

University of Houston-Downtown

Course Prefix, Number, and Title: PHIL 1301 Introduction to Philosophy

Credits/Lecture/Lab Hours: 3/3/0

Foundational Component Area: Language, Philosophy and Culture

Prerequisites: Credit or enrollment in ENG 1301.

Co-requisites: None

Course Description: Teaches student how to think philosophically about basic issues about human nature and the limits of human knowledge, freedom and determinism, morality and responsibility, the role of science, technology, work and religion in their lives. (PHIL 1301)

TCCNS Number:

Demonstration of Core Objectives within the Course:

Assigned Core Objective	Learning Outcome Students will be able to:	Instructional strategy or content used to achieve the outcome*	Method by which students' mastery of this outcome will be evaluated
Critical Thinking Communication Social Responsibility	Describe how ideas, values, beliefs and other aspects of culture express and affect human experience.	Reading and discussion (oral and written) of the history of philosophy as it relates to culture	At least 6 pages of writing outside of class
Critical Thinking Communication Social Responsibility	Analyze fundamental ideas that foster intellectual and aesthetic creation across human cultures.	Reading, discussion and criticism of key texts from the history of philosophy.	Oral presentation or structured discussion (or other form of assessable oral communication) and 6 pages of writing outside of class
Critical Thinking Communication	Evaluate assumptions, concepts, and language to develop defensible conclusions based on analysis of information relevant to course content.	Verbal argumentation, visual representation of argumentation, written argumentation.	At least 6 pages of in-class writing and 6 pages of writing outside of class
Critical Thinking Communication	Synthesize and deliver well-constructed analyses and arguments about course content using multiple modalities (including written, oral, and visual formats).	In class debate, short presentations, short writing assignments, written essay questions	Oral presentation or structured discussion (or other form of assessable oral communication), 4 pages of in-class writing and 6 pages of writing outside of class

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Social Responsibility Personal Responsibility	Identify ethical dimensions of behavior and language use in different cultural contexts.	Reading and discussion of the philosophical ethics. Respectful , in-class debate with classmates with differing views.	At least 6 pages of in-class writing and 6 pages of writing outside of class
Social Responsibility Personal Responsibility	Connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making through the analysis of ethical dilemmas explored through literature, philosophical, or intercultural texts.	Reading and discussion of philosophical ethics and related case studies.	At least 6 pages of in-class writing and 6 pages of writing outside of class

Additional Course Outcomes:

After completing this course students will be able to:

- Read and interrogate philosophy texts
- Construct and analyze philosophical arguments
- Explain central ideas from the history of Western philosophy
- Think through the perspectives of others
- Coherently articulate views verbally and in written form
- Engage in respectful debate with others

Course Outline:

- **First Day** - Discussion: What is philosophy? What is wisdom? How is it attained? Where can I find it? Who is Socrates?...
- Plato, *Apology* in *Five Dialogues*
- Plato, “Allegory of the Cave” (Blackboard Vista)
- Plato, *Crito* in *Five Dialogues*
- Plato, *Symposium*
- **Commentary 1 due**
- Rene Descartes, “Meditation One” in *Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy*, starting on page 59.
- Descartes, “Meditation Two”
- 2/21 Descartes, *Meditations* 3, 4, 6.
- Baruch Spinoza, sections from *Ethics* (Blackboard Vista)
- John Stuart Mill, sections from *On Liberty* (Blackboard Vista)
- Review for the midterm
- **Midterm Exam**
- Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, sections from *Reason in History* (Blackboard Vista)
- **Commentary 2 due**
- Karl Marx, *The Communist Manifesto*, part I, pp473-483, and “Working-Class Manchester”, pp579-585 in *The Marx-Engels Reader*
- Marx, “Estranged Labor”, pp70-81; “The Secret of Primitive Accumulation”, etc., pp431-435
- Friedrich Nietzsche, sections to be announced (Blackboard Vista)
- Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*

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- **Commentary 3 due**
- **Last Day of Class - Final Exam**

Grading/Course Content which Demonstrates Student Achievement of Core Objectives:

Grading Scale: 90-100 = A; 89-80 = B; 79-70 = C; 69-60 = D; 59 and below = F

Summary of Course Exams, Quizzes, Assignments and Final	
Written Commentaries	30%
Midterm Exam	30%
Final Exam	30%
Class Preparation, Participation, and Oral Presentation	10%