

Philosophy 331.01W—History of Philosophy I Spring 2018

Dr. Bill Bolin

Office & Hours: Talbot HL 324 and online, by appt.

Telephone: 903.886.5272

Email: bill.bolin@tamuc.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will allow you many opportunities to explore important philosophical issues that people have pondered from the time of the Ancient Greeks to the time of the European Renaissance and continue to ponder today. These issues include reality, an afterlife, ethics, and consciousness, to name but several. We will read a number of essays that explore different ideas about where those concepts originate and how our thinking about them might determine our actions, even as we gain an understanding of how such thinking developed through the those historical eras. The course is organized so that conflicting, competing, and even complementary theories will be investigated and can be discussed in interesting and civil ways. Assignments include two exams, two short written responses to the reading, and several short quizzes over the reading. One textbook is required:

- Pojman, Louis P, and Lewis Vaughn. *Classics of Philosophy*. 3rd ed. New York: Oxford UP, 2011. ISBN: 9780199737291

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Students will write response papers that demonstrate an understanding important philosophical concepts addressed from antiquity through the European Renaissance and how those concepts might be applied to contemporary issues.
- Students will write two exams that demonstrate understanding of the main schools of thought in Western philosophy from antiquity through the European Renaissance.
- 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 history of philosophy from antiquity to the Renaissance.
- to acquire an overview of the various cultural and social influences on thinking throughout the ages and from different cultures.
- 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 timed open-book, open-note exams will include both objective and essay questions.

Response papers: In addition, you'll turn in two written responses (each one 300-400 words) 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 comment on one or two points in the reading, connecting those points to other reading and/or experiences. Each response paper will be evaluated according to the level of detail in your insightful commentary and sensible connections to other reading and/or experiences or observations. Specific assignments are forthcoming in eCollege.

Quizzes: You'll take eight quizzes to test your comprehension of some of the reading. These timed, open-book quizzes will have objective questions.

Discussion Posts: Several weeks, particularly those that do not have an exam or response paper, will include discussion posts. Your posts will be ungraded but will serve both to check your attendance and to allow you space to offer your informed perspectives regarding the subject at hand.

Almost all deadlines will be on a Sunday night, allowing you a full week to meet each one. **As a rule I do not accept late assignments.** If you miss a deadline because of a technical problem, you will be directed to Tech Support for an explanatory report you can send me before I will decide to accept the assignment.

EVALUATION

Assignment Values	Final Grade Ranges
Midterm Exam 50 pts. Final Exam 50 pts. Response Papers 20 pts. (2@ 10 pts. each) Quizzes 80 pts. (8 @ 10 pts. each)	A=180--200 B=160--179 C=140--159 D=120--139 F=0--119

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance, defined as regularly logging into eCollege and participating, 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. **Note that as a rule I do not accept late assignments,** and exceptions to the rule are quite rare. If you discover you must miss a deadline for an exam or the response paper, you must contact me before the deadline in time to make satisfactory arrangements for submitting the assignment. Failure to make prior satisfactory arrangements will result in your forfeiting the right to submit that assignment. As per university policy, excessive absences (three weeks' worth) could 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 most likely lead to a failing grade for the course.

TENTATIVE CALENDAR (All reading assignments are from the textbook unless otherwise indicated. A few other readings will likely be assigned as the semester progresses.)

Week 1 Jan. 16 Overview: Intro to class; lecture on the meaning(s) of *philosophy*

Week 2 Jan. 22 Chapter 1: Pre-Socratics; **Quiz 1**

Week 3 Jan. 29 Chapter 2: Plato, *Apology* and *Phaedo*

Week 4 Feb.. 5 Chapter 2: Plato, *Republic*; **Quiz 2**

Week 5 Feb. 12 Chapters 4,5, 6, and 7: Epicurus, Epictetus, Sextus Empiricus, and Plotinus;
Quiz 3

Week 6 Feb. 19 Chapter 3: Aristotle, *Categories* and *Physics*; **RP1**

Week 7 Feb. 26 Chapter 3: Aristotle, *Politics*; **Quiz 4**

Week 8 Mar. 5 Midterm Exam

Spring Break Mar. 12

Week 9 Mar. 19 Chapter 8: Augustine; **Quiz 5**

Week 10 Mar. 26 Chapter 9: Boethius; Chapter 10, Anselm and Gaunilo; **Quiz 6**

Week 11 Apr. 2 Chapter 11: Maimonides; **Quiz 7**

Week 12 Apr. 9 Chapter 12: Aquinas; Chapter 13 William of Ockham; **Quiz 8**

Week 13 Apr. 16 Confucius, selections from *The Analects*; **RP2**

Week 14 Apr. 23 [Avicenna](#) and [Averroës](#)

Week 15 Dec. 5 Value of Philosophy: Bertrand Russell, "The Value of Philosophy"
[<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x1mI2OjCus>]; Plato, [from The Republic](#)

Week 16 May 7 Final Exam

Students with Disabilities:

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

StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

***Nondiscrimination notice:** A&M–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:** Campus Concealed Carry - 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 (<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedure/s/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>) and/or consult your event organizer). 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.*

***Tenets of Common Behavior statement:** All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See Student's Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct)*