Stephen F. Austin State University  
Division of Multidisciplinary Programs  
PHIL 1301:501--Introduction to Philosophy  

Summer I 2021

Instructor: Dr. Ben Dixon

Office hours: Wednesdays from 11:30-12:30pm via the D2L pager function & Thursdays from 2:30-3:30 via Zoom (Zoom meetings are by appointment). Zoom link: [https://sfasu.zoom.us/j/92519704545?pwd=aHFgREM3aTcrUGhCNtg0dIFaY2hpQT09](https://sfasu.zoom.us/j/92519704545?pwd=aHFgREM3aTcrUGhCNtg0dIFaY2hpQT09)

Contact information: The best way to contact me is through the "Mail" function within D2L. You can also contact me by regular email at <dixonb@sfasu.edu>.

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


- The book may be purchased from the campus bookstore; it is possible to purchase or rent the book more cheaply from online retailers.

- Be sure to obtain the SIXTH edition of the textbook; other versions will not coordinate with the lectures or assessments.

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.

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Students will acquire factual information concerning the nature
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.

- 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.

Core Curriculum Objectives

PHIL 1301 is part of the university's Core Curriculum. As such, the work assigned in this course recognizes the general goals of the core and the specific objectives attached to those classes designated for inclusion in the Language, Philosophy, and Culture Foundational Component Area as defined by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:

N.B. See the Course Timeline for a more detailed schedule.

May 17-21

Getting Started - Introductory material, Get Acquainted Exercise and Discussion Instructions Quiz.

May 19-28
Unit One: The Philosophical Journey

Lecture and textbook reading assignment on The Philosophical Journey; Unit 1 quizzes, and discussion.

June 1-11
Unit Two: Mind and Body

Lecture and textbook reading assignment on Mind and Body; Unit 2 quizzes, and discussion.
June 14-25
Unit Three: Epistemology - The Search for Knowledge

Lecture and textbook reading assignment on Epistemology; Unit 3 quizzes, and discussion.

June 28-July 9
Unit Four: Ethics

Lecture and textbook reading assignment on Ethics; Unit 4 quizzes, and discussion.

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**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

N.B. The Discussion Instructions quiz and the Get Acquainted Exercise are gateways to the graded unit discussions. They do not count toward your final grade.

- **Factual Quizzes**: 20% of your total grade
  - There will be an open-book quiz during each unit to test your basic comprehension of the readings and lectures. You may attempt each quiz twice.
  
  - Quizzes will be available through the Quizzes tool in D2L. They can also be reached by a link from the Content Browser.
  
  - Each quiz is worth 5% of your final grade.

- **Thinking Skills Quizzes**: 40% of your total grade
  - There will be an additional open-book quiz during each unit to enable you to demonstrate higher-order thinking skills with regard to the readings and lectures. You may attempt each quiz twice.
  
  - Bear in mind that these quizzes are more difficult than the factual quizzes.
  
  - Each Thinking Skills Quiz is worth 10% of your final grade.
• **Discussion Participation**: 40% of your total grade

  ○ Students are required to participate in graded group discussions during each of the four units. Your discussion grade is not solely based on the number of posts but on their clarity, thoughtfulness, and collegiality.

  ○ There are detailed discussion instructions available in the Getting Started module; you will need to pass a quiz on these requirements before you can participate in the first graded discussion.

  ○ Your participation in each discussion is graded on a scale of 0-10. Each one is worth 10% of your final grade.

  ○ The Get Acquainted discussion (in the Getting Started module), while required, is not graded; in addition to offering you an opportunity to get to know your classmates, it also offers you the opportunity to become experienced in using the discussion function in a low-stress situation.

• **A note on deadlines**: Extensions may be available on individual quizzes; contact the instructor if you have an extenuating circumstance. However, because of the group nature of the discussions, extensions are **not** available on discussions.

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**COURSE POLICIES**

**Zoom flexibility** is intended to support students in many situations. Especially now, in our virtual learning space, with many children learning from home and schools facing sudden closures, I expect children to be present during Zoom sessions such as office hours or other meetings from time to time. I also understand that students may be caring for other family members who need assistance, such as siblings or parents.

• **There is no requirement for any student to be visible during Zoom office hours or other Zoom meetings related to the class**, and students do not need to state a reason for preferring to turn off their video.
• Breastfeeding babies, as well as children of all ages are welcome during office hours and other meetings and may be visible on screen even when other students are present. Alternatively, parents and caregivers may turn the camera off when more privacy is required.
• Stepping away momentarily for family care reasons is completely understandable and expected. Simply mute and/or turn off your camera as necessary and rejoin when you are able.
• **Do not take any photos, audio, or video of any children on screen.** Students who do so are subject to censure.
• All students participating in a Zoom session are encouraged to support and respect caregivers as they mute and/or turn off their video and use the chat function as needed.
• Please consider disclosing your student-caregiver status to me. This is the first step in my being able to accommodate any special needs that arise. While I maintain the same high expectations for all students in my classes, I am happy to problem-solve with you in a way that makes you feel supported as you strive for school-caregiver balance.

**SFASU values students’ mental health** and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. SFA provides a variety of resources to support students' mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

**On-campus Resources:**

SFASU Counseling Services

[www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices](http://www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices)

3rd Floor Rusk Building

936-468-2401

SFASU Human Services Counseling Clinic

[www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp)
Crisis Resources:

Burke 24-hour crisis line 1(800) 392-8343
Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1(800) 273-TALK (8255)
Crisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-741

Academic integrity is the 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. According to the SFA policy located at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/4.1-student-academic-dishonesty.pdf,

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 your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work 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.

Please note that quoting or closely paraphrasing the textbook or lecture without citation is plagiarism and will be penalized. Anyone who commits an act of cheating or plagiarism will receive a grade of F for the course. Moreover, the student is required to meet with the instructor to discuss the incident, and a formal Report of
Academic Dishonesty will be submitted to the student's permanent file. If you feel that the instructor's determination of academic dishonesty is in error, there is an appeals process described in full at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/final-course-grade-appeals-by-students-6.3.pdf.

Disability 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/.

Withheld Grades [Semester Grades Policy (A-54)]
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.

Acceptable Student Behavior
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 (see the 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 class projects/exams 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.