

# PHIL 1301 Introduction to Philosophy

## CLASS SYLLABUS



### Instructor Contact Information

**Instructor:** Dr. Paul Tran-Hoang

**Email:** Paul.Tran-Hoang@lonestar.edu

**Phone:** (281) 401-5331

**Office Location:** 13.804B

**Student Hours:** Wednesday and Friday, 1-4pm; I am available outside these hours. Feel free to drop me an email and I will be happy to accommodate for your schedule.

**Website / Other Contact:**

### Welcome to PHIL 1301

**Course Title:** PHIL 1301

**Course Subject:** Introduction to Philosophy

**Course Section:** 6014

**Classroom Location:** D2L

**Semester and Year:** Spring 2021

**Class Days and Times:** N/A

### Course Overview

**Credit Hours:** 3

**Contact Hours:** 48

**Prerequisite:** College Level Readiness in Reading AND Writing

**Lecture Hours:** 3

**Lab Hours:** 0

**Core Applicability:** Language, Philosophy, & Culture [40]

**Catalog Description:** 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.

### **Student Learning Outcomes:**

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.

**In our efforts to prepare students for a changing world, students may be expected to utilize computer technology while enrolled in classes, certificate, and/or degree programs within LSCS. The specific requirements are listed below:**

Access to a personal computer with a current, updated operating system. Chrome or Firefox web browser must be installed to complete course assignments.

## Getting Ready

### **Required Material:**

*Voices of Wisdom: A Multicultural Philosophy Reader* (9th edition), Gary E. Kessler. Other readings will be distributed by Prof. Tran-Hoang.

### Instructor Guidelines and Policies

**COVID 19:** Lone Star College (LSC) is dedicated to the health and safety of all employees and students. Based on federal, state, and local mandates, LSC has established entry, personal protective equipment (PPE), and social distancing guidelines. Individuals will be provided PPE at entry points onto any open LSC property, and everyone is required to wear PPE while at the campus and other LSC properties. Temperature checks and completion of a health survey will also be required for entry.

If you have COVID-19, symptoms of COVID-19, or been exposed to someone who has tested positive, please report your illness or exposure to LSC-ReportVirus@lonestar.edu or call 832-246-0019 immediately. For more information, please visit <https://www.lonestar.edu/lsc-faq>.

**Attendance:** Regular attendance is expected in order for students to successfully complete the course objectives; this includes actively logging into the course.

**Communication:** The best way to reach me is by email through D2L. You will generally get a response within 24-48 business hours. If you don't get a response within that timeframe, please email again.

**Late Work:** Late work is accepted. Any assignment not submitted by the due date will receive a point deduction.

**Make-up Assessments:** Students must contact the instructor prior to missing a scheduled examination. An opportunity to take a makeup examination will be offered to those who make prior contact with the instructor. All make-up exams will be administered in any Lone Star campus assessment center.

**Cell Phones and Computers:** Phones and computers are not permitted in class.

**Official Day of Record:** Students that have not attended an in-class meeting or participated in an online class prior to the official day of record will be dropped from the course without exception. Official day of record for this course is 2/2/21.

**Withdrawal Policy:** Withdrawal from the course after the official day of record and prior to "W" Day, 4/12/21 will result in a final grade of "W" on your transcript. Instructor approval is necessary if you want to withdraw after official day. 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 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. Each student should fully understand this drop limit before you drop any course. Please see a Counselor or Advisor in our Student Services area for additional information and assistance. This policy does not affect developmental or ESOL students.

**Anti-Racism:** LSC-UP is committed to eliminating all forms of racism and discrimination by modeling inclusive learning and work environments for students and employees. LSC-UP dismantles barriers for the underrepresented student and commits to ongoing self-examination of our teaching, learning, and operations. By honoring the experiences and cultural capital that each person brings, we strive to create opportunities for all to succeed. We embrace diversity because it enriches everyone’s experience; we advance equity because it is necessary for democracy; we cultivate inclusion because together we achieve greater goals.

As our community’s college, we move beyond equity in access to achieve equity in outcomes. If you experience or witness discrimination, we welcome your communication.

### Conflict Resolution

If you have an issue with any aspect of the class (grading, policies, instructor behavior, etc.), please discuss the issue with your instructor outside of class time. If you cannot resolve the issue with your instructor, you may contact the department chair to further discuss the matter.

### **Department/Division Contact:**

Department Chair, HUMA, PHIL, HIST:

Dr. Matthew Keyworth, Matthew.J.Keyworth@lonestar.edu, 281-290-5056

Dean of Instruction, Arts and Humanities:

Jonathan Anderson, Jonathan.Anderson@lonestar.edu, 281-401-5313

### Grade Determination

We will use a straight point system.

