INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY
PHIL 1301-6502
Fall 2012

Professor: Michael Harding
Email: mharding@dcccd.edu
Meeting Days & Time: Tuesday/Thursday 6:00-7:20 PM
Room Number: W177
Credit Hours: 3 Semester Hours
Division: Communications and Social Sciences
Office Fax: 214-860-8755

Course Description:
This is an introductory philosophy course. We will examine several traditional philosophical questions and problems, drawing on the greatest thinkers of the Western tradition. Among the questions we will investigate are: What is the nature of knowledge? Justice? Happiness? Does God exist? If so, why is there evil? Do we human beings have free will? How do we tell right from wrong? What justifies the State?

Course Pre-requisites:
Students enrolling in this course should have completed Developmental Reading 0093 or English as a Second Language (ESOL) 0044 or have met the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) standard in Reading.

Getting Your End-of-Term Course Grade:
Grade reports are no longer mailed. Convenient access is available online (E-Connect) or by telephone (DCCCD Touch Tone Services). Online: http://econnect.dcccd.edu/grades.html. You will need your student ID number and password to login. Telephone: 972-613-1818. Grades will also be posted on eCampus.

STOP BEFORE YOU DROP:
For students who enrolled in college level courses for the first time in the Fall of 2007, Texas Education Code 51.907 limits the number of courses a student may drop. You may drop no more than 6 courses during your entire undergraduate career, unless the drop qualifies as an exception. Your campus counseling/advising center will give you more information on the allowable exceptions.

Remember that once you have accumulated 6 non-exempt drops, you cannot drop any other courses with a “W.” Therefore, please exercise caution when dropping courses in any Texas Public Institution of higher learning, including all seven of the Dallas County...
Community Colleges. For more information, you may access: https://www1.dcccd.edu/6drop

**Cell phones, electronic devices and pagers:**
Students are expected to turn off all cell phones, electronic devices and pagers during class time.

**Repeating This Course:**
Effective for Fall Semester 2005, the Dallas County Community Colleges will charge additional tuition to students registering the third or subsequent time for a course. This class may not be repeated for the third or subsequent time without paying the additional tuition.

Third attempts include courses taken at any of the Dallas County Community Colleges since the Fall 2002 semester. More information is available at: https://www1.dcccd.edu/cat0506/ss/oep/third_attempt.cfm.

**Financial Aid:**
Students must begin attendance in all classes of enrollment. No exceptions. Financial Aid will not be granted to students who have been certified as not attending by the certification date. For this lecture class, your physical participation in class, on or before the certification date, will allow you to receive credit for FA purposes. For certification dates, check with the division or FAO for further information. Students, who are not certified as beginning class, are responsible for any payments due as a result of non-certification, to include the dropping of courses. Students who are receiving any form of financial aid should check with the Financial Aid Office prior to withdrawing from classes. Withdrawals may affect your eligibility to receive further aid and could cause you to be in a position of repayment for the current semester. Students who fail to attend or participate after the drop date are also subject to this policy.

If you are receiving financial aid grants or loans, you must begin attendance in all classes. Do not drop or stop attending any class without consulting the Financial Aid Office. Changes in your enrollment level and failing grades may require that you repay financial aid funds.

**The Texas Success Initiative (TSI)**
The Texas Success Initiative (TSI) is a statewide program designed to ensure that students enrolled in Texas public colleges and universities have the basic academic skills needed to be successful in college-level course work. The TSI requires assessment, remediation (if necessary), and advising of students who attend a public college or university in the state of Texas. The program assesses a student's basic academic skills in reading, writing, and math. Passing the assessment is a prerequisite for enrollment in many college level classes. Students who do not meet assessment standards may complete prerequisite requirements by taking developmental courses in the deficient area and passing them with a grade of C or higher. Additional information is available at https://www1.dcccd.edu/cat0506/admiss/TSI_requirements.cfm.

**Academic Honesty:**
Academic honesty is expected, and integrity is valued in the Dallas County Community Colleges. Scholastic dishonesty is a violation of the Code of Student Conduct. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a test, plagiarism, and collusion. As a college student, you are considered a responsible adult. Your enrollment indicates acceptance of the DCCC Code of Student Conduct published in the DCCC Catalog. More information is available at https://www1.dcccd.edu/cat0406/ss/code.cfm.

For the purposes of this course, a single deliberate act of plagiarism will result in failure for the course, regardless of performance in other areas of evaluation. This policy also applies to all extra credit assignments and papers. If you are wrongly accused of cheating, you have access to a campus appeals procedure to defend your grade.

