

Introduction to Philosophy

CRN: 1301

Instructor: Patricia Thornton

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Office Hours: TTH 7:30 am – 8:15 am

Required Texts

Plato, Republic
ISBN: 9780872207370

All other course texts will be provided electronically on D2L.

Course Description

3 Credits (3 hrs. lec.) 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. (3801015112)
Prerequisite: College Level Readiness in Reading AND Writing

This course provides an introduction to major and minor branches of philosophy through specific topics. Covered branches/topics include: Epistemology (Cartesian skepticism and its modern-day significance, normative epistemology), Metaphysics (theories of personal identity), Ethics and Applied Ethics (Kantian and Utilitarian approaches to world poverty), Social Philosophy (social duties and immigration), the Meaning of Life (Tolstoy and Nagel), and the History of Philosophy (Descartes and Plato).

Course Learning Outcomes

- Read and understand a philosophical text
- Construct and analyze a philosophical text
- Do basic secondary research in philosophy
- Write a well-reasoned essay
- A general knowledge of the history of philosophy
- Think through perspectives other than their own
- Communicate and exchange ideas verbally

Major Assignments

You will write ~ 5 pages (1650-1800 words) for the paper. In the paper you will either argue against or defend a position. All papers will be submitted through D2L. More information on the paper will be given during the semester.



The test and final will consist of essay or a combination of essay/short answer questions. Both will be completed in class and will be open note. You will have the option of completing the test and final on your personal computer (via D2L) or in a Blue/Greenbook.

A small portion of your grade may be determined by pop quizzes; this will be fully determined by class participation. If class participation is strong, no pop quizzes will be given, and everyone will receive full credit for the portion allotted to pop quizzes. If class participation is weak, pop quizzes will be given as an alternative to gauging engagement with the readings. See the section titled “Other Expectations,” below.

Formatting

Formatting requirements for the paper: 12pt font, Times New Roman, double-spaced. I will check for deviations from standard formatting, such as, but not limited to, large margins, extra spaces, and unnecessary or repetitive introductory information (name, date, course, etc., should only be listed once and not double-spaced). I will mark down your paper grade for any major formatting deviations. In addition, you will need to include proper citations (I do not care which citation style you use, as long as it is consistent throughout).

If you represent another’s words or work as your own, you are plagiarizing. If you plagiarize on any work you complete for the course, you will fail. This is why it is crucial you cite properly when you use outside resources.

Submission deadlines and late work

The paper must be submitted on D2L at least 1 hour before class begins on the day it is due. Late submissions will be penalized. If you have difficulties accessing/submitting to D2L, I will happily accept submissions via email *before* the assigned due date. If it is turned in late via email, it will be penalized the same as regular submissions. I highly encourage early submission to avoid any last-minute technical difficulties.

Grading Information

Final grades will be determined according to the following (%= percentage of your final grade each assignment is worth):

Test: 30%
Paper: 30%
Final: 35%
Pop quizzes (dependent on participation): 5%

Although not *required* for full credit in the course (and so cannot hurt your final grade), I will take into account the following in deciding if a raise to your final grade is warranted:

- (1) Regular attendance (there is one exception to this – see the section titled “Statement on attendance” below)
- (2) Thoughtful, regular, and on-topic participation
- (3) Improvement throughout the course

That is, (1)-(3), if met, can potentially (and almost certainly will) help your final grade. Consider these your extra credit opportunities.

Other Expectations

You are to come to class fully prepared. This means you have completed the assigned reading before class. This also means you are prepared to answer questions on the assigned readings. If I suspect that a majority of students have not completed the assigned reading (i.e., if no one answers questions during class), then I may resort to pop quizzes as an alternative to gauging student engagement with the readings.

Personal attacks directed toward other students will not be tolerated.

Be respectful of your fellow classmates. I will also take any measures necessary to eliminate distractions and disruptions. Do not bring children to class. I may ask you to take your delicious-smelling food elsewhere (please try to eat outside of class). If you are expecting an important call during class, sit toward the back of the room so you can leave without disrupting others. If you know you cannot resist checking Facebook or other content unrelated to class material, you, too, should sit at the back. If you are actively listening to music or watching videos during class, I will ask you to leave.