Your grade = (Your total points earned ÷ Total number of possible points in the class)

**Reading guides:** Students will complete short answer assignments on topics discussed during the week. These reading guides will help students comprehend the readings and will provide a chance for students to reflect on the topics covered in the course.

**Discussion Posts:** Students will respond to discussion prompts throughout the term.

**Papers:** There will be three papers in total. All papers are to be typed and submitted as a word document or PDF. Papers will be checked for plagiarism. We will follow MLA formatting guidelines, which can be found at this link:

[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/mla\\_style/mla\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/mla\\_general\\_format.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_general_format.html)

## Letter Grade Assignment

<b>Your grade will be determined by the following</b>	<b>Summary</b>
Reading guides	Reading guides will ask students to answer a variety of reflection and comprehension questions.
Discussion Posts	There will be regular discussion board assignments. The introduction post will count as part as the discussion. The introduction post is also the official ODR activity. In other words, one must post an introduction in order to not get dropped from the class.
Papers	There will be a number of papers assigned throughout the semester. Students are welcome to submit drafts before the deadline. The turnaround time for comments will typically be a couple days. Grades will be on the typical letter grade scale. Rubric for papers will be discussed when papers are assigned.

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Final Average in Percent</b>
A	90 - 100
B	80 - 89
C	70 - 79
D	60 - 69
F	< 60

## Tentative Instructional Outline (\*denotes reading is in textbook)

<b>Tues 01/19</b>	<p>This week we discuss the syllabus and iron out administrative details.</p> <p>We also look at MLK Jr's famous letter "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" where MLK Jr addresses the question of justice and civil disobedience.</p>	<p>Reading: Martin Luther King Jr. "Letter from Birmingham Jail"</p> <p>Tasks: 1. Obtain textbook</p> <p>2. Reading guide on the MLK jr reading.</p> <p>3. Discussion board introductions (please respond to peer's posts).</p> <p><b>All due Sunday 1/24 at 11:59pm</b></p>
<b>Mon 01/25</b>	<p>What is philosophy? What is true happiness? Does it consist in having pleasurable experiences?</p>	<p>Readings: Philip K. Dick, "We Can Remember It for you Wholesale"</p>

	Or, is there something more to life? This week we focus on these fundamental philosophical questions.	Robert Nozick, "The Experience Machine" <b>Task: Reading guide due 11:59pm on Sunday 1/31.</b>
<b>Mon 02/01</b>	Is absolute knowledge possible? Or can we have probable knowledge at most? This week, we discuss the nature of knowledge and certainty.	Reading: *Descartes, Meditation 1 and 2 <b>Task: Reading guide due 11:59pm on Sunday 2/7.</b>
<b>Mon 02/08</b>	What is the self? Is it a physical object like a table or chair? Or is it something immaterial? If so, how does it relate to the body? Are there such things as souls? This week we begin our discussion of the nature of the self and the mind.	Reading: Thomas Nagel, "What is it like to be a bat?"  <b>Tasks: Discussion 1 due 11:59 pm on Sunday 2/14.</b>  <b>Response to peer's post due Tuesday 11:59pm on 2/16.</b>  <b>Paper 1 prompts distributed 2/8</b>
<b>Mon 02/15</b>	*This week was interrupted by the weather and energy crisis.	
<b>Mon 02/22</b>	Where does the self end and the world begin? Is any boundary ultimately arbitrary? This week we look at the Buddhist conception of the self according to which there ultimately is no self.	Reading: *The Buddha, "False Doctrines about the Soul"  <b>Task: Paper 1 due 11:59pm on Sunday 2/28.</b>
<b>Mon 03/01</b>	Can computers think? Are we, at bottom, highly complex computers? What would be the ethical implications of this? This week, we consider issues between the philosophy of mind and technology.	Reading: *John Searle, "Chinese Room" and *Terry Bison, "They're Made Out of Meat".  Task: Reading guide due 11:59pm on Sunday 3/7.
<b>Mon 03/08</b>	What is the relationship between the self and gender identity? Is gender identity socially constructed or a natural part of the self? This week we discuss gender identity in relation to the self.	Reading: *Deirdre (Donald) N. McCloskey, "Crossing".  <b>Tasks: Discussion 2 post and reply due 11:59pm on Sunday 3/14</b>
<b>Mon 03/15</b>	Spring Break	
<b>Mon 03/22</b>	This week we continue our exploration of the relationship between the self and social categories such as race, ethnicity, and culture.	Reading: *Jorge F. E. Gracia, "Identities: General and Particular."  Task: Reading guide due 11:59pm on Sunday 3/28.

