

- COURSE SYLLABUS -

INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY
DIVISION OF MULTIDISCIPLINARY STUDIES
30029 - PHI 153 – 600
Hybrid Class
SPRING 2020

Dr. Paul R Shockley
Email: shockleypr@sfasu.edu
21 January- 8 May 2020
Office Hours: 10am-4pm Mondays
& Tuesdays & by personal appointment

Ferguson Bldg: G78 (ground floor)
8am-9:15am, Tuesday/Thursday
Tuesday: Face-to-face
Thursday: online (D2L)

“Philosophy begins in wonder.
And, at the end, when philosophic thought has done its best, the wonder remains.”
~ Alfred North Whitehead

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

In addition to a concern with the goals, nature, and methods of philosophy, Introduction to Philosophy (PHI 153/1301) course focuses on issues concerning philosophical theories of knowledge and reality, drawing on ideas from a variety of disciplines. Possible topics: the nature of philosophy, the problem of skepticism and knowledge, mind and personal identity, and the nature and existence of God. Emphasis is on the nature of philosophy and its relation to education, logic, and critical thinking.

PHI 153: Introduction to Philosophy (3 credits) will meet twice each week in 75 minutes for 15 weeks, and also meets for a 2-hour final examination. Students have significant weekly reading assignments, and typically complete multiple exams, a final exam, and epistemology essay, and discussion work.

II. COGNITIVE AND AFFECTIVE OBJECTIVES:

A. Problem Learning Outcomes:

- This is a general education core curriculum course with specific core objectives. This course has been selected “personal responsibility” as a core objective for assessment.
- Personal responsibility is a problem learning outcome whereby objective is to develop the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.

“It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it.” ~ Aristotle

B. Exemplary Educational Objectives:

- Awareness of the scope and variety of texts dealing with various philosophical issues.
- Understanding of the historical and social contexts of philosophical movements.
- Ability to respond critically to works in philosophy.
- Ability to formulate, express, and support opinions on the philosophical issues covered in this course.
- Knowledge of cross-cultural influence of philosophy.

III. GRADE POLICIES, COURSE REQUIREMENTS, & TESTING INFORMATION:

A. Course Policies and Requirements:

- 20% Exam 1: Philosophy to Assumptions (20 topics): 3 March on D2L (Tuesday).
- 20% Exam 2: Descartes to Ayn Rand's Objectivism (20 topics): 5 April. D2L (Sunday).
- 20% D2L Discussion Board: 10 Posts with 3 replies to other entries that specifically advances, clarifies, or critiques other posts using the seven types of questions I offer below in syllabus. Discussion posts are from Wednesday to following Tuesday (giving you time to meet with me on Monday or Tuesday if you have any questions).
- 20% Epistemology Paper (5-7 page paper): 26 April by 11:59 PM (Sunday).
- 20% Exam 3: Blaise Pascal to Neil Postman's *Amusing Ourselves to Death* (25 topics): 3 May (Sunday)
- 10% Extra Credit: Video Debate Analysis (5-7 page paper): Due by 19 April (Sunday). This points earned on this paper will be applied to your lowest grade. I encourage you to do this paper early in the course.

B. Attendance is expected. A complete attendance report may be filed with the student's dean and the registrar with the final course grade. *In fact, you can only miss one class. More than one missed class, whether excused or unexcused, means you will receive a final grade of "F" for this course.*

C. Since this is a hybrid course, involving face-to-face instruction and online material on D2L, it is really imperative that you attend class

whenever we are in session. Please do not miss class in view of academic excellence! Too much is at stake! We will usually meet on Tuesdays and then on Thursdays will be online material.

- D** All students are required to be present for announced exams. Any missed exam without a *cogent documented* excuse will be counted numerically as a zero (00). This is considerably lower than an average F.
- E.** Because of the nature of these exams over assigned readings and lecture material, it is in your *best* interest to attend class and proactively engage material, especially since each assignments builds upon one another.
- F.** To undergird our class lectures and assignments, weekly units are posted on D2L. Make sure you watch these presentations on a weekly basis. Once again, this course is a mixture of face-to-face and online material. First part of the week will be face-to-face and latte part of the week will be online.
- G. Required Books:**

Brooke Noel Moore & Kenneth Bruder, *Philosophy: The Power of Ideas*, 9th edition (New York: McGraw Hill), 2014 . ISBN: 978-0-07-803835-8. Free copy is located in library reserves.

- 1. This book will stimulate our thoughts regarding *ultimate questions* like:
 - a. Where did we come from? (*origin*)
 - b. What are we? Who are we? (*identity*)
 - c. Why are we here? (*meaning*)
 - d. How should we then live? (*morality*)
 - e. What's gone wrong with the world? (*evil*)
 - f. What can be done to fix the problems of the world? (*hope*)
- 2. Chapters 1-6 are testable from *Power of Ideas* for first exam (up to Descartes in chapter 6).
Chapters 6-13, and chapter 17 for second and third exams (Descartes and following).