Calendar of topics / assignments

1/15 – Syllabus/Introduction

1/17 – Clifford, “The Ethics of Belief”

1/22 – James, “The Will to Believe”

1/24 – Descartes, Med 1

1/29 – Grau, “Bad Dreams, Evil Demons, and the Experience Machine”

1/31 – Parfit, “Personal Identity”

2/5 – Movie – Memento

2/7 – Movie – Memento (continued)

2/12 – Tolstoy, *Confession*, IV-IX

2/14 – Nagel, “The Absurd”

2/19 – Catch up day/Review for Test

2/21 – Test

2/26 – Singer, “Famine, Affluence, and Morality”

2/28 – O’Neill, “Kantian Approaches to Some Famine Problems”

3/5 – Held, *The Ethics of Care*, Ch. 1

3/7 – World Poverty wrap up, no new reading

3/12 – Spring break, no class

3/14 – Spring break, no class

3/19 – Miller, “Immigration: The Case for Limits”

3/21 – Kukathas, “The Case for Open Borders”

3/26 – Mendoza, “Discrimination and the Presumptive Rights of Immigrants”

3/38 – Immigration wrap up, no new reading ***Paper assigned***

4/2 – Republic, Book 1&2

4/4 – Republic, Book 3

4/9 – Republic, Book 4

4/11 – Republic, Book 5 ***Paper due***

4/16 – Republic, Book 6

4/18 – Republic, Book 7

4/23 – Republic, Book 8

4/25 – Republic, Book 9

4/30 – Wrap up Republic

5/2 – Review for final

Final Exam Times

8:30 class: 5/7 – 8:00-9:50am

10:00 class: 5/9 – 9:30-11:20am

Statement on attendance

Attendance will be taken at every class meeting via a sign-in sheet. While there are no formal attendance requirements for the completion of this course (except for that listed below), your final grade may be improved by attending class regularly.

Mobile Device Policy

If you own a mobile device (such as a laptop, a tablet, or a smartphone), you may use it provided that you are accessing appropriate course content (online text, D2L, etc.) or taking notes. Please see that it is in silent mode during class time.

Other Policies

Withdrawal Policy

Withdrawal from the course after the official day of record and prior to the [“W” Day](#) will result in a final grade of “W” on your transcript. You are strongly encouraged to meet with your professor prior to withdrawing from a course to consider all options. No credit will be awarded for a course earning a “W.” If you stop attending class, you must withdraw at the registration office prior to “W” day. If you stop attending class and do not officially withdraw, you will receive whatever grade is calculated based on your completion rate, which could result in an “F” for the course.

Six Drop Rule

Students who enrolled in Texas public institutions of higher education as first-time college students during the Fall 2007 term or later are subject to section 51.907 of the Texas Education Code, which states that an institution of higher education may not permit a student to drop (withdraw with a grade of “W”) from more than six courses, including courses that a transfer student has previously dropped at other Texas public institutions of higher education that have already been counted against their [six drop limit](#).

Students should fully understand this drop limit before they drop any course. Please see a Counselor or Advisor in our Student Services area for additional information and assistance. **Dropping a transitional and/or ESOL course does not count against the six drop limit.**

Evaluation of Instruction

Lone Star College-CyFair is committed to acting intentionally about student success. As part of our institutional effectiveness efforts, our instructors are assessed in several ways. For the continuous improvement of our instruction, you are encouraged to provide input for each course you take each semester using the Course Evaluations Questionnaire, which can be accessed through your myLoneStar account. This occurs approximately half way through your course, and you will be notified when surveys are available for completion. Instructions on how to access and complete the Course Evaluations Questionnaire can be found by logging into your [myLoneStar Account](#) and clicking on the Quicklinks – “How To” Documents. The college deans review these evaluations each semester. Additionally, the deans and/or department chairs may visit each instructor’s class at some time during the semester to observe the instructional environment being provided and complete an assessment of the instructor.

