Introduction to Philosophy  
PHI 153.501  
Fall 2018

Dr. Owen M. Smith  
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OFFICE: Paul L. Boynton Building 208B (BO 208B)  
OFFICE HOURS:  
M 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. and 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.  
T 2:30 – 4:30 p.m.  
W 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. and 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.  
R 2:30 – 4:30 p.m.  
and by appointment  
OFFICE PHONE: (936) 468-2367  
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Course Meeting Time and Place: Since this course meets entirely online, no class time or classroom has been assigned to this course.

Prerequisites for Course: None

Course Description:  
An introduction to philosophy through the examination of prominent philosophical problems, topics, and theorists

Required Textbook:  

All students must purchase access to an electronic version of this textbook, which includes interactive content designed to help students comprehend the course material. The electronic version of the textbook may be obtained by purchasing a code at a local textbook store or by contacting the publisher directly at <http://shop.mheducation.com/highered/product.M0078038340.html>.

Course Requirements:  
• Factual Quizzes – 20% of final course grade  
• Thinking Skills Quizzes – 20% of final course grade  
• Unit Discussions – 40% of final course grade  
• Dropbox Assignments – 20% of final course grade
Program Learning Outcomes:
This is a general education core curriculum course and no specific program learning outcomes for this major are addressed in this course.

General Education Core Curriculum:
This course has been selected to be part of Stephen F. Austin State University’s core curriculum. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has identified six objectives for all core courses: Critical Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, Empirical and Quantitative Skills, Teamwork, Personal Responsibility, and Social Responsibility. SFA is committed to the improvement of its general education core curriculum by regular assessment of student performance on these six objectives.

Student Learning Outcomes:
1. Students will acquire factual information concerning the nature of philosophy and the practice of critical thinking.
2. Students will gain an understanding of certain fundamental philosophical problems and historically prominent conceptual systems associated with the philosophical disciplines of philosophy of the person, epistemology, and ethics.
3. Students will come to recognize the importance of basic philosophical issues and distinctions in their own lives, and to analyze and evaluate the choices they make in regard to these issues.

Course Policies
1. Student Conduct: Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (cf. Student Conduct Code, Policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on course requirements may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.

2. Office Hours
a. The instructor is available to meet with students in his office during his regularly scheduled office hours. Students who wish to meet with the instructor in his office during regularly scheduled office hours do not need to make an appointment; the instructor will meet with students on a first come, first served basis.

b. Students who wish to meet with the instructor in his office outside of regularly scheduled office hours must make an appointment with the instructor ahead of time.
c. Students can contact the instructor outside of regularly scheduled office hours by email at the instructor's university email address (omsmith@sfasu.edu), by telephone at the instructor's office phone number (936-468-2367), or by using the email function or the instant message function on the university's Desire2Learn (D2L) website.

3. Getting Started Module – Mandatory Assignments
   a. In order to be eligible to participate in required course activities, all students must complete three (3) mandatory assignments at the beginning of the semester. Each of these assignments may be found in the Getting Started module in the Content Browser section of the D2L site for the course.
   b. The first mandatory assignment is the Syllabus Quiz, which is a short quiz based on the syllabus and designed to make sure students have essential information concerning the course. Students must pass this quiz with a score of 100% and will be permitted to take this quiz as many times as necessary to achieve this score. Students who fail to earn the required score on the Syllabus Quiz will become ineligible to participate in all further course activities, including quizzes, discussions, and dropbox assignments. Although the Syllabus Quiz is a mandatory course assignment, your score on the Syllabus Quiz will NOT factor into your final course grade.
   c. The second mandatory assignment is participation in the Getting Acquainted Exercise, in which students participate in an online discussion designed to familiarize them with the discussion function of the D2L site for the course. Students must make at least four posts to this discussion: an initial post introducing themselves to the rest of the class and at least three posts responding to introductions posted by other students. The Getting Acquainted Exercise is a mandatory course assignment; students who fail to meet the requirements for participation in this exercise will be excluded from the group discussions required for each unit of the course. Although the Getting Acquainted Exercise is a mandatory course assignment, this exercise is ungraded and will NOT factor into your final course grade.
   d. The third mandatory assignment is the Discussion Instructions quiz, which is a short quiz that covers material from the Discussion Instructions document and the Unit Discussion Grading Rubrics document. This quiz is designed to familiarize students with the requirements of the unit discussions as well as strategies for performing well on these course requirements. Students must pass this quiz with a score of 100% and will be permitted to take this quiz as many times as necessary to achieve this score. Students who fail to earn the required score on the Discussion Instructions Quiz will become ineligible to participate in the four unit discussions in the course. Although the Discussion Instructions Quiz is a mandatory course assignment, your score on this quiz will NOT factor into your final course grade.
   e. The deadline for each of these assignments is 11:45 p.m. on Tuesday, September 04, 2018. Any student who wishes an extension on any of these mandatory assignments must submit a written request to the instructor and provide some form of credible written documentation for the reason cited by the student for missing the deadline for the assignment.
4. Factual Quizzes
   a. During each unit of the course, students will be required to take an open-book quiz to demonstrate comprehension of basic information contained in the unit readings and course lectures.
   b. Each Factual Quiz will be worth a total of five (5) points and will typically consist of a combination of multiple-choice and true/false questions.
   c. Quizzes will be available through the Course Tools menu on the D2L website for the course.
   d. Students may attempt each Factual Quiz a maximum of two (2) times. A student’s grade on this quiz will the higher of the two scores earned on these attempts.
   e. At his discretion, the instructor may grant an extension to a student who cannot take a Factual Quiz during the designated period owing to serious illness or another similarly compelling reason. Any student who wishes an extension on this type of quiz must submit a written request to the instructor and provide some form of credible written documentation for the reason cited by the student for missing the deadline for the quiz.