Neil Postman, *Amusing Ourselves to Death*, revised edition (Penguin Books), 2005. ISBN 978-0143036531. Kindle version is also available. Free copy is located in library reserves.

- a. You will be tested on this book on third final exam.

Paul R. Shockley & Raul F. Prezas, *Thinking with Excellence: Navigating the College Journey & Beyond* (New York: Two Creeks Publishing Group), 2019: ISBN-13: 978-0692194812; ISBN-10: 0692194819. Kindle version is also available. Free copy is located in library reserves

- a. You will be tested on this book on first exam.

- Each exam will be derived from the philosophy study guide:
- Exam 1: Philosophy to Assumptions
- Exam 2: Descartes to Ayn Rand's Objectivism
- Exam 3: Pascal to Neil Postman's *Amusing Ourselves to Death*
- Each exam will cover topics per philosophy study guide. Know everything you can about each topic, drawing from class lecture and readings. From that list I will choose 10 topics to know-inside and out a week before the exam. Then on each exam I will select 5 topics of which you will write. The exams are non-cumulative but do build upon one another.
- The questions will be essay prompts. Know how to write out a proper essay-which is totally different from a short answer. Check out: <https://www.grammarly.com/blog/first-college-essay/>
- I reserve the right to change the format of the exam upon review following each exam.
- Any plagiarism or cheating whatsoever committed on exams will result in 00 and SFA policies will strictly be enforced.
- There could also be additional required readings applied to any exam and will be announced in class.
- There could also be additional required readings as deemed appropriate on D2L discussion assignment. Therefore, do not wait till last moment to read and complete discussion assignments.
- I reserve the right to change the format of the exam upon review following each exam.
- Any plagiarism or cheating whatsoever committed on exams will result in 00 and SFA policies will strictly be enforced.
- There could also be additional required readings applied to any exam and will be announced in class.
- All grades will be posted on D2L.
- Take good notes. Recordings of any sort are NOT allowed for class lectures (except for ADA compliance).
- Any student *who has* to miss any exam must personally contact me with a cogent documented excuse to re-take the exam **within** two class days. Otherwise, you will receive no credit (00). If you miss the

final exam, contact me to take the exam immediately; otherwise, you receive no credit for the exam (00).

- It is critical to your success that you attend all classes. Moreover, if you are having problems understanding the material, let me know early. Meet with me; let's brainstorm together. We also offer tutoring at AARC (first floor of Steen library). I'm here for you.
- <http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/class-attendance-6.7.pdf>
- Here is rubric I will be using for all exams and papers:

GRADING RUBRIC:

- H. Here is the way I will evaluate your philosophy papers & essays: *An excellent book report, essay, research paper, or any other paper (A) meets or exceeds all of these criteria for both content and writing:*

Content

- Demonstrates originality of thought, creativity, and particular insight into the material
- Demonstrates excellent and thorough understanding of the material
- Uses primary and secondary sources in a way that demonstrates high level of intellectual engagement with the text
- Uses primary and secondary sources in such a way that demonstrates the ability to independently research, read, and assimilate material relevant to the topic and to include it in the paper in a useful and insightful way
- Demonstrates the ability to read texts from different perspectives, traditions, cultures, and time periods with nuance and sensitivity, understanding how context affects interpretation.
- Logical fallacies are completely avoided.
- Truth claims are cogently justified (e.g., logical reasoning; empirical evidences; existential relevance; workability; livability; explanatory power; ethical/aesthetic excellence)

Writing

- Includes excellent writing that is interesting to read, clear, correct, polished, varied, and appropriate to the nature of the audience and goal; directions were explicitly followed
- Demonstrates completely correct handling of the mechanics of citation, attribution, and integration of quoted and paraphrased material
- Is well organized, with a choice of writing and paragraph structure that guides readers through the work in a way that is well suited to the particular aims, audience, and tone of the goals of assignment.

- Is copy-edited and polished at the sentence level to within an inch of its life

A good paper (B) meets or exceeds all of these criteria for both content and writing:

Content

- ● Demonstrates a good understanding of the material
- ● Uses primary and secondary sources in a way that demonstrates a high level of intellectual engagement with the text
 - Demonstrates the ability to read texts from different perspectives, traditions, cultures, and time periods, with an understanding of how context affects interpretation
 - Logical fallacies are avoided.
 - Truth claims are justified with good argumentation.

