

Introduction to Philosophy 1301

Summer II, 2020
Department of Political Science and Philosophy

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Office Hours: MTWTF by appointment on Blackboard Collaborate

Required Texts: All the necessary texts (Plato, Spinoza, Bentham & Marx PDFs) will be on Blackboard.

Course Description

The *Introduction to Philosophy* class for the summer session is a pared-down and much reduced version of the full semester class. Philosophy is all about thinking and reflection and it would be impossible to cover all of the material that is typically covered in the full version of the course in only four weeks – so we won't even try to do that. Rather, we will look at an intro and only **THREE** of the sub-disciplines of philosophy: **metaphysics [of God], ethics, and political philosophy**. We will explore these through some of the great set-pieces of Western philosophical history; **Plato's account of the death of Socrates, Spinoza's excommunication from the synagogue, Bentham's prison reform, and Marx's critique of capitalism**. We will spend roughly one week on each of these great moments in Western philosophical history.

READING

You must make an attempt to spend several hours per day doing the readings. The number one reason for poor performance in college philosophy courses is a failure to do the reading. You cannot fake it. Reading philosophy texts is not like reading a newspaper or a novel, one paragraph of philosophy can contain many new ideas. So it can be a real challenge to make sense of philosophy texts without instruction, this is why the **4 collaborate mandatory** sessions are very important for setting your reading on the right track at the beginning of each week. Please make every effort to attend these. I hope these collaborate sessions are not too long, I will use the time to explain some of the context of the week's readings and what you should look out for. I will ask you to switch off your mics until I'm finished, and then we will have a short Q&A for a few mins.

The Class

Because of Covid-19 restrictions this class will be taught entirely online

Assessment

4 mandatory collaborate sessions 10% each

4 Short quizzes 10% each

1 final short paper 20%

The final paper will be assessed

on: Relevance
Accuracy
Comprehension
Effort and Application Seriousness

The Angelo State University Honor Code

Angelo State University expects its students to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic pursuits. Students are responsible for understanding the Academic Honor Code, which is contained in both print and web versions of the [Student Handbook](#). In other words, when you submit your work, you claim that the work is yours. If someone else wrote it for you or you got it from someone else (internet, other student's class...), then you are not the author and thus will get a zero for that assignment. Any idea that is not yours should be properly referenced.

Religious Observances

Every effort will be made to accommodate all forms of religious observance in compliance with ASU OP 10.19. Students who require additional arrangements to be made should make these known in good time in order that arrangements can be made.

Accommodations for Disability

ASU is committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs or activities of the university, or be subjected to discrimination by the university, as provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments of 2008 (ADAAA), and subsequent legislation. The Student Affairs Office is the designated campus department charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing requests for reasonable accommodations based on a disability. It is the student's responsibility to initiate such a request by contacting the Student Affairs Office, Suite 112 of the Houston Harte University Center, at 325-942-2047 (phone) or 325-942-2211 (fax) or by e-mail at studentservices@angelo.edu to begin the process. The Student Affairs Office will establish the particular documentation requirements necessary for the various types of disabilities.

ASU Mission Statement

Angelo State University, a member of the Texas Tech University System, delivers undergraduate and graduate programs in the liberal arts, sciences, and professional disciplines. In a learning-centered environment distinguished by its integration of teaching, research, creative endeavor, service, and co-curricular experiences, ASU prepares students to be *responsible citizens* and to have productive careers.

Title IX at Angelo State University

Angelo State University is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from sex discrimination of any kind. The University prohibits discrimination based on sex, which includes pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, and other types of Sexual Misconduct. Sexual Misconduct is a broad term encompassing all forms of gender-based harassment or discrimination including: sexual assault, sex-based discrimination, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, public indecency, interpersonal violence (domestic violence and/or dating violence), and stalking. As a faculty member, I am a Responsible Employee meaning that I am obligated by law and ASU policy to report any allegations I am notified of to the Office of Title IX Compliance. This is done in order to connect students with resources and options in addressing the allegations reported. As a student, you are encouraged to report any incidents of sexual misconduct directly to ASU's Office of Title IX Compliance and the Director of Title IX Compliance/Title IX Coordinator. You may do so by contacting:

Michelle Boone, J.D.

Director of Title IX Compliance/Title IX Coordinator

Mayer Administration Building, Room 210

325-942-2022

michelle.boone@angelo.edu

***GradingScale**

A-90%Outstanding

B-80Verygood

C-70Satisfactory

D-60Minimumrequired

F-less than 60%

*All course work must be completed for a final grade.

The Course

(I reserve the right to make course changes when necessary)

WEEK 1 (Monday July 6)

Collaborate session 1¹ (Monday, July 6, 11 am)

Short Quiz 1 (Blackboard, July 10, Friday, test available all day),

Plato, *The Trial and Death of Socrates*

Themes: what is the point of doing philosophy? Is there a philosophical method? Is there a specific kind of “Western” philosophical tradition? Should an event that happened 2300 years ago matter to us today? What is the role of philosophy in a free society? These questions begin in Plato’s *Euthyphro*, *Apology*, and *Crito* which tell the story of the trial and death of Socrates.

WEEK 2

Collaborate session 2 (Monday, July 13, 11 am)

Short Quiz 2 (Blackboard, July 17, Friday, test will be available all day)

¹ If you cannot attend the collaborate session you will have the opportunity for a make-up session.

Spinoza's excommunication from the synagogue

Themes: philosophy and the metaphysics of religion. What is the appropriate relationship between philosophy and religion? What is a heretic? What is the role of the heretic or apostate in society? What are the great metaphysical problems of religion? Many think Spinoza had all the answers.

WEEK 3

Collaborate session 3 (Monday, July 20, 11 am)

Short Quiz 3 (Blackboard, Friday, July 24, test will be available all day)

Bentham's Prison Reform

Themes: what can moral philosophy do to address social problems? One example is Bentham's attempt to use moral philosophy or ethics, in his case utilitarianism, to address the criminal justice system. Bentham even proposed that philosophy could be used to develop prison architecture; his answer was the Panopticon.

WEEK 4

Collaborate session 4 (Monday, July 27, 11 am)

Short Quiz 4 (Blackboard, Friday, July 31, test will be available all day)

Marx's Communist Manifesto

Themes: forget everything you have heard about 'Marxism,' Marx had virtually nothing to say about communism, but he did write millions of words about capitalism and globalization? Marx added many new ideas to the modern language of political philosophy; alienation, commodity fetishism, and capitalist contradictions such as his doctrine of monopoly capitalism, colonialism and many others.

Final Paper: must be emailed to me by Wednesday, August 5, 12 noon