



SOUTH  
PLAINS  
COLLEGE

## *Policy Statement*

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**Instructor: B. Kyle Keltz**

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**Office Hours: By appointment**

**Department: English**

**Campus: Levelland**

**Course Number: Phil 1301-001**

**Course Title: Introduction to Philosophy**

**Semester/Year: Fall 2017**

### **I. DESCRIPTION OF THE COURSE**

This course is a topical introduction to various traditional and contemporary philosophical problems and issues. Topics include being, mind, free will, knowledge, God, evil, ethics, politics, and life's meaning.

### **II. SCOPE/PURPOSE**

Philosophy 1301 introduces students to general philosophical topics that explore various traditional and contemporary philosophical problems and issues. Both historical and current materials will be employed to access the relevance of these issues as they have developed throughout history and are experienced in today's world.

### **III. REQUIRED RESOURCES FOR THE COURSE**

William F. Lawhead. *The Philosophical Journey: An Interactive Approach*. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: McGraw-Hill Education, 2014. ISBN: 978-0078038341

#### **Recommended Text (optional, if book review is chosen)**

Beckwith, Francis J. and Gregory Koukl. *Relativism: Feet Firmly Planted in Mid-Air*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2005. ISBN: 978-0801058066

### **IV. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE COURSE**

1. Students will read assigned chapter before class time, will participate in class discussions of the readings and issues, and will be tested over their understanding of the readings through the administering of examinations.
2. Students will take four in-class examinations including the final examination; these examinations will be graded according to the standards set forth in this policy statement.

3. Students will be required to complete a number of surveys on Blackboard that will help them to determine how their beliefs intersect with various philosophical positions.
4. Students can choose to write a personal philosophical treatise of five to seven pages, written over one of the major topics discussed in class; this paper will be graded according to the standards set forth in this policy statement.
5. Students can choose to write a book review of three to four pages instead of the philosophical treatise, written over the optional text; this paper will be graded according to the standards set forth in this policy statement.

## **V. LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

Upon completion of the course, the student should be able to:

1. understand the distinguishing elements of philosophical movements;
2. understand the major elements of philosophical inquiry that are highlighted by the instructor;
3. apply critical thinking to the study of philosophy;
4. analyze assigned readings and successfully demonstrate this through the four examinations;
5. analyze assigned readings and accurately write a philosophical treatise or book review if desired or needed; and
6. participate in class discussions over the topics and readings.

## **VI. METHODS OF EVALUATION**

Students' work is evaluated by means of A, B, C, D, F: Superior, Good, Average, Poor, and Unacceptable. Numerical grades are assigned for convenience in averaging grades only. All assignments must be completed and turned in on the date due before a student will receive credit for the assignment.

Writing assignments will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

1. accuracy of content;
2. use of the conventions of standard grammar;
3. use of the appropriate method of development for the assignment;
4. use of the principles of unity and coherence; and
5. use of logical, factual arguments to advance the thesis of the assignment.

## VII. GRADING POLICY

Exams: 60% (three in-class exams; lowest exam grade will be dropped)

Other: 10% (Blackboard surveys)

Final: 30% (final two-hour exam; non-comprehensive)

Essays: 10% (five-to-seven pg. Philosophical Treatise or three-to-four pg. Book Review)

## VIII. ABSENCE POLICY

Any student who misses **MORE THAN FOUR** class sessions **SHALL BE DROPPED** with a grade of “X” if the student has a passing grade average at that time. If the student is failing, due to poor work or missing assignments, the student will be given a grade of “F.” In special cases because of extenuating circumstances, a student may miss more than four absences and not be dropped, but the student must immediately notify the instructor of the attendance difficulty and submit proof of those extenuating circumstances, especially if the student already has surpassed the four allowed absences.

“Students are expected to attend all classes in order to be successful in a course. The student will be withdrawn from the course when absences become excessive as defined in the course syllabus” (*SPC General Catalog*, [catalog.southplainscollege.edu](http://catalog.southplainscollege.edu)). Students should consult the *General Catalog* for the college's detailed policy on class attendance and drops & withdrawals.

## IX. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY—PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING

“It is the aim of the faculty of South Plains College to foster a spirit of complete honesty and a high standard of integrity. The attempt of any student to present as his or her own any work which he or she has not honestly performed is regarded by the faculty and administration as a most serious offense and renders the offender liable to serious consequences, possibly suspension” (*SPC General Catalog*).

“Complete honesty is required of the student in the presentation of any and all phases of course work. This applies to quizzes of whatever length as well as to final examinations, to daily reports and to term papers” (*SPC General Catalog*). Students should consult the *General Catalog* on p. 22 for the college's detailed policies on plagiarism and cheating. Failure to comply with these policies will result in an F for the assignment and can result in an F for the course if circumstances warrant.

## X. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities, including but not limited to physical, psychiatric, or learning disabilities, who wish to request accommodations in this class should notify the Disability Services Office early in the semester so that the appropriate arrangements may

be made. In accordance with federal law, a student requesting accommodations must provide acceptable documentation of his/her disability to the Disability Services Office. For more information, call or visit the Disability Services Office at Levelland (Student Health & Wellness Office) 806-716-2577, Reese Center (Building 8) & Lubbock Center 806-716-4675, or Plainview Center (Main Office) 806-716-4302 or 806-296-9611.