Student Support Services

Lone Star College-CyFair is committed to your success! One of our cultural beliefs is [Students Matter!](#)

If you are experiencing challenges achieving your goals academically or personally, please contact your advisor, instructor, or another individual on campus you trust. Advisors can provide assistance with questions related to academics, while the Counseling office can assist with ADA accommodations and personal barriers. All concerns related to classroom instruction must first be addressed with the instructor. Please know that we have resources and are here to support you.

Academic Success Center (Barker Cypress Campus - Learning Commons - 2nd Floor)

The Academic Success Center (ASC) offers [tutoring](#) for most disciplines and specific assistance in The Science Center (LRNC 203), Math Center (LRNC 205) and the Writing Center (LRNC 208). Student success seminars are also offered throughout the semester. For more information, please visit the [Academic Success website](#) or call 281.290.3279.

Academic Success Center open labs (TECH 104, CASE 104 and CASA 223)

The Academic Success Center Open Labs are quiet work and study areas available to you. You access the labs with your LSC ID card. The ASC Open Labs are available during extended hours during all semesters. Basic software assistance, access to Mac and PC computers loaded with courseware, printing, copying, and scanning are available in TECH 104, CASE 104 and CASA 223. For more information, please visit the [Academic Success website](#), contact 281.290.5980, or cfasclabs@LoneStar.edu.

Americans with Disabilities Act Statement (Disability Services)

Lone Star College- CyFair is dedicated to providing the least restrictive environment for all students. We promote equity in academic access through the implementation of reasonable accommodations as required by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title V, Sections 504 and 508, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), and the Americans with Disabilities Amendment Act (ADAAA). These laws enable students with disabilities to participate in and benefit from all post-secondary educational courses and activities.

A student requesting accommodations for a disability must contact the Counseling/Disability Services Office and register for services. The Assistive Technology Lab is available for students who benefit from

its various technologies to convert text to speech, magnify items, convert text to Braille, etc. after their accommodations have been determined by the Counseling office. If possible, the student requesting services should make an initial contact with the office at least 4 weeks prior to the start of the first class. Any disability related documentation and requests for assistive technology should be submitted to the Disability Services office, which is located on the LSC-CyFair campus in CASA 109. You may contact Stephanie Dillon, Disability Services Counselor, at 281-290-3260 or 281-290-3533 or Stephanie.G.Dillon@LoneStar.edu for additional information and/or to schedule an appointment. Additional information may be accessed online at <http://www.LoneStar.edu/disability-services.htm>

Counseling Services

Counseling services are available to students who are experiencing difficulty with academic issues, selection of college major, career planning, disability accommodations, or personal issues. You may contact [Counseling, Career, and Disability Services](#) at 281.290.3260, CyFair.Counseling@LoneStar.edu or stop by CASA 109 to make an appointment.

Students may contact counseling services at the Fairbanks Center or Cypress Center. The Fairbanks Center contact is 832.782.5110, Fairbanks.counselor@LoneStar.edu, or FBC 120. The Cypress Center contact is 832.920.5029, Lolita.B.Page@LoneStar.edu, or CYC, or 100B.

Library

The Lone Star College-CyFair Library is located in the Learning Commons (LRNC) building and contains informational resources for both college students and community members. Not only is the library an academic library, but it is also a branch of the Harris County Public Library. Librarians are professionally trained to assist you with any aspect of research during operating hours including using the library, locating and evaluating information sources, and citing information sources. The Library contains over 125,000 books, online information databases, 185 computers, free wireless internet, and many more information/research related amenities to ensure student success.

Library Resources

You may access library services via:

- Phone: Circulation Desk 281-290-3210 and Reference Librarians 281-290-3214 or 281-290-3219
- Email: CyFairLibrary@LoneStar.edu
- Text: 832-463-0478
- Chat: LoneStar.edu/library
- Online: LoneStar.edu/library/cyfair
- myLoneStar: Log in to my.LoneStar.edu with your LSC Student ID number and password to access library services from the high school campus location, home, or any location with Internet services to search catalog, view library account, research databases, and more.

