not agree with, they subvert the free exchange of ideas that should characterize a university classroom. If their actions are deemed by the professor to be disruptive, they will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, which may include being involuntarily withdrawn from the class. Also,

1. Turn off ALL cell phones, i-Pods, and other MP3 players.
2. Do not access the web for entertainment or private use during class.
3. Arrive to class on time.
4. Do not speak while others are speaking.
5. No children allowed.
6. Food and drink are not permitted in the computer labs – bottled water only.

**Early Alert:** The "Early Alert" system allows faculty members to notify the Advising and Mentoring Center when students miss an excessive number of classes or assignments, exhibit unusual or disruptive behavior, or are failing to meet the course requirements. Students should know that this system is in place to help them through difficulties and is a confidential means of communication between the faculty member, the student, and the advisors.

### Classroom Behavior

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### Plagiarism and Cheating

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's work as your own. 1) When you borrow someone else's facts, ideas, or opinions and put them entirely in your own words, you must acknowledge that these thoughts are not your own by immediately citing the source in your paper. Failure to do this is plagiarism. 2) When you also borrow someone else's words (short phrases, clauses, or sentences), you must enclose the copied words in quotation marks as well as citing the source. Failure to do this is plagiarism. 3) When you present someone else's paper or exam (stolen, borrowed, or bought) as your own, you have committed a clearly intentional form of intellectual theft and have put your academic future in jeopardy. This is the worst form of plagiarism.

Here is another explanation from the 2010, sixth edition of the *Manual of The American Psychological Association (APA)*:

*Plagiarism:* Researchers do not claim the words and ideas of another as their own; they give credit where credit is due. Quotations marks should be used to indicate the exact words of another. *Each* time you paraphrase another author (i.e., summarize a passage or rearrange the order of a sentence and change some of the words), you need to credit the source in the text.

The key element of this principle is that authors do not present the work of another as if it were their own words. This can extend to ideas as well as written words. If authors model a study after one done by someone else, the originating author should be given credit. If the rationale for a study was suggested in the Discussion section of someone else's article, the person should be given credit. Given the free exchange of ideas, which is very important for the health of intellectual discourse, authors may not know where an idea for a study originated. If authors do know, however, they should acknowledge the source; this includes personal communications. (pp. 15-16)

Consult the Writing Center or a recommended guide to documentation and research such as the *Manual of the APA* or the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* for guidance on proper documentation. If you still have doubts concerning proper documentation, seek advice from your instructor prior to submitting a final draft.

### Use of Work in Two or More Courses:

You may not submit work completed in another course for a grade in this course.

Penalties for Plagiarism: Should a faculty member discover that a student has committed plagiarism, the student should receive a grade of 'F' in that course and the matter will be referred to the Honor Council for possible disciplinary action. The faculty member, however, may elect to give freshmen and sophomore students a "zero" for the assignment and to allow them to revise the assignment up to a grade of "F" (50%) if they believe that the student plagiarized out of ignorance or carelessness and not out of an attempt to deceive in order to earn an unmerited grade. This option should not be available to juniors, seniors, or graduate students, who cannot reasonably claim ignorance of documentation rules as an excuse.

Caution: Be very careful what you upload to Turnitin or send to your professor for evaluation. Whatever you upload for evaluation will be considered your final, approved draft. If it is plagiarized, you will be held responsible. The excuse that "it

was only a draft" will not be accepted.

Caution: Also, do not share your electronic files with others. If you do, you are responsible for the possible consequences. If another student takes your file of a paper and changes the name to his or her name and submits it and you also submit the paper, we will hold both of you responsible for plagiarism. It is impossible for us to know with certainty who wrote the paper and who stole it. And, of course, we cannot know if there was collusion between you and the other student in the matter.

Penalties for Cheating: Should a faculty member discover a student cheating on an exam or quiz or other class project, the student should receive a "zero" for the assignment and not be allowed to make the assignment up. The incident should be reported to the chair of the department and to the Honor Council. If the cheating is extensive, however, or if the assignment constitutes a major grade for the course (e.g., a final exam), or if the student has cheated in the past, the student should receive an "F" in the course, and the matter should be referred to the Honor Council. Under no circumstances should a student who deserves an "F" in the course be allowed to withdraw from the course with a "W."

Student Right of Appeal: Faculty will notify students immediately via the student's TAMIU e-mail account that they have submitted plagiarized work. Students have the right to appeal a faculty member's charge of academic dishonesty by notifying the TAMIU Honor Council of their intent to appeal as long as the notification of appeal comes within 5 business days of the faculty member's e-mail message to the student. The *Student Handbook* provides details

### UConnect, TAMIU E-Mail, and Dusty Alert

Personal Announcements sent to students through TAMIU's UConnect Portal and TAMIU E-mail are the official means of communicating course and university business with students and faculty – not the U.S. Mail and not other e-mail addresses. Students and faculty must check UConnect and their TAMIU e-mail accounts regularly, if not daily. Not having seen an important TAMIU e-mail or UConnect message from a faculty member, chair, or dean is not accepted as an excuse for failure to take important action. Students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to sign-up for *Dusty Alert* (see [www.tamtu.edu](http://www.tamtu.edu)). *Dusty Alert* is an instant cell phone text-messaging system allowing the university to communicate immediately with you if there is an on-campus emergency, something of immediate danger to you, or a campus closing.

### Copyright Restrictions

The Copyright Act of 1976 grants to copyright owners the exclusive right to reproduce their works and distribute copies of their work. Works that receive copyright protection include published works such as a textbook. Copying a textbook without permission from the owner of the copyright may constitute copyright infringement. Civil and criminal penalties may be assessed for copyright infringement. Civil penalties include damages up to \$100,000; criminal penalties include a fine up to \$250,000 and imprisonment.