5. Thinking Skills Quizzes
   a. During each unit of the course, students will be required to take an open-book quiz to demonstrate more complex, higher-order thinking skills to demonstrate understanding of the theoretical material contained in the unit readings and course lectures. The questions in the Thinking Skills Quizzes are more difficult than those in the Factual Quizzes, and students are urged to approach them thoughtfully. Before taking these quizzes, students should complete the LearnSmart integrated quizzes in the electronic version of the textbook that is accessed through the Connect website.
   b. Each Thinking Skills Quiz will be worth a total of five (5) points and will typically consist of a combination of multiple-choice and true/false questions.
   c. Quizzes will be available through the Course Tools menu on the D2L website for the course.
   d. Students may attempt each Factual Quiz a maximum of two (2) times. A student’s grade on this quiz will the higher of the two scores earned on these attempts.
   e. At his discretion, the instructor may grant an extension to a student who cannot take a quiz during the designated period owing to serious illness or another similarly compelling reason. Any student who wishes an extension on a quiz must submit a written request to the instructor and provide some form of credible written documentation for the reason cited by the student for missing the deadline for the quiz.
6. **Unit Discussions**
   a. During each unit of the course, students will be required to participate in a group discussion to explore the unit material in greater detail. Specific requirements for participation in group discussions will be addressed during the Getting Started module for the course.
   b. In order to be eligible to participate in the group discussions, each student must (i) pass the Discussion Instructions quiz with a score of 100% and (ii) meet all the requirements for participating in the Getting Acquainted Exercise. Students who have not completed both these requirements will not be permitted to participate in the group discussions. The deadlines for these requirements are 11:45 p.m. on Tuesday, September 04, 2018.
   c. Student participation in group discussions will be graded on a ten (10) point scale. Students will be graded on the clarity, thoughtfulness, and collegiality of their discussion posts as well as on the number and dates of their discussion posts. Since the unit discussions are designed for students to show their understanding of the course material, students should make clear and precise references to relevant material from the textbook and course lectures in their posts to these course requirements.
   d. Discussions will be available through the Course Tools menu on the D2L website for the course.
   e. Because student contributions to group discussions must be made in a timely manner, no extensions will be granted by the instructor regarding participation in a group discussion.

7. **Dropbox Assignments**
   a. During each unit of the course, students will be required to complete one (1) dropbox assignment to demonstrate their understanding of the unit material. Each dropbox assignment will consist of a written essay, typically based on one of the boxed exercises found in the course textbook. Specific instructions and requirements will be provided for each dropbox assignment.
   b. Dropbox assignments will be graded on a five (5) point scale. The rubrics used in grading dropbox assignments are listed in the instructions for each dropbox assignment.
   c. Dropbox assignments must be submitted through the Course Tools menu on the D2L website for the course.
   d. At his discretion, the instructor may grant an extension to a student who cannot complete a dropbox assignment by the designated deadline owing to serious illness or another similarly compelling reason. Any student who wishes an extension on a dropbox assignment must submit a written request to the instructor and provide some form of credible written documentation for the reason cited by the student for missing the deadline for the dropbox assignment.
8. **Accommodations:** To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to <http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

9. **Academic Integrity**

   a. Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

   b. Definition of Academic Dishonesty: Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were one’s own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit. Students should read the complete policy at <http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp/>.

   c. Please note that quoting or closely paraphrasing the textbook or course lecture without citation is plagiarism and will be penalized.

   d. Students are required to be familiar with all items they submit in fulfillment of course requirements. If in the instructor’s opinion, a student does not demonstrate sufficient familiarity with any such item, the instructor may reject the item and assign the student a score of zero (0) for that item.

   e. Students in this course are required to adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity. Any student who commits an act of cheating or plagiarism in this course will be subject to sanctions ranging from a score of zero (0.0) on the course requirement to receiving a final course grade of “F.”

   f. A student who considers the instructor’s determination of academic dishonesty to be in error may take advantage of an appeals process described in full at <http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic-appeals-by-students.pdf/>.>
11. Grades
   a. Midterm Grades: In accordance with university policy, students will be assigned a midterm grade in this course. This grade will be based on all course requirements graded prior to midterm. A student’s midterm grade is no guarantee of the student’s final course grade. A student with a passing midterm grade may still fail the course; a student with a failing midterm grade may still pass the course.
   b. As course requirements are graded, the instructor will publish student grades to the D2L site for the course; if a grade has not been published on the D2L site for the course, the grade is not yet available. The instructor does not generally respond to requests to specify the date by which a particular course requirement will be graded, provide unpublished grades to students, compute current course averages for students, or compute the scores required by students on remaining course requirements to achieve a particular final grade in the course.
   c. Withheld Grades: Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

Tentative Course Schedule:
   • Getting Started Module: August 28 – September 04
   • Unit One - The Philosophical Journey: September 05 – September 22
   • Unit Two - Mind and Body: September 25 – October 13
   • Unit Three - The Search for Knowledge: October 16 – November 10
   • Unit Four - Ethics: November 13 – December 08

THERE IS NO FINAL EXAMINATION IN THIS COURSE.

For a more detailed list of the activities and due dates associated with each unit, refer to the Course Timeline, which is available in the Course Content section of the D2L page for the course.