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Writing

- Includes good-quality paper that is interesting to read, clear, correct, and appropriate to the nature of the assignment’s goal; directions were followed in a commendable way.
- Demonstrates correct handling of the mechanics of citation, attribution, and integration of quoted and paraphrased material
- Is well organized at the outline and paragraph level
- Is carefully copy-edited and almost entirely error-free

An average quality paper (C) meets all of these criteria for both content and writing:

Content

- Demonstrates solid understanding of the material; may sometimes not show full understanding of how sources relate to other material in the course
- Uses primary and secondary sources in a way that demonstrates intellectual engagement with the text at a level appropriate to undergraduate students
- May not demonstrate initiative in research; may sometimes show a superficial understanding of the texts
- Demonstrates the ability to read texts from different perspectives, traditions, cultures, and time periods with comprehension, but may have difficulty in not reading the text from an exclusively modern- or culture-specific position
- Logical fallacies are slightly evidenced.
- Truth claims are insufficiently justified (not argued very well)

Writing

- Includes average-quality writing that is correct and appropriate to the nature of the assignment's audience and goal; directions somewhat followed.
- Demonstrates an average handling of the mechanics of citation, attribution, and integration of quoted and paraphrased material; may be awkward in integration and attribution of sources
- Somewhat organized at the outline and paragraph level; may be unfocused or somewhat not organized in the most effective order
- Is satisfactorily copy-edited, although some problems of language may remain

An average (D or below):

Includes *any one* of these problems to a noticeable extent:

Content

- ● Demonstrates a deficient understanding of the material
- ● Does not engage with primary and secondary sources, or does so in a superficial, proof-texting way
- ● Includes difficulty in comprehending or engaging with texts from different perspectives, traditions, cultures, and time periods
- ● Logical fallacies are discovered.
- ● Truth-claims are not justified or are poorly justified.

Writing

- ● Includes writing that is not appropriate to the nature of the assignment's audience and goal (e.g., too casual or too jargonistic)
- ● Includes persistent problems with the mechanics of citation, attribution, and integration of quoted and paraphrased material
- ● Lacks organization at the outline and paragraph level
- ● Includes persistent and/or systemic problems at the sentence level (structure of sentences; appropriate word choice; spelling and punctuation; other grammar issues; general clarity)

I. Additional Hints for Success on Essays, Papers, & Reports:

1. Always be thinking about the leading proponents and critics on any particular idea or problem in philosophy. In other words, who embraced what particular philosophical idea and who argued against it? Where do these major ideas come out of (e.g., John Dewey's *Art as Experience*)? What was the context for the emergence of those ideas?
2. Introduction: be sure to clearly state the thesis to your work, the problem you will work out, and how you will address that problem. Explain clearly what the central idea is.

3. What are the criticisms made to this idea? What are the responses to those criticisms?
4. Also, be able to critique philosophical ideas with your own worldview. Using the sevenfold criterion, 5 ways of knowing, etc. in *Thinking with Excellence*, you should be able to offer a critique of that philosophical idea from your worldview.
5. What are the specific lessons you learned? The more specific you are with the lessons, the better your conclusion will be.
6. What are you still missing? What have you left out? Think lateral thinking?
7. Have you committed the fallacy of reductionism?
8. Have you written your work using proper grammar and spelling? Remember: how you communicate is as important as what you communicate.
9. Bibliography/works cited page. Proper citation used?
10. No plagiarism? When in doubt, document.
11. Using the sevenfold criteria, avoiding logical fallacies, and using the fivefold view of evaluating what is true will be helpful to your success.
12. Regularly meet with me, especially if things are unclear to you. If you find yourself struggling with a topic we are discussing in class, my door is open to you; I want you to succeed. You will need to make sure you are doing the required reading and are attending class.
13. Once again, no plagiarism whatsoever. No late papers will be accepted. No extensions or exemptions granted. To be sure, all your work will be taken seriously as a philosophical critique. So, I can't wait to see you apply all that you are learning in this course! Go forth Lumberjacks!

“Art tries, literally, to picture the things which philosophy tries to put into carefully thought-out words.” ~ Hans Rookmaaker

J. Questions to ask in every class: “Now, that’s a good question!”

Asking questions in class can be very intimidating. We are fearful of being embarrassed or rejected. We don’t want to appear “dumb.” We push back from the idea of being singled out by the professor whereby we are called upon repeatedly in class; we don’t like the spotlight. We don’t want to be known as the “teacher’s pet.”

The situation becomes even more difficult. We come across those who like to argue, who want to be the center of the class, or who redirect their questions in way that benefits them. Out of arrogance, hubris (which means excessive pride), and control, they want to claim “superiority” over fellow classmates.

Sadly, we come across educators who don’t like questions. Some are hot-tempered, cynical, and not easy to talk to or even learn from, and deem themselves “god-like” given their background, degrees, and accomplishments. They can make us feel irrelevant, uncomfortable, and worthless.

To be sure, many us don’t even know where to begin when it comes to asking good questions. We’ve never been trained on the science and art of asking good questions. Yet, we want to learn. We want to contribute to class. We want to seize our studies!

“Do one thing every day that scares you.” ~ Eleanor Roosevelt

What are we to do?

While there are difficult classes, professors, and classmates, thinking with excellence invites you to ask good questions. Success in life demands good questioning. Most professors we encounter love questions and long for rich classroom dialogue. Outstanding professors, and there are many of them, will also protect you from students who seek to disrupt you, try to take advantage of the classroom setting by showing off, or attempt to “put you down.” They want you to learn and will do all they can to facilitate those opportunities. If you can learn how to ask good questions, then you will have a dynamic skill set that will last a lifetime, no matter your career, context, or relationships.

