

Course Syllabus



Course	PHIL 1301-002
Course Title	Introduction to Philosophy
Instructor	Laura Campos de González
Term	Fall 2023
Meetings	TR 2:30pm - 3:45pm in HH 2.706

Instructor Contact Information

Office Location	JO 5.109
Email Address	laura.campos@utdallas.edu
Office Hours	TR 1:00pm-2:00pm (in-person)/By appointment (virtual)

Pre-requisites: None.

Course Description

This course will introduce you to key questions and conversations in the history of world philosophy. Our class will survey Ancient Greek, Chinese, Buddhist, Medieval Christian, and contemporary thinkers in order to meditate upon the following questions: How do we embark upon the path to knowing about ourselves and our world? What can I know and what (if any) are the limits of my knowledge? How is knowledge of the world also self-knowledge? How have these questions, the method of asking them, and their answers changed across time and place? This course investigates the different ways in which the pursuit of wisdom is also a mode of self-examination that can help us understand our way of being in the world, teach us the limits of our capacities, and inform us about the responsibilities we have to others and the world.

Learning Outcomes

1. Obtain familiarity with the history of philosophy.
2. Develop proficiency in reading, debating, and interpreting crucial texts within the philosophical tradition.
3. Develop the ability to understand, interpret, and critically engage philosophical texts, ideas, and arguments.
4. Develop the ability to formulate and defend philosophical ideas and concepts in class discussions.

Required Texts: All required materials will be distributed via eLearning. Please print out these readings and bring them to class.

Assignments & Grade Breakdown

1. **In-Class Discussion** – 20%
Respectful dialogue is the cornerstone of fruitful philosophical activity. In-class participation is expected to be ongoing and should be based on course readings and themes.
Attendance will not be taken in class. However, you must be present to participate in discussion, so please contact me if you will miss class due to a university-approved excuse.
2. **In-Class Reflection Responses** – 30%
Five times throughout the semester, you will complete in-class, handwritten responses to prompts given in class. Each completed assignment will be 1 page long (college-ruled notebook paper will be provided) and you will be given 30 minutes to complete the assignment. The prompts will ask you to synthesize and/or interpret the material read during the previous 2-3 weeks.

3. **Proposal** for Final Paper – 10%
4. **Peer Review** of Proposal– 10%
5. **Final Paper** – 30%

Late Work Policy

Late work may be graded for full credit only with university-approved documentation unless you have made arrangements beforehand. Unexcused late work will be docked a half-letter-grade per day.

Extra Credit Opportunities

You can earn a maximum of 4 points of extra credit. There are 3 options to earn extra credit and each completed activity is worth 2 points each. See "Extra Credit Instructions" on eLearning for details.

1. **Writing Center Visit (Final Paper)**
2. **Office Hours Check-In**
3. **Media Analyses**

Grading Policy and Criteria

A	94-100	C+	77-79.99	A = excellent and outstanding work
A-	90-93.99	C	73-76.99	B = very good work
B+	87-89.99	C-	70-72.99	C = satisfactory work
B	83-86.99	D	60-69.99	D & F = unsatisfactory work
B-	80-82.99	F	0-59.99	

Comet Creed

“As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do.”

Following the commitment to honesty and integrity found in UTD’s Comet Creed, the expectation for this course is that students will engage in cordial, polite, independent, and original scholarly thought and expression. Neither disrespect for others nor plagiarism (including the use of AI-generated content) will be tolerated.

If you are concerned that your use of sources and/or AI might result in plagiarism, please come meet with me and I would be more than happy to discuss any concerns you might have.

Any student who decides to submit plagiarized work for this course will receive an F on the assignment and will be reported to the UTD Office of Community Standards and Conduct for further disciplinary sanctions. For more information on UTD’s policy regarding academic dishonesty, see <https://conduct.utdallas.edu/dishonesty/>.