<b>Mon 03/29</b>	Are we free? Or is the future determined? If the future is determined, can we be held morally responsible for what we do? We discuss the nature of freedom from an existentialist perspective.	Reading: *Jean-Paul Sartre, Existentialism  Task: Reading guide due 11:59pm on 4/4
<b>Mon 04/05</b>	Can we be held morally responsible for actions if the future is pre-determined? Does morality presuppose free choice? This week, we discuss the moral implications of determinism.	Reading: *Bruce N. Waller, "Chanelle, Sabrina, and the Oboe"  Paper 2 prompt distributed 4/5.
<b>Mon 04/12</b>	Work on Papers/Catch up on assignments	<b>Paper 2 due at 11:59pm on Sunday 4/18</b>
<b>Mon 04/19</b>	How do we determine whether an action is morally correct? Is it ever permissible to sacrifice one life to save five? We discuss the moral theory known as utilitarianism.	Readings: 1. Short clip from "The Good Place". 2. *J.S. Mill, What Utilitarianism Is.  Task: <b>Reading guide due 11:59pm on Wednesday 4/28.</b>
<b>Mon 04/26</b>	Does the moral worth of an action depend on its consequences? Or does it depend on the intention of the person performing that action? We discuss Kant's universalist theory which focuses on intentions.	Reading: *Immanuel Kant, Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals.  Task: (Extra Credit) <b>Reading guide due 11:59pm on Sunday 5/2.</b>
<b>Mon 05/03</b>	Work on papers/Catch up on any missing assignments	<b>Paper 3 prompt distributed Monday 5/3</b>

<b>Mon 05/10</b>	Finals Week	<b>Paper 3 due 11:59pm on Friday 5/14.</b>
------------------	-------------	--

## **Lone Star College-University Park is committed to your success!**

### **GradUP**

The LSC-University Park community is here to support you and we encourage you to graduate! Many of you come to a community college because it provides an open door and it makes sense financially. What you may not realize is what attaining an associate or workforce degree can do for you. Below are just some of the reasons why a degree is a positive move for your life and career:

1. You'll be eligible for more jobs.
2. You could have higher earning potential.
3. You can finish in two years or less.
4. You have options for career paths.
5. You can discover what you want from your academic program and career.
6. You can apply for additional scholarships.
7. Many of the colleges in Texas have articulation agreements with community colleges that allow you to receive full credit for the courses you have completed.
8. Your transfer acceptance is higher with an associate degree.



If you have any questions or need guidance with your academic plan and graduation, please ask for assistance. There are resources, advisors, and additional materials available to you. Because your academic success is important, Lone Star College fosters and commits to a set of cultural beliefs.



#### **One LSC**

I develop meaningful relationships and collaborate for mutual success.



#### **Student Focused**

I support and prepare each student to succeed in college and life.



#### **Own It**

I bring my best, rise above challenges, and own my contributions.



#### **Advance Equity**

I advance diversity and inclusion to create an equitable environment.



#### **Cultivate Community**

I cultivate a community of trust and integrity through transparent dialogue and purposeful actions.



#### **Choose Learning**

I learn, grow, and create opportunities for others to do the same.

**Your success is our primary goal!** If you are experiencing challenges achieving your academic goals, please contact your instructor or an advisor. We can provide assistance with academic needs, ADA accommodations, classroom difficulties, financial concerns, and other issues.

**Advising:** The Advising process is an integral part of your academic success. Academic advisors are available to assist you with a variety of academic services including admissions, testing, advising, registration, referral of campus and community resources, add/drop/withdrawal process, transfer planning and graduation processes.

<https://lonestar.edu/advising.htm>

**Academic Calendar:** <https://lonestar.edu/academic-calendar>

**Final Exam Schedule:** <https://lonestar.edu/examschedule.htm>

**Important Registration Dates:**

**Summer 2021**

<b>Mar. 1</b>	Registration begins
<b>May 7</b>	Payment due (May mini-mester)
<b>May 17</b>	May mini-mester begins
<b>May 28</b>	Payment due (Summer 2021)
<b>June 6</b>	3-week mini-mester ends
<b>June 7</b>	Summer I classes begin
<b>June 13</b>	4-week mini-mester ends
<b>July 13</b>	Summer I classes end
<b>July 15</b>	Summer II classes begin
<b>Aug. 22</b>	Summer II classes end

**Counseling Services:** Counseling services are available to students who are experiencing difficulty with academic issues, selection of college major, career planning, or personal issues. Visit <https://lonestar.edu/counseling-services.htm> for more information.

