

Syllabus



PHIL 1301: Introduction to Philosophy (Hybrid)

Course Syllabus: Spring 2025

"Northeast Texas Community College exists to provide personal, dynamic learning experiences empowering students to succeed."

Instructor: Donnie Featherston

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	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Online
Office Hours	by appointment	by appointment	by appointment	by appointment	by appointment	by appointment

This syllabus serves as the documentation for all course policies and requirements, assignments, and instructor/student responsibilities.

Information relative to the delivery of the content contained in this syllabus is subject to change. Should that happen, the student will be notified.

Course Description:

(3 credits) A study of major issues in philosophy and/or the work of major philosophical figures in philosophy. Topics in philosophy may include theories of reality, theories of knowledge, theories of value, and their practical applications.

Prerequisite(s):

none

Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

1. Read, analyze, and critique philosophical texts.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of key concepts, major arguments, problems, and terminology in philosophy.
3. Present logically persuasive arguments both orally and in writing.
4. Demonstrate critical thinking skills in evaluation and application of philosophical concepts to various aspects of life.
5. Evaluate the personal and social responsibilities of living in a diverse world.

Evaluation/Grading Policy:

Course Journal/Short Writing	8 @ 10 pts. = 80 pts.
Quizzes	8 @ 10 pts. = 80 pts.
Final Essay	50 pts.
Final Exam	50 pts.
Total	260 pts.

Numerical grading scale breakdown: At the end of this semester, I will assign you a letter grade based upon the percentage of the total points available for the semester that you have earned. My grading scale is as follows:

A: 100%-90; **B:** 89.9-80; **C:** 79.9-70; **D:** 69.9-60; **F:** 59 or below.

Required Instructional Materials:

All readings are available on Blackboard in .pdf format.

Optional Instructional Materials:

All recommended readings are available on Blackboard in .pdf format:

Minimum Technology Requirements:

All students must have access to a computer, internet, and Blackboard, and should be comfortable using Blackboard for all course materials.

Required Computer Literacy Skills:

Basic proficiency with Blackboard

Course Structure and Overview:

Schedule:

Week 1 (8/25 - 9/1)	Introduction	Short Writing 1 (In-Class) - 10 pts. Quiz 1 Hadot (online) - 10 pts.
Week 2 (9/1-9/8)	Pre-Socratics	Short Writing 2 (In-Class) - 10pts. Quiz 2 PreSocratics (online) - 10 pts.
Week 3 (9/8 - 9/15)	Plato/Aristotle	Short Writing 3 (In-Class) - 10 pts. Short Writing 4 (In-Class) - 10 pts. Quiz 3 Plato (online) - 10 pts. Quiz 4 Aristotle (online) - 10 pts.
Week 4 (9/15 - 9/22)	Descartes	Short Writing 5 (In-Class) - 10 pts. Quiz 5 Descartes (online) -10 pts.
Week 5 (9/22 - 9/29)	Kant	Short Writing 6 (In-Class) - 10 pts. Quiz 6 Kant (online) - 10 pts.

Week 6 (9/29 - 10/6)	Hegel/Marx	Short Writing 7 (In Class) - 10 pts. Short Writing 8 (In Class) - 10 pts. Quiz 7 Marx (online) - 10 pts.
Week 7 (10/6-10/13)	Sartre/Nietzsche	Short Writing 8 (In Class) - 10 pts. Short Writing 9 (In Class) - 10 pts. Quiz 8 Sartre (online) - 10 pts. Quiz 9 Nietzsche (online) - 10 pts.
Week 8 (10/13 - 10/20)	Final Week	Final Exam (In Class) - 50 pts. Final Essay - 10/20 (online) (5:00 PM) - 50 pts.

Readings:

Each module has an associated reading. These readings are assigned at the beginning of each module, and you will find the file (in .pdf format) for that reading within the module itself. (A copy of each reading can also be found in the "Course Readings" link on the course page.) You will need to read the reading in order to complete the quiz within each module.