Academic Support Resources

We all learn in different ways. **I encourage you to talk to me as soon as you can about your individual learning needs so we can find a way to accommodate you.** This is best done early in the term. Our conversation will remain confidential and I will do all I can to support you. According to UTD policy, a student must register with Student AccessAbility for an accommodation to be officially considered. For further information, please see <https://accessibility.utdallas.edu>.

In addition to contacting me, please familiarize yourself with the various resources that UT Dallas provides to ensure your academic success: <https://oisds.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies/#academic-support-resources>.

Office Hours & Communication

The purpose of **office hours** is to discuss things that are appropriate for a one-on-one conversation, such as: accommodations, grades, class progress, course material, feedback, ideas for your final paper, personal topics that may be affecting your work in class, and other concerns.

I strive to treat all students with the utmost respect, maturity, professionalism, and care both inside and outside the classroom. I expect you to do the same. If you fail to adhere to this standard, I reserve the right to restrict all future communication to email correspondence and/or to have you removed from the class roster and/or to lower your final grade up to and including a grade of “F”.

All communication to the instructor should be written in a respectful manner and should concern questions that have not already been answered in class or in the syllabus. Questions suited for longer philosophical discussion are best answered in office hours. In general, I do not engage in professional communication during weekends or holidays.

In compliance with FERPA, **I cannot explicitly discuss your grades via written electronic communication.** We can discuss your grades in office hours. You can also calculate your grade using this calculator website: <https://www.rapidtables.com/calc/grade/grade-calculator.html>

Course Schedule

Week 1 – 8/22 & 8/24 [**Last day to add/swap is 8/28**]

- Audre Lorde, “Uses of the Erotic”

Week 2 – 8/29 & 8/31

- María Lugones, “Playfulness, 'World'-Travelling, and Loving Perception”

Week 3 – 9/5 & 9/7

- Plato, Selection from *Phaedo*
- **Reflection Response #1** – In-class on 9/7

Week 4 – 9/12 & 9/14

- Selection from *Early Buddhist Discourses*

Week 5 – 9/19 & 9/21

- Julian of Norwich, “Short Text” from *Showings*
- **Reflection Response #2** – In-class on 9/21

Week 6 – 9/26 & 9/28

- Immanuel Kant, “What is Enlightenment?”
- -----, “On a Supposed Right to Lie from Philanthropy”

Week 7 – 10/3 & 10/5

- Friedrich Nietzsche, “On Truth and Lying in a Nonmoral Sense”
- **Reflection Response #3** – In-class on 10/5

Week 8 – 10/10 & 10/12

- Zhuangzi, Selection from *The Complete Writings*
- **Extra Credit Deadline #1** – Due in class on 10/12

Week 9 – 10/17 & 10/19

- Michel Foucault, “Technologies of the Self”
- **Reflection Response #4** – In-class on 10/19

Week 10 – 10/24 & 10/26

- Georges Bataille, Selection from *The Accursed Share*

Week 11 – 10/31 & 11/2

- Hélène Cixous, “The Laugh of the Medusa”
- **Reflection Response #5**– In-class on 11/2

Week 12 – 11/7 & 11/9

- Gloria Anzaldúa, Selection from *The Gloria Anzaldúa Reader*

Week 13 – 11/14 & 11/16

- Sara Ahmed, “Happy Objects”

Final Paper Proposal due by Friday, 11/17 11:59pm

Week 14 – **No classes: Fall Break and Thanksgiving Holidays – 11/20-11/26**

Week 15 – 11/28 & 11/30

- Byung-Chul Han, *The Burnout Society*

Peer Review of Proposal due by Wednesday, 11/29 11:59pm

Week 16 – 12/5 & 12/7

- Byung-Chul Han, *The Burnout Society* (cont’d)
- **Extra Credit Deadline #2** – In-class on 12/7

Final Paper due by Friday, 12/15 11:59pm

Note: The syllabus is designed to meet the course objectives and may change at the instructor's discretion. Any changes will be communicated in class and/or via email and an updated syllabus will be provided.