**Student Learning Resource Center (SLRC) - While the campus is closed, we are just a click away!**

The Student Learning Resource Center, also known as the SLRC, consists of the library's digital resources and research assistance, academic coaching, and the assistive technology lab. These free services are available to currently enrolled Lone Star College students to support academic success.

**Academic Coaching: Writing, Math, and Science**

Academic Coaching includes elements of traditional tutoring but focuses on the goals and the process of teaching students to become more effective learners over the course of their studies. Academic Coaching provides academic support for subjects virtually through an online platform called Upswing. This support comes in the form of live coaches as well as a variety of tools and resources to support your academic success.

Academic Coaching aids with writing assignments and the writing process. Assistance in all levels of math and all areas of science is also provided.

More information, including hours, guidelines, and how to sign up for online tutoring, can be found online at <https://upresearch.lonestar.edu/academiccoaching>. Please contact [uptutor@lonestar.edu](mailto:uptutor@lonestar.edu) for more information

**Assistive Technology Lab**

The Assistive Technology (AT) Lab provides services for students who have accommodations that have been approved by Disabilities Services. Students should begin the process in the Disability Services Office (<https://lonestar.edu/disability-services.htm>).



Assistive technology is any item, piece of equipment, software program, or product system used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of persons with disabilities. Some examples of services include note-takers, reader/scribes, digital recorders, smart pens, and text-to-speech software. More information can be found at <https://lonestar.edu/up-assistivetech> and you can contact the Assistive Technology Lab staff at [upassistivetech@lonestar.edu](mailto:upassistivetech@lonestar.edu).

### **Library: Digital and Research Resources**

The University Park library is completely digital. Online collections of credible resources include articles, e-books, videos, and are accessible from anywhere with your **14-digit library barcode, which you can request online** (<https://www.lonestar.edu/library/card.htm#card>). Librarians are available to assist with finding, evaluating, and citing information and can also be contacted by **email** ([uplibrary-ref@lonestar.edu](mailto:uplibrary-ref@lonestar.edu)), **text** (281.761.6852), or through the “**Chat** with the Librarian” button on the library webpages.

More information, including research and citation guides and a searchable FAQ, can be found online at <https://lonestar.edu/up-library> and <https://upresearch.lonestar.edu>.

As soon as our COVID-19 crisis is behind us, come visit the SLRC physical space on the eighth floor. You will find open computer labs, study spaces, and printers. Normally, students get their student ID here, interact with friendly staff, and check out textbooks from the reserve collection. When we open again, take time to check out the resources and services of your Student Learning Resource Center. We'll see you there!

### **Lone Star College-University Park College Resources and System Policies**

Please see this link for college details: <https://lonestar.edu/up-syllabus-policies>

Please see this link for system details: <http://www.lonestar.edu/syllabus-policies>

## **Lone Star College COVID-19 Prevention Expectations**

Lone Star College is dedicated to the health and safety of all employees and students with a strong commitment to student engagement and success. In coordination with federal, state, and local mandates and guidelines, Lone Star College has established general COVID-19 prevention expectations below. Campus-specific COVID-19 protocols shall be provided to you by campus presidents.

The expectations and protocols may be changed as the COVID-19 situation evolves. Please direct campus protocol questions to the campus president.

Lone Star College supports students with online tutoring, online bookstore access, online library resources, with access to Office 365 available. Information about tutoring and available resources may be found at <https://www.lonestar.edu/Student-Resources.htm>.

Lone Star College implemented the COVID-19 Prevention Expectations listed below for students attending class on a Lone Star College campus during the 2020 Fall Semester. Be sure to stay home if you are feeling ill or if you have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for illness.

### On-Campus<sup>1</sup> and In the Classroom

- You must properly wear a mask that adequately covers your mouth and nose.
  - You should put your mask on upon exiting your vehicle in the campus parking lot. Unless otherwise provided by law, you will not be allowed on a campus or remain on a campus without a mask.
  - If you need a mask, the campus will provide you one at the designated campus entry checkpoint.
  - Failing to wear a mask or refusing to wear a mask while on a Lone Star College campus is considered a Student Conduct Code violation.
- Proceed to the designated campus entry checkpoint.
- You must submit to a temperature check at the Campus Screening Checkpoint.
- You should stay at least six feet from others while on campus.
- You should sanitize your hands regularly, but especially prior to entering a classroom and when leaving.

### Notifications of Possible Exposure

- Lone Star College will notify you of possible exposure to COVID-19 if a person who was in your area of campus while you were on campus tested positive.
- In case of building closure, your instructor will notify you of the plan for continuing the course.

---

<sup>1</sup> For purposes of this document, “campus” and “on-campus” includes both indoor and outdoor spaces located on a Lone Star College property.