**ADA Statement:**
Mountain View College and the Office of Special Services are committed to upholding the laws and the spirit of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) signed in 1990.

**Disclaimer Reserving Right to Change Syllabus:**
The instructor reserves the right to amend this syllabus as necessary.

**Inclement Weather Statement:**
In the event of severe weather conditions, please listen to local radio or television stations for information concerning official closing of Mountain View College facilities. You can also call the inclement weather hotline at 214-860-8888, or check for updates on this web site. Decisions for evening classes will be made by 4:00 pm.

**Instructor Attendance Policy:**
I will not include attendance as a direct part of your grade, but I will include participation in your grade (see below). You are all adults, and I leave you to take responsibility for your performance. That means that you should not bring me excuses for missing class, either written or oral. If you do not attend, do not be surprised if I am not very giving with my time to help you catch up. In addition, any changes to tests, assignments, and important dates are your responsibility to keep track of and “I missed that class” is not a viable excuse for late work or lack of preparedness. Lastly, experience shows that academic performance varies inversely with attendance. What does that mean? **It means that if you want to do well, you actually need to show up.** If for some reason you must leave class early, you should inform the instructor prior to the start of class of your reason for leaving early. That being said, leaving early and arriving late should be rare occurrences.

*Students must begin attendance in all classes of enrollment. No exceptions. Financial Aid will not be granted to students who have been certified as not attending, by the certification date. For this lecture course, your physical participation in class, on or before the certification date will allow you to receive credit for FA purposes. For certification dates, check with the division or FAO for further information. Students, who are not certified as beginning class, are responsible for any payments due as a result of non-certification, to include the dropping of courses.*
Grading Policy:
There will be two exams, each worth 33% of your final grade. The other 34% of your final grade will come from *active* participation in discussion (20%), as well as a) turning in a set of 3 typewritten questions about the assigned readings, at the start of each Tuesday and b) completing brief in-class writing assignments (cumulative 14%). The questions should be about the content of the assigned readings that occur to you while you are preparing for class. These questions will be turned in at the start of class on Tuesday, and may serve as the basis for our in-class discussions.

Please note: the schedule of readings below is tentative and likely to change as we go through the class. We will probably spend more time on some texts and less time on others. Thus, in order to know where we are in the class, you will need to actually attend class and pay attention.

Grading Scale:

- 90-100=A
- 80-89=B
- 70-79=C
- 60-69=D
- 0-59=F

Course Materials/Supplies Needed:

In addition to the required text, handouts may be provided for various topics. If you are not in class when they are handed out, do not ask me for a copy, ask one of your fellow students to let you make a copy of his or hers. *It is not my job to chase you down and make sure that you are doing everything you are supposed to be doing, that you are reading everything you are supposed to be reading, or that you have all of the materials you are supposed to have. That is your responsibility as an adult, not mine.* Any copies that remain in my hand at the end of class will be recycled.

About this class:
Do not come and go from the classroom. Students are expected to remain in their seats for the duration of the class session. In cases of strong physical necessity, students should leave as discreetly as possible. This should be rare. If it is not, your participation grade will suffer.

Computers and other electronic devices must be put away (this includes laptops). *Don’t send text messages on your phone in class.* It may seem strange to you, but students who focus on their phones while in class tend to do poorly on the exams. It’s also rude to me and those around you.
Drinks are permitted if they are consumed silently and cleaned up afterward, but food is not allowed.

Students who arrive late or depart early will lose participation points. You are all adults and understand the nature of traffic congestion. Plan accordingly. Disruptive students will be asked to leave: everyone here is paying to be here, don’t waste their time, and don’t waste mine.

**There are no extra projects. There is no extra credit.** It is your responsibility to stay on top of things: don’t think that you can “cram” for something like this at the last minute. Philosophy is not a subject in which brute memorization will help you; understanding the material is what matters most. You must read, and you must think about what you’re reading. The material you read in this class is not like the material you read in other classes. You must read it attentively—which means that if you’re trying to read it while, for example, watching TV, you’re not going to get anything out of it.

Students wishing to withdraw must notify the Registrar’s Office by completing a Petition for Course Drop. Be advised: I cannot drop you. You must do it yourself. There is a deadline, and it is your responsibility to know what it is. If you fail to attend class and do not drop, you will receive a grade based on your performance—most likely an F.