Thus, I encourage you to think about books, conversations, truth-claims made, and worldviews like a detective by asking clarifying questions like “*What do you mean by that?*” and “*How did you come to that conclusion.*” Here are seven types of questions you should ask when it comes to truth-claims being made by authors, professors, and fellow students:

1. **“When you make this truth-claim, are you saying _____?”** Here you repeat your understanding of the truth-claim. This is an additional *clarification* question to the two mentioned above.
2. **“When you make this truth-claim, would this be an example of what you are trying to say?”** Here you give an example of the truth-claim made. This is an *example* question.

3. **“If I understand you correctly, your understanding of this truth-claim is _____ [repeat interpretation]? Am I right? I wonder if the claim could be interpreted this way [give alternative interpretation]?”** These are *interpretation* questions.
4. **“What are the implications of this truth-claim?” Or would this be an implication of this truth-claim _____?”** You can think about the implications of the truth-claim in how it affects or impacts one’s life, community, context, faith, family, other ideas, history, policy, science, or other types of studies. These are *implication* questions.
5. **“Can this truth-claim be true given what we know about _____ [common sense; empirical data; historical facts; philosophical truths; scientific evidence; other realms of studies such as sociology or other inquiries]?”** Here we are examining the consistency of the truth-claim with what we already know is true and trustworthy. This is a *consistency* question.
6. **“I agree/ disagree with you. Here’s why. I’ve had this experience [state experience; remember to summarize; don’t be too wordy].... What do you think about this experience?”** This is an *agreement/disagreement* question rooted in personal experience.
7. **“What other ways can we think about this truth-claim that may be foreign to our own particular shared assumptions?” “Would _____ [e.g., different age; culture; gender; race; religion; time; place] interpret this truth-claim the same way?”** Here we are using *lateral* type of questioning; we are attempting to think outside of the box.

These seven types of questions, namely, clarification, example, interpretation, implication, consistency, agreement/disagreement, and lateral questions, will benefit you in ways you can never imagine!

“Now if a man believes in the existence of beautiful things, but not of Beauty itself, and cannot follow a guide who would lead him to a knowledge of it, is he not living in a dream?” ~ Plato

K. Epistemology Paper (5-7 pages, excluding cover sheet and bibliography):

During the unit on Epistemology, students will construct a written assignment that will dovetail with the specific epistemological theories covered in that section of the course. The assignment will be a single essay that is step driven and may be described to the students in the manner seen below. While the sample directions below break the assignment into steps, this is a single essay and will be uploaded for each objective.

Following the unit on Epistemology, each student will complete and turn in a written assignment. The stylistic requirements for the assignment will be the completion of a **five-seven** page essay (excluding cover sheet and works cited page) that is stylistically clean and

displays academic citation of all source material. The work will be typed and will include a works cited page. While the content requirements have been broken down into a series of steps that build upon one another and thus highlight our learning process (see below), this is to be written as a single, cohesive essay. The content steps are:

➤ Student Directions:

As you have been introduced to a number of epistemological theories during the last several weeks, you are to choose **TWO of those theories and provide a critical evaluation of each theory**. Upon identifying and explaining each theory, you will then critically evaluate each theory.

Next, you will transition from a direct analysis of an epistemological theory to an indirect analysis of a third theory. In this case, you are to either design your own cartoon or find a cartoon online that you believe comments on a third epistemological. After providing the cartoon, you will write an analysis of this image in which you identify and explain how the cartoon, in terms of its context and assumptions, comments on this third epistemological theory.

Finally, you will conclude your paper with a personal discussion in which you identify the epistemological theory that you find most convincing and then critically explore how your choosing that theory will impact your own ethical self-awareness in different contexts and your cultural self-awareness as it is tied to such issues as civic responsibility or understanding your role in a regional, national, or global community.

Here you will need to demonstrate the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making.

This work is to be done in your words. All sources must be properly cited. Plagiarism, which is your responsibility to know what it is and how to avoid it, is totally unacceptable. Strict plagiarism policy is upheld. No “cut-in-paste” from internet.

By enrolling in **Introduction to Philosophy** you are also enrolling in a Core Curriculum Course that fulfills the **Personal Responsibility** requirement. You will see this course on your D2L list. This paper will fulfill both the requirements of this course and the needs of Stephen F. Austin State University’s Core Curriculum Assessment Plan with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. When you complete this one assignment, you need to upload the assignment to your standard course dropbox. Do not plagiarize!

L. Extra Credit Video Debate: Extra Credit

- You may watch **ONE** of the following four video debates and offer a 5-7 page critical review (excluding cover sheet/bibliography). Cover sheet is required. 12 size font. Romans/New Times. Proper grammar, citations, and

punctuation are expected. If any other sources are consulted, bibliography is required. Do not plagiarize!