## **XI. STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION**

South Plains College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Vice President for Student Affairs, South Plains College -1401 College Avenue, Box 5, Levelland, TX 79336, 806-894-9611

## **XII. STATEMENT OF DIVERSITY**

In this class, the instructor will establish and support an environment that values and nurtures individual and group differences and encourages engagement and interaction. Understanding and respecting multiple experiences and perspectives will serve to challenge and stimulate all of us to learn about others, about the larger world, and about ourselves. By promoting diversity and intellectual exchange, we will not only mirror society as it is, but also model society as it should and can be.

## **XIII. CAMPUS CONCEALED CARRY**

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in South Plains College 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 South Plains College policy, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to the SPC policy at: ([http://www.southplainscollege.edu/human\\_resources/policy\\_procedure/hhc.php](http://www.southplainscollege.edu/human_resources/policy_procedure/hhc.php)). Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all South Plains College campuses. Report violations to the College Police Department at 806-716-2396 or 9-1-1.

#### XIV. CLASS SCHEDULE (Readings/Exams)

| Week | Date               | Topics   | Readings   |
|------|--------------------|--|--|
| 1    | Aug. 29<br>Aug. 31 | Introduction to Course<br>Introduction to Philosophy             | Course Syllabus<br>Chap. 1 Intro to the Philosophical Journey (pp. 1-37)                                       |
| 2    | Sep. 05<br>Sep. 07 | Logic<br>Metaphysics   | Chap. 1 Intro to the Philosophical Journey (pp. 37-47)<br>Chap. 2 The Search for Ultimate Reality (pp.50-66)   |
| 3    | Sep. 12<br>Sep. 14 | Philosophy of Mind - Dualism<br>Philosophy of Mind - Physicalism | Chap. 2 The Search for Ultimate Reality (pp. 67-78)<br>Chap. 2 The Search for Ultimate Reality (pp. 79-111)    |
| 4    | Sep. 19<br>Sep. 21 | Freedom and Determinism  | Chap. 2 The Search for Ultimate Reality(pp. 112-160)<br><b>Exam 1 (Sep. 21)</b>                                |
| 5    | Sep. 26<br>Sep. 28 | Epistemology<br>Epistemological Viewpoints                       | Chap. 3 The Search for Knowledge (pp. 167-188)<br>Chap. 3 The Search for Knowledge (pp. 189-265)               |
| 6    | Oct. 03<br>Oct. 05 | Philosophy of Science<br>Philosophy of Religion                  | Chap. 3 The Search for Knowledge (pp. 291-300)<br>Chap. 4 The Search for God (pp. 310-339)                     |
| 7    | Oct. 10<br>Oct. 12 | Natural Theology<br>Eastern Philosophy of Religion               | Chap. 4 The Search for God (pp. 340-353)<br>Chap. 4 The Search for God (pp. 370-390)                           |
| 8    | Oct. 17<br>Oct. 19 | Catch-up/Review  | <b>Exam 2 (Oct. 19)</b>  |
| 9    | Oct. 24<br>Oct. 26 | Ethics<br>Ethical Relativism/Objectivism                         | Chap. 5 The Search for Ethical Values (pp. 406-420)<br>Chap. 5 The Search for Ethical Values (pp. 421-443)     |
| 10   | Oct. 31<br>Nov. 02 | Ethical Relativism/Objectivism<br>Egoism/Altruism                | Chap. 5 The Search for Ethical Values (pp. 421-443)<br>Chap. 5 The Search for Ethical Values (pp. 443-460)     |
| 11   | Nov. 07<br>Nov. 09 | Applied Ethics<br>Meaning of Life                                | Chap. 5 The Search for Ethical Values (pp. 533-539)<br>Chap. 7 Phil and the Meaning of Life (pp. 636-651)      |
| 12   | Nov. 14<br>Nov. 16 | Death and the Afterlife<br>Religious Relativism                  | Chap. 7 Phil and the Meaning of Life (pp. 636-651)<br>Chap. 7 Phil and the Meaning of Life (pp. 636-651)       |
| 13   | Nov. 21<br>Nov. 23 | Thanksgiving Break   | <b>Exam 3 (Nov. 21)</b><br>No Class*   |
| 14   | Nov. 28<br>Nov. 30 | Political Philosophy<br>Political Philosophy                     | Chap. 6 The Search for the Just Society (pp. 548-552)<br>Chap. 6 The Search for the Just Society (pp. 548-552) |
| 15   | Dec. 05<br>Dec. 07 | Philosophy of Law<br>Review                                      | Chap. 6 The Search for the Just Society (pp. 553-567)<br>Final Exam Review                                     |
| 16   | Dec. 12<br>Dec. 14 | Finals Week  | No Class**<br><b>Final Exam (Dec. 14)***</b><br>Optional Paper Due Last Day of Class (Dec. 14)                 |

\* No class on November 23 for Thanksgiving Break

\*\* No class on December 12 and 14 for Finals Week

\*\*\* **Final exam** is on **December 14** from **8:00am to 10:00am** in the regular classroom.