Students are expected to bring to class the readings assigned for the current class. Taking of substantial notes is a condition for success in the course, as in any college course (hint: if all you’re writing down is what I’m putting on the board, you’re probably not taking good notes).

Philosophy is hard. Students are frequently surprised by this fact, since in contemporary usage “philosophy” simply means one’s general point of view. But this is not what philosophy means in an academic context. Likewise, the readings assigned in this class are not “textbook” readings. Often they are translations of works written hundreds, if not thousands of years ago. As such, they are not immediately clear in their meaning. You cannot simply “skim” the text in order to understand it. Instead, one must enter into a conversation with the text: asking the author why he or she makes this argument, what does it mean or imply, and how does it relate to other parts of the book or to other philosophers. Your goal here is not to learn about the philosophers we read, but to learn from them.

Because of this, it is highly recommended that students write in their books. Underline passages that seem important. Mark cross-references, and write comments, notes and questions in the margins. To truly engage these philosophers, one must enter into a conversation with them, and not read them passively. Real reading is done with a pen or pencil in hand.

Machiavelli’s description of his reading habits might serve as a useful illustration:

> On the coming of evening, I return to my house and enter my study; and at the door I take off the day’s clothing, covered with mud and
dust, and put on garments regal and courtly; and reclothed appropriately, I enter the ancient courts of ancient men [his library], where, received by them with affection, I feed on that food which only is mine and which I was born for, where I am not ashamed to speak with them and to ask them the reason for their actions; and they in their kindness answer me; and for four hours of time I do not feel boredom, I forget every trouble, I do not dread poverty, I am not frightened by death; entirely I give myself over to them. And because Dante says it does not produce knowledge when we hear but do not remember, I have noted everything in their conversation which has profited me...

Machiavelli describes himself as entering his library where he is in the presence of ancient men. Reading is described as a conversation, where he questions those ancients and they, through their books, answer him. Finally, he takes careful notes in order to ensure that he remember what they said and profits from it.

It is best not to think of this class as a series of discreet and unconnected texts (they are not—they have been selected because of their relation to one another), but as your opportunity to participate in a great conversation that has been going on for thousands of years, and which has shaped the world around you. As John Maynard Keynes famously wrote:

> The ideas of economists and political philosophers, both when they are right and when they are wrong, are more powerful than is commonly understood. Indeed the world is ruled by little else. Practical men, who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influence, are usually the slaves of some defunct economist. Madmen in authority, who hear voices in the air, are distilling their frenzy from some academic scribbler of a few years back. I am sure that the power of vested interests is vastly exaggerated compared with the gradual encroachment of ideas” *(The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money, p. 383)*.

Keynes’ point stands today. We live in a world shaped by the thinkers we will read in this class (as well as others); to understand these thinkers is to understand that world, and those who have been shaped by it—including ourselves.
**Reading Schedule**

Rather than a date-by-date list of readings, I'm giving you the list of readings in the order we will read them. This is meant to allow us to spend as much time as we collectively feel to be necessary discussing each text. Most likely, we will not make it through all of this material. The **mid-term exam will take place Thursday, October 11, 2012**; the **final exam** will occur at the end of the course in accordance with the published schedule.

Plato's *Euthyphro*

Plato's *Apology of Socrates*

Plato's *Republic* book VI 506e-511d—**the divided line**

Plato's *Republic* book VII 514a-521b—**the cave**

Aristotle’s *Physics*, book II, 192b1-195b30

Aristotle’s *On the Soul*, book II, 412a3-416b30

Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*, books I (happiness), II (virtues of character), III (actions, deliberation, will), V (justice), VI (intellectual virtues), VII (incontinence), X (pleasure, happiness, politics)

Aristotle’s *Politics* (handout)

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Q1, Article 1; QII, Article 1-3—**the existence of God** (at least one week)

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*—handout on natural law (at least half a week)

Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*, introduction, Meditations 1-3

Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*, introduction, Meditations 4-6

Hobbes, *Leviathan* Part I, chapter 6 (on the passions), chapters 11 (on manners), chapters 13-15 (on the state of nature, on the first and second natural laws, on other natural laws); Part II, 17-18 (on the commonwealth, on the rights of the sovereign) (at least two weeks)

John Locke, *Second Treatise*—handout on natural law (at least half a week)

John Locke, *Letter on Toleration*—handout on religious tolerance (at least one week)

Nietzsche's *Twilight of the Idols*—(at least one week, maybe more)