- Summarize each major argument from both sides and offer a thoughtful response/critique using the philosophical tools you have gained in this class. Look for logical fallacies as studied in chapter 1 and consider the seven-fold criteria for evaluation:

Logical Coherence
Empirical Adequacy
Existential Relevance
Viability
Workability
Explanatory Power
Ethical and Aesthetic Values

You will also find resources from *Thinking with Excellence* to aid you in doing the analysis.

- This paper is to be in your own words; plagiarism is not acceptable whatsoever.
- All four debates are offered on youtube.com. Choose only one! You can use the details below to find the youtube debates. This paper is due on **Sunday night by 11:59pm on 19 April** on D2L. No late papers will be accepted. If you have trouble accessing video on links provided, search youtube using title names, and minutes for the following presentations. All are readily available:
- The first debate is John Lennox vs. Richard Dawkins Debate: *Has Science Buried God?* Oxford Museum of Natural History hosts this debate. John Lennox of Oxford explains how science points to an intelligent creator and Richard Dawkins of Oxford offers a counterargument. This paper is due **19 April** by 11:59pm and is to be uploaded to D2L. This debate is 1.21 hours long. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OVEuQgMglw>.
- The second debate is theist William Lane Craig vs. atheist Paul Kurtz: *Is Goodness Without God Good Enough?* This debate took place at Franklin & Marshall College. This debate is 1:39 long. This paper is to be uploaded to D2 L by **19 April** by 11:59pm. Sunday night. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=srRzS-579o&t=5s>.
- Third debate is Does God Exist between William Lane Craig vs. late antitheist Christopher Hitchens. This 4 April 2009 debate took place at Biola University in California. This debate is 2.12 hours long. This paper is to be uploaded to D2L by **19 April** by 11:59pm. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0tYm41hb48o&t=69s>.
- Fourth debate is "Is There a God?" between famed bioethics philosopher Peter Singer vs. Oxford scholar John Lennox which took place in 2017

at the Town Hall at Melbourne, Australia with Fixed Point Foundation. <https://youtu.be/HoTILnpd3q8>. The debate is 1:46 hours long. This paper is to be uploaded to D2L by **19 April** by 11:59pm. Sunday night.

- Plagiarism is not acceptable whatsoever. Your review and critique is to be in your own words.
- Anticipate computer problems. Don't wait till last minute to upload your paper.
- Save your papers repeatedly. Upload working copies to your electronic email account in case something terrible happens to your computer.
- Watch presentation early, write summary notes, and reflect upon contrasting views presented.

M. Discussion Board Responses (10 discussion board prompts):

- I will upload lecture material and pertinent questions each and every Wednesday on D2L. As a result, you will offer a minimal of 500 word minimal response to 10 of the entries I upload with three thoughtful, qualitative replies (no minimum word count for replies) that advance, clarify, or critique the author's post. Know what you claim and why you claim it! But make sure you justify each and every claim you make. No plagiarism whatsoever. Cite all sources used
- Following each discussion post which will be given by prof on Wednesday- you are to post response by Sunday at 11:59 PM of every week and three replies to other student responses by the next Tuesday of every week by 11:59 PM. Once again, *each reply is to specifically advance, clarify, or critique other student posts using the seven types of questions I offer in this syllabus.* Use tools from *Thinking with Excellence* to analyze other prompts as well.
 1. Professor Prompt: Prompt is issued by Wednesday
 2. Student post: Sunday by 11:59 PM: 500 words minimal
 3. Reply to other student posts that advance, clarify, or critique the fellow student (s) position by Tuesday by 11:59 PM.
- Each entry with three thoughtful replies (as explained just above) to other posts will be graded with a potential possibility of earning 10 points. Thus, 10 points per entry could earn total of 100 points (A+). Once again, each reply is to either the advance, clarify, or critique the argument given. Don't merely say you agree or disagree; do not give "rabbit trails." Be clear, focused, and on target. Instead, think philosophically by always asking what does this fellow student mean by this truth claim and what justification is being offered here? Is the justification defensible? How and why?
- To be sure, this does not mean that each entry guarantees 10 points. Each entry must be excellent to earn 10 points.

- I will likely grade discussion questions and replies once they are completed to make one final grade at the end of the semester.
- Proper grammar, citation, and punctuation.
- No plagiarism whatsoever.
- No extensive quotes.
- Use skills of analysis and thoughtful reflection.
- Any qualitative feedback you offer to the other entries (above three required that advance, clarify, or critique *within the week they are posted*, might qualitatively contribute to your overall grade for this assignment. Go the extra mile!
- Given this hybrid format, there are no extensions offered if deadlines are missed No exceptions. No exemptions. No extensions. Anticipate the unexpected. Save your material repeatedly.
- You are not to be impolite or hostile to me or fellow students in any of your responses or replies. If you are, you will receive 0 for the entire discussion board-which is significant loss towards final grade.
- Do not wait till the last moment to do either the post or replies. Think. Think. Think. Evaluate. Evaluate. Evaluate. Reflect. Reflect. Reflect. Think more and then post/reply.
- Regarding replies: You will receive no credit if you only offer replies but do not give your own post. Once again, there is no minimum requirement for replies, only those that are qualitatively thoughtful and beneficial, advancing the post philosophically, clarifying the post philosophically, or giving a critique to the post will be counted. I encourage you to use *Thinking with Excellence* as a resource to aid you in your critiques.

