

Phil331.01E—History of Philosophy I Fall 2023

Dr. Bill Bolin

Office & Hours: Talbot Hall 324, M 2:00p—4:00p, TTh 3:30p—5:00p, and by appt.

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course, which does not assume any previous study of philosophy, will allow you opportunities to read a number of scholars from the Classical and Medieval periods in order to address these four major divisions in philosophy:

1. Logic and Epistemology—What counts as knowledge? What does it mean to know something? What is evidence of sound reasoning?
2. Axiology—How ought one to live? Why are these people's ethical systems different from those people's? What is beauty?
3. Metaphysics—What does it mean to *be*? What counts as evidence of free will? How can there exist both a benevolent, omnipotent deity and evil in the world?
4. Politics—What actions are permissible? How ought one to govern and to be governed?

No textbooks are required as every assigned text is available for free in digital form. Links to the reading will be provided in the course shell. However, if you prefer hard copy, please see the list of titles and ordering information, also provided in the course shell.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Students will write short response papers and two exams that demonstrate an understanding of established arguments in philosophy.
- Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the interconnectedness of global dynamics (issues, processes, trends, and systems), and this ability will be assessed through a response paper.
- Students will be able to analyze, evaluate, or solve problems when given a set of circumstances, data, texts, or art.
- In written, oral, and/or visual communication, A&M-Commerce students will communicate in a manner appropriate to audience and occasion, with an evident message and organizational structure.
- Students will understand and practice academic honesty.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of societal and/or civic issues.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To acquire an overview of the various approaches to understanding major concepts in the discipline of philosophy.
- to acquire an overview of the various cultural and social influences on thinking about those major concepts.
- to formulate articulate responses to the reading assignments and ensuing discussions.

ASSIGNMENTS

Exams: You'll have a mid-term and a final, each covering roughly half of the semester. These exams will solicit short answers of 3 or 4 sentences, as well as longer, more richly detailed essay responses. These will be in-class exams, and you will need a blue or green exam booklet for each one.

Response papers: In addition, you'll turn in four written responses (300-400 words each) to some of the reading assignments. These responses are not designed to test how well you've read the assigned material. Rather, they serve as opportunities for you to apply important features of each ethical approach to a given current situation. Specific assignments are forthcoming in the course shell.

Quizzes: You'll take six quizzes to test your comprehension of some of the reading. These timed quizzes will be given in class during the first dozen minutes or so and cannot easily be made up. Each quiz will be announced as the semester progresses, so be attentive to their deadlines.

Extra Credit: An extra credit assignment will be available near the end of the semester.

As a rule I do not accept late assignments, so please be attentive to deadlines. If you must miss an upcoming deadline, you will need to contact me to make *prior satisfactory* arrangements for submitting the assignment. Failure to make prior satisfactory arrangements will result in your forfeiting the right to turn in that assignment. An extra credit assignment to be named later will be an opportunity to restore points from a missed assignment or simply to add points to the total grade.

EVALUATION

Assignment Values	Final Grade Ranges
Midterm Exam 50 pts.	A=180--200
Final Exam 50 pts.	B=160--179
Response Papers 40 pts. (4 @ 10 pts. each)	C=140--159
Quizzes 60 pts. (6 @ 10 pts. each)	D=120--139
Extra Credit 10 pts.	F=0--119

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is important for several reasons, but it is especially important for you to keep up with the assignments in this class. The tentative calendar below offers only the most general description of activities; more detail will be provided in class as the semester goes on. If you are absent the day an assignment is due, you must contact me and make satisfactory arrangements for turning in the assignment. In most cases, such arrangements will include your emailing the assignment to me as an attachment by the deadline. Failure to make *prior satisfactory* arrangements will result in your forfeiting the right to turn in that assignment. As per university policy, excessive absences (three weeks' worth) may result in your being dropped from the course.

PLAGIARISM/ACADEMIC DISHONESTY STATEMENT

Instructors in the Department of Literature and Languages do not tolerate plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. Instructors uphold and support the highest academic standards, and students are expected to do likewise. Penalties for students guilty of academic dishonesty include disciplinary probation, suspension, and expulsion. (Texas A&M University-Commerce Code of Student Conduct 5.b[1,2,3]). Plagiarism on one assignment in this course will result in a failing grade for the course.

TENTATIVE CALENDAR

Aug. 29 Introduction: Intro to course procedures and to Classical and Medieval philosophy; reflective writing

Aug. 31 Logic & Epistemology: Lecture on logic and epistemology, as well as on reading philosophy

Sept. 5 Logic & Epistemology: Plato, *Meno*; lecture on reading arguments

Sept. 7 Logic & Epistemology: Plato, *Meno*, cont.

Sept. 12 Logic & Epistemology: Plato, *Apology*; **RP1 due**

Sept. 14 Logic & Epistemology: Plato, *Apology*, cont.

Sept. 19 Logic & Epistemology: Maimonides, *The Guide of the Perplexed*, Book 1

Sept. 21 Logic & Epistemology: Maimonides, *The Guide of the Perplexed*, Book 1, cont.

Sept. 26 Axiology: Plato, *Euthyphro*

Sept. 28 Axiology: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book II

Oct. 3 Axiology: Epictetus, *The Handbook*; **RP2 due**

Oct. 5 Axiology: Epictetus, *The Handbook*, cont.

Oct. 10 Axiology: Aurelius, *Meditations*

Oct. 12 Axiology: Aurelius, *Meditations*, cont.

Oct. 17 Axiology: Confucius, from [Analects](#); [Confucian ethics](#)

Oct. 19 Axiology: **Midterm Exam**

Oct. 24 Metaphysics: Augustine *On Free Choice of the Will*, Book I

Oct. 26 Metaphysics: Augustine *On Free Choice of the Will*, Book II

Oct. 31 Metaphysics: Augustine *On Free Choice of the Will*, Book III and Reconsiderations; **RP3 due**

Nov. 2 Metaphysics: Plato, *Phaedo*

Nov. 7 Metaphysics: Anselm, *On Freedom of Choice*

Nov. 9 Metaphysics: Buddha, from *Great Discourse on Causation*

Nov. 14 Metaphysics: Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Question 82

Nov. 16 Metaphysics: Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Question 83

Nov. 21 Politics: Plato, *Crito*

Nov. 23 Thanksgiving

Nov. 28 Politics: Plato, *Republic*, Book VIII

Nov. 30 Politics: Plato, *Republic*, Book VIII, continued; Quiz 6; **RP4 due**

Dec. 5 Politics: Pizan, from *Book of the City of Ladies*; **Extra Credit due**

Dec. 7 Politics: Pizan, from *Book of the City of Ladies*, continued

Dec. 12 at 10:30a to 12:30p **Final Exam** ([Final Exam schedule](#))

University Specific Procedures

The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

Pandemic Response Statements

The university's COVID-19 protocol can be found [here](#).

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

YouSeeU Virtual Classroom Requirements:

<https://support.youseeu.com/hc/en-us/articles/115007031107-Basic-System-Requirements>

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

TAMUC Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10GraduateStudentAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library- Room 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url: <http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.