

Fall 2021

---

## Instructor Info

Dr. A.K. Flowerree

Office: Eng/Phil 265C

[Amy.Flowerree@ttu.edu](mailto:Amy.Flowerree@ttu.edu)

Office Hours: 11 – 12 pm  
MWF

---

## Course Info

M/W/F, 12 – 12:50 pm

English 001

Assignments on  
Blackboard

---

## TA Info

Shivangi Goel

❖ [shgoel@ttu.edu](mailto:shgoel@ttu.edu)

❖ M (3-5 pm)

Edward Oudanoh

❖ [edward.oudanoh@ttu.edu](mailto:edward.oudanoh@ttu.edu)

❖ W (8-10 am)

Yunhui Bai

❖ [yunbai@ttu.edu](mailto:yunbai@ttu.edu)

❖ F (1:30 – 3:30 pm)  
Phil 263

---

Phil 2300:

# Beginning Philosophy

## Overview

We live in an age of #MeToo, Covid-19, echo chambers, corrupt political parties, protests (riots?), climate disaster, and constant outrage. In this moment, how should you think and act?

The goal of this class is to use the tools of philosophy in order to understand and act in our current context. We will articulate and analyze arguments, we will clarify concepts, and we will discuss what responsibilities we have as citizens, social media members, students, and friends. We will pursue understanding in the context of great thinkers in the philosophical tradition.

## Course objectives

- ❖ You will learn develop a working knowledge of important philosophical concepts
- ❖ You will develop the ability to reconstruct arguments from philosophical texts and popular discourse
- ❖ You will learn how to evaluate and respond to arguments
- ❖ You will develop and defend your own answers to the central questions of the course

## Required Text

---

- ❖ *All readings will be provided through blackboard*
- 

## Evaluation

Excellent	160 – 180 points	A
Good	140 – 159 points	B
Acceptable	120 – 139 points	C
Poor	100 – 119 points	D
Failing	<100 points	F

## FAQs

Q. What is philosophy?

A. a rigorous method for evaluating claims using the analytic tools of argument and reasoning

---

Q. What will I get out of this class?

A. You will develop your ability to formulate and answer questions that matter, in order to better understand your viewpoint and the view point of others.

---

Q. What is philosophy good for?

A. Many people study philosophy for the money (philosophy students often to go on to become lawyers, bankers, business professionals, systems analysts). But the study of philosophy can add value to any pursuit, and even help one determine whether it's worth pursuing at all!

## Assignments

Your grade for this class is determined by how many points you earn over the course of the semester.

- ❖ *Easy Points (25 points)*  
Quizzes and pod points
- ❖ *Proficiency points (50 points)*  
Ten (10) one paragraph in class essays
- ❖ *Mastery Points (105 points)*  
Two (2) exams worth 25 points each  
One (1) cumulative final exam worth 40 points  
Final reflection paper worth 15 points

## Covid Flex™

To accommodate covid disruptions:

- ❖ It is your responsibility to notify me as soon as you realize you need accommodations.
- ❖ I will work with you to make an alternate plan. This could include, but is not limited to, making up missed assignments, or completing alternative assignments of equal value.
- ❖ I do not plan to offer an online version of this class.
- ❖ Please do not come to class with (suspected) Covid.

## Classroom Civility

- ❖ In this class, we discuss difficult and uncomfortable topics.
- ❖ The purpose of this class room is to provide a space that fosters exchange of ideas, creative thinking, and intellectual growth.
- ❖ Behavior that disrupts the classroom will not be tolerated (rude, sarcastic, abusive, or obscene).

## Students with Disabilities

I gladly accommodate students who require special arrangements. Students must present appropriate verification from Student Disability Services during the instructor's office hours. For additional information, please contact Student Disability Services in West Hall or call 806-742-2405.

## Academic Integrity

My commitment to you is that I will give you the tools you need to succeed in this class. Your commitment to me is that **you** complete the work with honesty and integrity. Failure to maintain this trust will result in significant consequences, including failing this course.

