

SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY  
Course Syllabus  
Spring 2023

Instructor: Dr. Bernie Cantens  
PHIL 1301 02 Introduction to Philosophy  
MWF 12:00-12:50  
Classroom: Lawrence Hall 201  
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**Text**

*Five Dialogues: Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Meno, and Phaedo. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Translated G. M. A. Grube.*

ISBN-13 978-087220633

*The Elements of Moral Philosophy, James Rachel 7th Edition. McGraw Hill.*

ISBN 978-0-07803824-2

**\* Make sure you bring the text to every class!**

## Course Description

PHIL 1301 (PHIL 1301) Introduction to Philosophy (3-0). An introduction to the field of philosophy and its leading questions in metaphysics, epistemology, philosophy of mind, ethics, social philosophy, existentialism, logic, and aesthetics.

## Relationship of Course to University Mission

A quality education must consider the ability to reflect across the spectrum of disciplines. This task requires skills of analysis of basic concepts and principles, reading and writing skills, and a constructively critical attitude. The study of philosophy is an integral part of a general curriculum that helps students achieve these cognitive skills. In addition, philosophy investigates deep and profound questions about the meaning of life which are essential for a prosperous and fulfilling life.

## Learning Outcomes

The following outcomes are expected of the students who complete this course:

1. Identify and write intelligibly about ultimate questions.
2. Communicate orally and through writing the relevance and importance of ultimate questions for the prosperity of individuals and society.
3. Explain prominent themes in the history of philosophy.

4. Explain ethical, metaphysical, and epistemological concepts, doctrines, and theories.
5. Explain and apply the nature of philosophical inquiry and how it relates to inductive and deductive reasoning.
6. Explain the thoughts and theories of some of the most prominent philosophers in history.
7. Demonstrate the ability to critically evaluate one's own and others' belief about ultimate questions.

## Grading and Assignments

Weekly Review Questions: Due Every Friday (3 points each) – 30 Points

- Week 3 Assignment and Exam – 15 Points  
2 –page reflection paper 5 Points  
Essay exam 10 Points
- Week 6 Assignment and Exam – 15 Points  
2 –page reflection paper 5 Points  
Essay exam 10 points
- Week 10 Assignments and Exam – 15 Points  
2 –page reflection paper 5 Points  
Essay exam 10 points
- Final Exam – 25 Points

## 2-Page reflection paper

Students will complete a philosophical reflection paper on a topic *directly* related to this course and that has been part of the reading assignments and class discussions. The paper should be approximately 2 pages long (or longer), double-spaced and 12-font. The students will be graded according to four criteria: (1) whether the paper has an clear and explicit thesis; (2) whether the paper has an organized and demonstrates a logical flow of ideas; (3) whether there are well constructed and developed arguments and/or critical explanations of philosophical problems and solutions; and (4) whether the writing skills, such as word use, sentence structure, grammar, and punctuation are correct.

## Exams

There will be three exams and one final exam. The three exams are worth 10 points each and the final exam is worth 25 points. The exam will be composed of essays and short answers. It is within the instructor's purview to apply qualitative judgment in determining grades for an assignment or for the course.

## Class Participation

Attendance will be taken every class period and students will be marked down for unexcused absences. Students will lose 1 point for every unexcused absence up to a possible 5 points. Students can make up lost points in unexcused absences by actively participating in class discussions or by attending out-of-class philosophy lectures and events. Unexcused absences included only the following: (1) sickness with a doctors' note, (2) death in the family, or (3) some other extraordinary event.

## Class Dynamic

Class participation is expected of all students enrolled in this course. Questions and class discussions are encouraged as an effective vehicle to motivate students' interest in the subject matter. *If there are few questions and little discussion taking place in the classroom, the professor reserves the right to choose individual students to answer questions or give their view and arguments on a particular issue.* Therefore, careful daily reading of the text and handouts is essential for success in this course.

## Attendance Policy

Attendance is mandatory. Students **must** bring their text and journals to every class! Students will lose 1 point for every unexcused absence up to a possible 5 points. Students can make up lost points in unexcused absences by actively participating in class discussions or attending out-of-class philosophy lectures and events. Unexcused absences include only the following: (1) sickness with a doctors' note, (2) death in the family, or (3) an extraordinary event to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

## Course Requirements

Reading assignments before class is essential to succeed in this course. Students are expected to be ready for class and to write intelligibly in their journals every class period. This means that he or she should read the assigned chapters before the professor introduces it. Class participation, note taking, and discussion are highly encouraged. The study of philosophy does not only consist of memorization; students must also read analytically and reflect critically on the texts and reading assignments. When studying difficult material, it is often necessary to read it several times before a proper understanding is achieved. Do not be disappointed if you do not understand a philosophical reading assignment on your first try.

## Grading/Measures of Evaluations

Review Questions	30 Points
2-Page Reflection Papers	15 Points
Exams	30 Points
Final Exam	25 Points

A=100-90; B 89-80; C79-70; D=69-60; F=<59

## PROGRAM AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>
Week 1 1/18-20	What is Philosophy (Handout)
Week 2 1/23-27	Some Logic (Handout) Review Questions 1 (3-points)
Week 3 1/30-2/3	<b>Assignment and Exam</b>
<b>TOPIC 1</b>	<b>Ancient Greek Philosophy: Socrates and Plato</b>
Week 4 2/6-10	<i>Apology</i> Review Questions 2 (3-points)
Week 5 2/13-17	<i>Crito</i> Review Questions 3 (3-points)
Week 6 2\ 20-24	<b>Assignment and Exam</b>
<b>TOPIC 2</b>	<b>Medieval Philosophy: Augustine and Aquinas</b>
Week 7 2/27-3/3	St Augustine's Confessions Review Questions 4 (3-points)
Week 8 3/6-10	St. Thomas Aquinas Review Questions 5 (3-points)
3/13-17	<b>Spring Break</b>

<b>TOPIC 3</b>	<b>Modern Philosophy: Descartes</b>
Week 9 3/20-24	Descartes: Meditations on First Philosophy Review Questions 6 (3-points)
Week 10 3/27-31	<b>Assignment and Exam</b>
<b>TOPIC 4</b>	<b>Ethics</b>
Week 11 4/3-11	Introduction to Ethics Review Questions 7 (3-points)
Week 12 4/10-14	Relativism and Subjectivism Review Questions 8 (3-points)
Week 13 4/17-21	The Debate Over Utilitarianism Review Questions 9 (3-points)
Week 14 4/14-18	Deontology: Are there Absolute Moral Rules and Kant Respect for Persons Review Questions 10 (3-points)
Week 15 5/1-5	Virtue Ethics Review Questions 11 (3-points)
Week 16 5/8-10	Review
Final Exam	Tuesday, May 16, 2023, 12:30-2:30

PLEASE, as a courtesy to the other students in the class, turn off all phones upon entering class!