IV. GENERAL RULES:

- No use of cell-phones, text-messaging, games, I-Pods (or equivalent), social utilities, or internet in class. No use of any technological device (unless ADA) that may be a distraction to the learning process. Laptops used exclusively for class-notes are acceptable. Please silence cell-phones before class. **If you use the computer for other purposes than taking notes, then you will be asked to leave class.**
- No smoking or use of tobacco will be permitted in the classroom.
- All university rules governing academic dishonesty will apply.
- Lectures may not be taped, recorded, or video transcribed.

- No reading of newspapers, magazine, kindle books, and other materials for other classes.
- Respect your classmates and professor.
- Do not bring visitors to class without express permission. We are limited in our seats.
- If you have to step out to the restroom be sure to do so quietly.
- Do not bring attention to yourself.
- No use of profanity in class or online.
- Respect and tolerance for all views shared among us all. Let's learn from each other.
- Attendance is expected. Given nature of class, you can only miss one class, whether excused or unexcused. Otherwise, you will receive an F as final grade if you miss more than one class. For any excused absence, documentation will be required.
- I will be taking attendance at beginning of class. It is imperative that you be present and on-time.
- If you are late to class you must inform me at end of class or you will be counted as absent.
- If you are more than fifteen minutes late to my class, then you will be counted as absent.
- If you are gone more than 15 minutes from class, then you will be counted as absent.
- For every three times you are tardy to class (under 15 minutes), your excessive tardiness will be counted as one absence.

V. HOW TO DO WELL IN THIS COURSE:

- Carefully read assigned work. Proactively bombard your assigned readings with the following questions: why, where, what, when, who, and so what?
- Consider making an outline of the major units of thought in your readings. As you formulate your outline from the reading, ask yourself the following question: "*What do I see?*" The more observations you make, the better your interpretation of the author's position or claim may be. Afterwards ask, "*What does it mean?*"

- After you outline the author's position/claim go back and see what arguments are being provided to support that position or claim. Keep asking yourself, "What is the issue?" Then consider what objections can be raised against that issue, position, or claim. Lastly, what replies can be given to defend the position or claim?
- You should consult with me as often as possible to make sure you are understanding the material. Do not wait until the day before a test to begin studying. This is not the kind of course for which you can cram and expect to do well. Take advantage of the office hours.
- Consider forming study groups to prepare for exams.
- Those who sit front and central statistically do better on their exams.
- Try to read when you are at your best (e.g., if you are a "morning person", then make a way to study philosophy in the morning and not late at night).
- Make sure you are able to contact another student for lecture material in case you happen to miss a class (es).

- Eight Strategies for First-Rate Studying:

Read Thoughtfully
 Read Repeatedly
 Read Patiently
 Read Selectively
 Read Imaginatively
 Read Purposefully
 Read Acquisitively
 Read Telescopically

If you want to improve your reading comprehension skills I would encourage you to purchase Mortimer J. Adler's informative work, *How to Read a Book*.

- 10 maxims I encourage you to inculcate into your life in order to achieve academic success:
 1. Be focused! Your energy, time, and discipline need to be bent on becoming the very best. Focus on what really counts. Do not allow yourself to become diverted by the trivial and unimportant.
 2. Be holistic! Pro-actively make decisions and pursue interests in your daily life that will assist you in obtaining success. Your resources must always be redirected to your goal.
 3. Be undivided! Do not separate one are of your life from another. Pursuing opposing interests may marginalize your success because it divides up your energy, time, resources, and attention.

4. Be determined! Academic progress is rough, ever so time-consuming, and ever so demanding. Meet every demand with a determination for excellence. Learn from your mistakes. Pick yourself up when you fail and press on!
5. Be resilient! Do not give up. You will perhaps fail some time or another during your program. You may even become depressed from the critical feedback you receive from your professors and peers. When those times come, and they do for most if not all, you must pick yourself up again-for accomplishing the goal is worth facing seemingly insurmountable obstacles.
6. Be sacrificial! Purposefully let go of those things that will hinder your success. Willfully discard every hindrance and degenerative influence that will keep you from achieving your goal with a passion for excellence. Routinely examine your life and see what is encouraging or discouraging you from reaching excellence.
7. Be healthy! Realize, as Aristotle states, that one area of your life impacts all other areas, whether intellectual, physical, or moral. Take very tender care of your mind, soul, and body. You need to strive to be holistically healthy-for if you are not mentally, physically, and spiritually healthy, then you may easily become fatigued, develop inner angst, regret, disappointment, and waiver in the completion of your goals. Remember, a good night sleep is one of the best things you can do for yourself.
8. Be supported! Cultivate a network of people who will exhort you to succeed! Develop relationships with peers who are also bent on achieving success.
9. Be excellent! Successful students realize the importance of cultivating a disposition, i.e., an inner character, which desires intellectual and moral excellence. Seek to desire excellence. Aristotle encourages us to do deeds of excellence until excellence becomes habitual in our personhood.
10. Be balanced! Learn how to balance “having fun” with “hard work.” Don’t ignore those opportunities to relax or play hard. In fact, pursue them! But do not allow those opportunities to displace your study opportunities. Remember, learning is pleasurable!