Quizzes:

After you have read the assigned reading for each module, you will take a short reading quiz. Each reading quiz will be 5-10 questions, multiple choice; its purpose is simply to check that you've done the reading. **Because I know that problems can and do occur, I will drop your lowest quiz score at the end of the semester**—so a bad grade on one quiz due to technical errors will not hurt your grade.

In Class Writings:

During our in class portion of the course we will do a variety of short writings. Each should be a few sentences that answer a question, utilizing your knowledge of the course materials to that point. These are not right or wrong so much as a time and chance for you to express your own ideas and reflection on the philosophical work and ideas we are encountering. I am grading this mostly on if you did them, and to level you contributed a solid idea or two. One sentence that does not really answer the question will not receive credit for the writing.

Final Exam:

At the end of the course we will take a comprehensive final exam in class. This will be limited in length to the time we have in class, and you will be expected to answer questions covering any material covered over the 8-week course.

Final Essay:

The essay will be due at the end of the course. For a full description of the assignment, see the “Final Essay Assignment” folder on the course page. The essay assignment will be your opportunity to apply what you’ve learned and to critically engage with some of the assigned readings. Your essay will be submitted through Blackboard. **Late essays will not be accepted.**

Communications:

During the course, I will check my NTCC email at least once per day; you should expect a response to any emails within 24 hours. NTCC email is the best way to get in touch with me; however, phone calls to my office will also be returned as soon as possible.

Course Policies:

1. Academic honesty is taken very seriously. In a philosophy class, this means that sources used in papers or journals should be cited somehow (MLA style, Chicago style, etc.), and quotations from any text clearly indicated. It also, more importantly, means not taking credit for the work of another. Plagiarism, handing in papers downloaded off of the internet, or any other case of a student handing in something he or she has not written will be grounds for immediate failure of the class, no exceptions. If you have any questions at all, please consult the university’s policy, and/or see me directly: “I didn’t know this wasn’t okay” is not an excuse.
2. **No outside sources are allowed for the essay!** The essay packet, primary texts from the course, class notes, and your thoughts are the only allowable sources. Use of outside sources will result in a zero for the assignment.
3. **The use of AI to generate content for assignments is strictly prohibited.** Because this technology is still new, there is a fair amount of grey area here. However, any questionable cases will be fed to an AI-detection program (<https://www.zerogpt.com/>), which will estimate the likelihood of AI usage. **Any text that is determined to be 70% or more likely to contain AI-generated content will receive a zero**, and there will be no possibility of redoing the assignment. This applies to all discussion board posts, the course journal, and the final essay assignment. Any course journal using AI-generated text will receive a zero for the complete assignment, even if some posts were not composed using AI text generation. Any final essay utilizing AI-generated content will receive a 0, even if some paragraphs are written by the student.

NTCC Academic Honesty/Ethics Statement:

NTCC upholds the highest standards of academic integrity. The college expects all students to engage in their academic pursuits in an honest manner that is beyond reproach using their intellect and resources designated as allowable by the course instructor. Students are responsible for addressing questions about allowable resources with the course instructor. Academic dishonesty such as cheating, plagiarism, and collusion is unacceptable and may result in disciplinary action. This course will follow the NTCC Academic Honesty and Academic Ethics policies stated in the Student Handbook. Refer to the student handbook for more information on these subjects.

ADA Statement:

It is the policy of NTCC to provide reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals who are students with disabilities. This College will adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal educational opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to request accommodations. An appointment can be made with the Academic Advisor/Coordinator of Special Populations located in Student Services and can be reached at 903-434-8264. For more information and to obtain a copy of the Request for Accommodations, please refer to the special population's page on the NTCC website. (<http://www.ntcc.edu/index.php?module=Pagesetter&func=viewpub&tid=111&pid=1>)

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA):

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's educational records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are considered "eligible students." In essence, a parent has no legal right to obtain information concerning the child's college records without the written consent of the student. In compliance with FERPA, information classified as "directory information" maybe released to the general public without the written consent of the student unless the student makes a request in writing. Directory information is defined as:

- the student's name
- permanent address and/or local address
- telephone listing
- dates of attendance