## The University wants me to also tell you:

ADA STATEMENT: Any student who, because of a disability, may require special arrangements in order to meet the course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make any necessary arrangements. Students should present appropriate verification from Student Disability Services during the instructor's office hours. Please note: instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodations to a student until appropriate verification from Student Disability Services has been provided. For additional information, please contact Student Disability Services in West Hall or call 806-742-2405.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT: Academic integrity is taking responsibility for one's own class and/or course work, being individually accountable, and demonstrating intellectual honesty and ethical behavior. Academic integrity is a personal choice to abide by the standards of intellectual honesty and responsibility. Because education is a shared effort to achieve learning through the exchange of ideas, students, faculty, and staff have the collective responsibility to build mutual trust and respect. Ethical behavior and independent thought are essential for the highest level of academic achievement, which then must be measured. Academic achievement includes scholarship, teaching, and learning, all of which are shared endeavors. Grades are a device used to quantify the successful accumulation of knowledge through learning. Adhering to the standards of academic integrity ensures grades are earned honestly. Academic integrity is the foundation upon which students, faculty, and staff build their educational and professional careers. [Texas Tech University ("University") Quality Enhancement Plan, Academic Integrity Task Force, 2010]

RELIGIOUS HOLY DAY STATEMENT: "Religious holy day" means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Texas Tax Code §11.20. A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. 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 after the absence. A student who is excused under section 2 may not be penalized for the absence; however, the instructor may respond appropriately if the student fails to complete the assignment satisfactorily.

## Core Requirement: Language, Philosophy, and Culture (LPC)

This class satisfies the LPC core requirement

Skill	Objective	Assessment
<b>Critical Thinking Skills (CT):</b> To include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.	Students will learn to read philosophical texts, reconstruct arguments, formulate objections, and anticipate replies.	In class essays, exams, quizzes, discussion, and pod projects
<b>Communication Skills (COM):</b> To include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication.	Students will develop analytical arguments in written and oral forms and learn to express ideas clearly and cogently orally and in writing.	In class essays, exams, quizzes, discussion, and pod projects
<b>Social Responsibility (SR):</b> To include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national and global communities.	Students will attain fluency in important topics for social responsibility: race, gender, the value of free speech and autonomy, how to be a responsible consumer of information. Additionally, students will gain experience in respectful discussion of difficult and potentially divisive social topics.	In class essays, exams, quizzes, discussion, and pod projects
<b>Personal Responsibility (PR):</b> To include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.	Students will formulate their own views on timely issues that relate to topics presented in class. They will defend those views with arguments.	In class essays, exams, quizzes, discussion, and pod projects

Phil 2300: Beginning Philosophy

All readings are on blackboard. There may be small adjustments to this plan

Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment
<b>Week 1: Aug 23</b>	Welcome! Arguments I	Excerpt from Plato's <i>Apology</i>	
<b>Week 2: Aug 30</b>	Arguments II: God	Aquinas <i>Five Ways</i> Goldberg, <i>it's not just your opinion</i>	Essay #1
<b>Week 3: Sep 6</b> No class <b>Labor Day</b>	Knowledge	Descartes <i>Meditation I</i> Epistemology Bootcamp	
<b>Week 4: Sep 13</b>	Knowledge	Nguyen, <i>Why it's hard to escape an echo chamber</i>	Essay 2
<b>Week 5: Sep 20</b>	Ethics of Belief	WK Clifford, <i>Ethics of Belief</i>	Essay 3
<b>Week 6: Sep 27</b>		William James, <i>Will to Believe</i>	<b>Exam I: October 1</b>
<b>Week 7: Oct 4</b>	Race and Gender	Spencer, <i>Dodos, Dingos and Dimes</i> Haslanger, What is Race and Gender? What do we Want them to be?	
<b>Week 8: Oct 11</b>	Race and Gender	TBA	Essay 4 (Wednesday)
<b>Week 9: oct 18</b>	Race and Justice	Mill, The Racial Contract "Lies my Teacher Taught me"	Essay 5
<b>Week 10: Oct 25</b>	Free Speech	Satta, <i>Free Speech</i> Locke, <i>Letter concerning toleration</i> Mill, <i>on Liberty</i>	Essay 6
<b>Week 11: Nov 1</b>	Free speech and canceling	Callard, <i>Should we cancel Aristotle?</i> Tufekci, Levy	<b>Exam II</b>
<b>Week 12: Nov 8</b>	Equality	Sen, <i>A theory of human rights</i> Nussbaum, <i>Political Equality</i>	Essay 7
<b>Week 13: Nov 15</b>	Responsibility	Moody-Adams, <i>Cultural responsibility and affective ignorance</i>	Essay 8
<b>Week 14: Nov 22</b> Thanksgiving break W/F	Justice: why punish?	Hiphi nation, S4 Ep 6, <a href="#">Justice and Retribution</a>	Essay 9
<b>Week 15: Nov 29</b>	Autonomy (covid and abortion)	Thomson, <i>A Defense of Abortion</i>	Essay 10
Wed, Dec 8 <sup>th</sup> , 1:30 – 4 pm			<b>Final Exam</b>