For more information on how to find locations, check library hours, borrow library materials, research a topic, discover other library services, and/or find research apps and tools, please visit, “How Do I...?” at <http://www.LoneStar.edu/library/how-to.htm>. This page provides additional information to learn how to get a library card, find and request books, videos, CDs, articles and more, check your library account, access e-books and digital downloads, search databases for articles, periodicals (magazines, newspapers, and journals), cite sources, locate research guides, and various other topics.

Veteran Affairs Center Services

The Lone Star College Veterans Affairs Center located in CASE 110 provides services to all veteran students and their family members from our five colleges including LSC-CyFair, LSC-Kingwood, LSC-Montgomery, LSC-North Harris, and LSC-Tomball, five centers, LSC-University Park, LSC-University

Center at Montgomery, LSC-University Center at University Park, Lone Star Corporate College, and LSC-Online. Information is available at <http://www.LoneStar.edu/veterans-affairs.htm>.

The Empowerment Center

The Empowerment Center is a resource center for every student. We welcome all students to our home in CASA 121 where faculty and staff volunteers provide guidance in accessing campus resources, including the [Food for Thought Food Pantry](#) and the Career Closet.

Lone Star College-CyFair Campus Policies

We encourage students to read the [Student Handbook](#) and [LSC Catalog](#) for a comprehensive list of policies and procedures.

Student Behavior Expectations

You are expected to conduct yourself appropriately while on College property or in an online environment. You may receive disciplinary action up to and including suspension, if you violate College rules, disrupt classes, or interfere with the opportunity of others to obtain an education. Students who pose a threat to the safety of others will be subject to immediate withdrawal from the classroom, campus environment, and/or online environment, as well as face subsequent criminal charges, as appropriate. Please refer to the [Student Code of Conduct](#) for additional information.

Academic Integrity

Lone Star College-CyFair is committed to a high standard of academic integrity in the academic community. In becoming a part of the academic community, you are responsible for honesty and independent effort. Please read the [Academic Integrity Policy](#) online and read the [Academic Integrity Brochure](#) for more information.

Academic Appeals

An academic appeal is a formal request by a student to change a grade or to challenge a penalty imposed for violations of standards of academic integrity such as plagiarism or cheating. Before a student brings an academic appeal, he or she should first meet with the instructor to request that a change be made. For additional information, please read the [Academic Complaint and Appeal Process](#).

Campus Safety and Security

Lone Star College is committed to maintaining the safety of the students, faculty, staff, and guests while visiting one of our campuses. To help ensure your safety during an emergency (safety, fire, severe weather, etc.), please follow the instructions of college officials. Safety information and resources may be found on the [Office of Emergency Management](#) website and are also posted in each classroom. In the event you wish to report an emergency, please contact the police at 281.290.5911 or utilize the red handled emergency phones located in classrooms.

The Texas Legislature enacted campus carry by passing Senate Bill 11, effective at LSC on August 1, 2017. For more information about Campus Carry, visit the LSC [Campus Carry](#) website.

FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), also known as the Buckley Amendment, was established to protect the privacy rights of all students and applies to any educational facility receiving federal funds. For more information and the release form, please visit <http://www.lonestar.edu/ferpa.htm>.

Equal Opportunity Statement

Lone Star College is committed to the principle of equal opportunity in education and employment. Lone Star College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, disability, age, veteran status, sexual orientation, nationality or ethnicity in its programs and activities.

Student Absence on Religious Holy Days

The student must notify the faculty member in writing within the first 12 days of the semester of the intent to be absent due to a religious holy day. Under Texas Education Code 51.911, a student who is absent from classes for the observance of a religious holy day shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time as established by the faculty member.

Guidelines for Children of College Students

Children of students may not enter the classroom, even for brief visits, without the instructor's prior express written permission and may never enter lab areas. See [Board Policy Section II.D.2.04 and Section II.D.2.06](#) for more information.

Syllabus Disclaimer

It is the instructor's right to modify the class schedule when necessary and cover course topics as he/she feels is necessary to meet the learning outcomes, therefore this syllabus is subject to change.