One of the dangers for those who do achieve success is the problem of malnourishment. Successful people may reach their long-term goals, but so many of them starve themselves in the process. Do not so focus on your goals that you miss out on dynamic opportunities that can nourish your person, inform your circumstance, grow your character, and enlarge your world. In other words, do not so focus on the future that you neglect the blessings that are right in front of you.

VI. CLASS SCHEDULE, TOPICS, & ASSIGNED READING:

Depending upon class context, I may alter our readings and topics. Notwithstanding, follow this outline unless otherwise directed by professor. Sometimes I may ask you to re-read certain chapters or portions from required readings or articles.

D2L is capable of assessing whether you engage your online work, how long you engage, and how often you even log in. I will be monitoring your progress each week on Brightspace D2L. Thus, failure to qualitatively engage your weekly content, not meeting the objectives for each week could result in an overall grade level reduction at the end of the semester. Therefore, it behooves you to make sure you take the opportunity to engage the weekly material on D2L. Aim for 90%-100% engagement for no penalty.

“When you look into an abyss, the abyss also looks into you.”
~Friedrich Nietzsche

Class meeting	Topic	I will be introducing you to some important ideas from the following books and authors:	Reading Assignment
21 January	Introduction to Class: What is Philosophy? What is a worldview? 7 fold criteria for analysis		<i>Power of Ideas:</i> Chapters 1-2 Thinking with Excellence, chapters 3-5
28 January	Presocratic Philosophy	<i>Plato’s Republic</i> <i>Presocratic Philosophy</i>	<i>Power of Ideas,</i> <i>Chapters 3-4</i> <i>Thinking with Excellence,</i> <i>chapters</i>
4 February	Metaphysics & Epistemology: Ancient (Plato; Aristotle), Medieval (Plotinus; St. Augustine; St. Aquinas)	<i>Plato’s Republic</i>	<i>Power of Ideas,</i> Chapters 5-6
11 February	Metaphysics & Epistemology continued: Stoicism, Epicureanism, Skepticism, & Neo-Platonism	Descartes’ <i>Meditations</i>	Power of Ideas, Chapters 7-9. Review chapters 1-9 for mid-term exam

	Berkeley; Leibniz; Spinoza; Locke; Hume; Kant; Reid		
18 February	Metaphysics & Epistemology Continues	American Philosophy	Catch up on reading
25 February	Introduction to Continental Philosophy Class on D2L	D2L	Review chapters 1-9 for mid-term exam in <i>Power of Ideas, Thinking With Excellence</i> : Chapters, 3-8, 11-12.
March 3	First Exam Essay due by 11:59 PM Class on D2L	D2L	
March 10	SPRING BREAK		
March 17	Introduction to Ethics: Virtue, Deontological, & Consequential Ethics: Consequential Ethics; Utilitarianism (Jeremy Bentham; John Stuart Mill); Egoism of Ayn Rand; Relativism; Ethics of Care vs. Ethics of Justice (Carol Gilligan)	<i>Nicomachean Ethics</i>	<i>Power of Ideas, chapter 10</i> Continue reading <i>Thinking</i> Selection 10:6: Utilitarianism (beginning on pg. 299) Selection 10.7 Friedrich Nietzsche: <i>Beyond Good and Evil</i> (beginning on pg. 301).
24 March	Ethics Continued		<i>Re-read Power of Ideas, Chapter 10</i>
31 March	Continuation of Ethics Existentialism/ Nihilism	Augustine Pascal Kierkegaard Camus Sartre Jaspers Heidegger Nietzsche	<i>Power of Ideas,</i> chapter 11
5 April	Exam 2: Descartes to Ayn Rand's Objectivism by 11:59 PM	D2L	
14 April	Introduction to Philosophy of Religion:	Thomas Aquinas' <i>Five Ways</i> ; St. Augustine Anselm	Chapter 13 of <i>Power of Ideas</i>

