

Introduction to Philosophy 1301
Spring Session of 2022
Sul Ross State University
SYLLABUS

Professor: Benjamin Barrientes

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307 Lawrence Hall, Office Hours are prior to class (and by appointment)

Class meets in Room 200 of Lawrence Hall

Course Description:

This "Introduction to Philosophy" course examines topics in Western/Eastern Philosophy through the lens of influential thinkers. Your Professor does not presuppose prior experience in philosophy (as we will come to know it) but does affirm Aristotle's first line in his *Metaphysics* that "All humans by nature desire to know."

Course Objectives- upon completion of the course students will be able:

1. To communicate about the various topics that shape the discipline of philosophy;
2. Think critically about the foundations of the Western Philosophical Traditions;
3. Think critically about their own philosophical ideologies;
4. Appreciate and respect the views of their classmates;
5. Through group inquiry participate in a dialogue that started many years ago;
6. Work on reaching a level of logical precision in expressing and writing their ideas.

Texas Domain III Competency 19: The teacher understands and applies critical thinking knowledge and skills to plan, organize/implement instruction, and assess learning.

Texas Domain III Competency 23: The teacher understands and applies knowledge of core concepts of philosophy including ways that individuals and groups achieve their goals through distinct and unique systems and approaches for thought.

Americans with Disability Act Statement:

In order to receive accommodations on exams or assignments, proper documentation must first be provided to the Office of Counseling and Accessibility Services. Students must contact Rebecca Greathouse Wren, LPC-S, SRSU's Accessibility Services Coordinator at 432-837-8203 (please leave a message and she'll get back to you as soon as she can during working hours), or email rebecca.wren@sulross.edu. The office is in The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library in Alpine offers free resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting

the library's website: library.sulross.edu. Off-campus access requires logging in with your LoboID and password. Librarians are a resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email (srsulibrary@sulross.edu), or phone (432-837- 8123). located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall (Suite 112), and the mailing address is P.O. Box C122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas, 79832.

Attendance and Plagiarism Policies:

Each class meeting informs subsequent class meetings. Participation and regular class attendance is the minimal expectation of each student. Please communicate to inform me that you will miss class.

Sul Ross State University has a zero-tolerance policy on cheating, plagiarism, or collusion. Procedures for dealing with these acts are addressed in the Scholastic Dishonesty Policy. Plagiarism is a serious matter; thus, if anyone needs "clarification" please let me know.

Libraries:

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The Southwest Texas Junior College (SWTJC) Libraries at Uvalde, Del Rio, and Eagle Pass offer additional access to library spaces and resources. Del Rio, Eagle Pass, and Uvalde students may also use online resources available through SWTJC website: library.swtjc.edu. The SWTJC Libraries serve as pick-up locations for InterLibrary Loan (ILL) and Document Delivery from the Alpine campus.

Our duty to each other:

The atmosphere in our classroom requires that we are each accountable for what we say and what we do. Please conduct yourself in a manner that demonstrates your observance of the Golden Rule. The University should be a place where we exchange ideas and points of view on a variety of issues. We should all feel comfortable and safe by trusting our atmosphere in order to express our point of view with clarity, precision, and measured language. We will observe a *common* courtesy by not consuming food in class.

*With the advent of email, the communication between teacher and student is better served. I will respond to your communication(s); I expect for you to respond to mine. We must value each other; thus, *communication is vital to your success in this class.*

No Electronic Devices:

Our classroom will resemble a Seminar. Our subject matter is complicated, our reading is dense, our discussions will be lively (and stimulating); thus, it is necessary to omit the trappings (and distractions) of electronic devices during our meetings.

There is ***no required textbook*** for this course (mostly all readings are part of the public domain; you will be furnished with some readings that are not easy to locate online).

Grading

Each student will write 2 critical analysis papers

Critique I: 35% of your grade, **due on 22nd of February 2022;**

Critique II: 35 % of your grade, due on (the last day that the we meet) **27th of April 2022;**

Class Participation: 15% of your grade (this includes any absences);

Philosophy Journal: 15% of your grade (due every Thursday).

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

Philosophy is a difficult discipline. Doing work in Philosophy is necessary (but not sufficient) to develop critical thinking skills and critical writing skills. Our initial working definition for Philosophy is: the human activity of examining questions for which there are no answers.

It is my belief that “words” make a difference. You’ve been doing Philosophy all of your lives; thus, you may want to invest time in getting to know “words” that are utilized in expressing ideas. Doing this will help you read purposefully. You want to acclimate yourself to reading with the idea of improving reading comprehension. Changing your reading habits will enable you: to think critically, examine your ideology, write better, ask interesting questions, and grow as a human being. Thinking, feeling, and engaging in discussion is what human beings *can* do to improve the world. Karl Marx believed that the job of the philosopher was to *change* the world. We will begin our journey with the promise of improving ourselves to serve the world (and the people that occupy it).

Reading for this class is not an option.