### Students with Disabilities

Texas A&M International University seeks to provide reasonable accommodations for all qualified persons with disabilities. This University will adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal education opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to register with the Director of Student Counseling and to contact the faculty member in a timely fashion to arrange for suitable accommodations.

### Incompletes

Students who are unable to complete a course should withdraw from the course before the final date for withdrawal and receive a “W.” To qualify for an “incomplete” and thus have the opportunity to complete the course at a later date, a student must meet the following criteria:

1. The student must have completed 90% of the course work assigned before the final date for withdrawing from a course with a “W”, and the student must be passing the course;
2. The student cannot complete the course because an accident, an illness, or a traumatic personal or family event occurred after the final date for withdrawal from a course;
3. The student must sign an “Incomplete Grade Contract” and secure signatures of approval from the professor and the college dean.
4. The student must agree to complete the missing course work before the end of the next long semester; failure to meet this deadline will cause the “I” to automatically be converted to a “F”; extensions to this deadline may be granted by the dean of the college.

This is the general policy regarding the circumstances under which an “incomplete” may be granted, but under exceptional circumstances, a student may receive an incomplete who does not meet all of the criteria above if the faculty member, department chair, and dean recommend it.

#### Student Responsibility for Dropping a Course

It is the responsibility of the STUDENT to drop the course before the final date for withdrawal from a course. Faculty members, in fact, may not drop a student from a course without getting the approval of their department chair and dean.

#### Independent Study Course

Independent Study (IS) courses are offered only under exceptional circumstances. Required courses intended to build academic skills may not be taken as IS (e.g., clinical supervision and internships). No student will take more than one IS course per semester. Moreover, IS courses are limited to seniors and graduate students. Summer IS course must continue through both summer sessions.

#### Grade Changes & Appeals

Faculty are authorized to change final grades only when they have committed a computational error or an error in recording a grade, and they must receive the approval of their department chairs and the dean to change the grade. As part of that approval, they must attach a detailed explanation of the reason for the mistake. Only in rare cases would another reason be entertained as legitimate for a grade change. A student who is unhappy with his or her grade on an assignment must discuss the situation with the faculty member teaching the course. If students believe that they have been graded unfairly, they have the right to appeal the grade using a grade appeal process in the *Student Handbook* and the *Faculty Handbook*.

#### Final Examination

Final Examination must be comprehensive and must contain a written component. The written component should comprise at least 20% of the final exam grade. Exceptions to this policy must receive the approval of the department chair and the dean at the beginning of the semester.

**Note on Course Schedule Philosophy 1301:** The following is a tentative schedule of activities and due dates for this course, which means that some adjustments may be made to it depending upon class progress. Any changes that are made will be given well in advance in class.

**Week 1: Course Introduction**

Day 1: Introduction to course and distribution of syllabus

**Week 2: Diagnostic Survey Essay**

Day 1: What is Philosophy?

Day 2: *The Sophists- Chapter 3 (pp. 42-59)*

**Week 3: The Beginnings of Reason**

Day 1: Socrates- Chapter 4

Day 2: Socrates- Chapter 5

**Week 4: The School of Athens**

Day 1: Plato- Chapter 6 (Epistemology and Metaphysics)

Day 2: *Plato- Chapter 6 (Politics and Ethics)*

**Week 5: The Lyceum of Thebes**

Day 1: Aristotle- Chapter 7 (Epistemology and Metaphysics)

Day 2: Aristotle- Chapter 7 (Politics and Ethics)

**Week 6: Birth of Christianity and Medievalism**

Day 1: Greek Exam

Day 2: *Jesus- Chapter 9*

**Week 7: Middle Ages and Renaissance**

Day 1: St. Augustine of Hippo- Chapter 10 and Anselm and Aquinas – Chapter 11

Day 2: The Renaissance- Chapter 12

**Week 8: Birth of Modernity**

Day 1: Descartes- Chapter 13

Day 2: Hobbes and Locke- Chapter 14

✚ Proposal of Research Essay topic and Working Bibliography

**Week 9: The Limits of Philosophy**

Day 1: *David Hume- Chapter 15*

✚ Sketch and bibliography of Research Essay due via Turn It In by 11:59PM Sunday



**Mid-semester Break**

Week 10: Assessment

Day 1: Medieval and Renaissance Exam

Day 2: **Peer Essay Editing- Bring hardcopy of essay draft to class**

Week 11: Analyzing History

Day 1: *Karl Marx- Chapter 18 (Part 1)*

Day 2: *Karl Marx- Chapter 18 (Part 2)*

📌 Research Essay Draft due in Turn It in by Friday 11:59PM

Week 12: Religion and Morality

Day 1: Soren Kierkegaard- Chapter 18

Day 2: Soren Kierkegaard- Chapter 18

📌 PEERMARK EDITING OF 2 student essays must be completed by 11:59PM SUNDAY

Week 13: Religion and Morality

Day 1: *Friedrich Nietzsche –Chapter 20*

Day 2: *Friedrich Nietzsche –Chapter 20*

📌 FINAL DRAFT- DUE by Sunday 11:59PM through Angel's Turn It In Drop Box

Week 14: The Twentieth Century

Day 1: Simone de Beauvoir- Chapter 24

**Thanksgiving Break**

Week 15: NOW

Day 1: Michel Foucault- ANGEL Readings

Day 2: Nihilism (Angel readings)

Week 16: Preparing for Final Exam

Day 1 (Last Class Day): Preparing for the final exam