	Existence of God: Arguments; Evidences; Existential; Religious Experience	Descartes Leibniz Pascal C.S. Lewis William Lane Craig Alvin Plantinga	Read selection 13.2 <i>Summa Theologica</i> by St. Thomas Aquinas Start reading <i>Amusing Ourselves to Death</i> by Neil Postman
19 April	Extra Credit Video Analysis Paper Due by 11:59 PM	D2L	
21 April	Problem of Evil: Moral Evil: Natural Evil: God as Origin of Evil; Natural Evil; Pointless Evil		Re-read <i>Power of Ideas</i> , <i>chapter 13</i> Continue reading <i>Amusing Ourselves to Death</i> by Neil Postman
26 April	Epistemology Paper due by 11:59 PM	D2L	
28 April	Problem of Miracles: ----- Introduction to Aesthetics Introduction to Aesthetics: Historical Survey: From Plato to Kuspit Read and discuss“ Aesthetic Universals” by Denis Dutton Aesthetics continued: Objective/subjective beauty; aesthetic value; aesthetic	<i>David Hume</i> From Plato to Kuspit John Dewey’s <i>Art as Experience</i>	Read “Aesthetic Universals” by Denis Dutton Make sure you finish <i>Amusing Ourselves to Death</i> by Neil Postman Re-read <i>Power of Ideas</i> , chapter 9, pages 206-208 on Pragmatism <i>Power of Ideas: pages 566- 572 on “What is Art? And Related Problems in Aesthetics”</i>

	experience		
3 May	Non-Cumulative Third Exam Existentialism to Aesthetics	D2L	

VII. STUDENT ETHICS AND OTHER POLICY INFORMATION

- A. Topics, Assignments, Tests, Reading Materials, and Office Hours are subject to change per professor’s discretion.
- B. Student Ethics and Other Policy Information can be found at <http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/>
- C. Class Attendance and Excused Absence: Policy 6.7:
 - 1. Given nature of class, only one absence is allowed, whether excused or unexcused. Official documentation will be required for excused absence.
 - 2. Regular, punctual attendance, documented participation, and, if indicated in the syllabus, submission of completed assignments are expected at all classes, laboratories, and other activities for which the student is registered.
 - 3. Based on university policy, failure of students to adhere to these requirements shall influence the course grade, financial assistance, and/or enrollment status. The instructor shall maintain an accurate record of each student’s attendance and participation as well as note this information in required reports (including the first 12 day attendance report) and in determining final grades.

4. Students may be excused from attendance for reasons such as health, family emergencies, or student participation in approved university-sponsored events. However, students are responsible for notifying their instructors in advance, when possible, for excusable absences.
5. Whether absences are excused or unexcused, a student is still responsible for all course content and assignments. Students with accepted excuses may be permitted to make up work for up to three weeks of absences during a semester or one week of a summer term, depending on the nature of the missed work. Make-up work must be completed as soon as possible after returning from an absence.

D. Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities: Policy 6.1 and 6.6:

To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 936-468-3004 as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to <http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/>

E. Student Academic Dishonesty: Policy 4.1:

Abiding by university policy on academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members must promote the components of academic integrity in their instruction, and course syllabi are required to provide information about penalties for cheating and plagiarism, as well as the appeal process.

F. Definition of Academic Dishonesty:

1. Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes, but is not limited to: using or attempting to use unauthorized materials on any class assignment or exam; falsifying or inventing of any information, including citations, on an assignment; helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism.
2. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were one's own. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:
 - a. submitting an assignment as one's own work when it is at least partly the work of another person;
 - b. submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from the Internet or another source;

- c. incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper or presentation without giving the author credit.

G. Penalties for Academic Dishonesty:

- 1. Penalties may include, but are not limited to, reprimand, no credit for the assignment or exam, re-submission of the work, make-up exam, failure of the course, or expulsion from the university.

H. Student Appeals:

- 1. A student who wishes to appeal decisions related to academic dishonesty should follow procedures outlined in Academic Appeals by Students (6.3).

I. Withheld Grades: Policy 5.5:

At the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic unit head, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F, except as allowed through policy [i.e., Active Military Service (6.14)]. If students register for the same course in future semesters, the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

J. Student Code of Conduct: Policy 10.4:

Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor's ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program. Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This policy applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the iCare: Early Alert Program at SFA. Information regarding the iCare program is found at <http://www.sfasu.edu/judicial/earlyalert.asp> or call the office at 936-468-2703.

K. PHIL: 153: Typically meets three times each week (Monday/Wednesday/Friday) in 50-minute segments for 15 weeks, and also meets for a 2.5-hour final examination. Students have significant weekly reading assignments, and typically complete multiple exams, a final exam, and epistemology essay and discussion work. These activities average a minimum of 6 hours of work per week to prepare outside of classroom hours. Online (and hybrid) version of Introduction to Philosophy contains

extensive reading and written content which includes the same information students in a face-to-face lecture course receive. Students engage in online modules for at least three hours per week. Students typically complete four discussion posts, multiple quizzes, four essays in addition to regular homework assignments. For every hour engaging with content, students spend at least two hours completing associated activities and assessments.

“Sometimes the questions are complicated and the answers are simple.”

~ Dr. Seuss