**2300 – 006 Introduction to Philosophy**
**(Online)**
**The University of Texas at Arlington**
**Department of Philosophy & Humanities**
**Fall 2018**

**Instructor(s)**
Dr. Sally Parker-Ryan

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**Faculty Profile**
https://www.uta.edu/profiles/**sally**-**parker**-**ryan**

**Office Hours**
Online Office Hours are scheduled for each Tuesday 11 am – 12 pm.

**Maximum Timeframe for Responding to Student Communication**
Response to student emails can generally be expected within 24 hours with a 48 hour maximum time frame.
Response to student assignments may be expected within 72 hours.

**Section Information**
PHIL 2300-006

**Time and Place of Class Meetings**
Online

**Description of Course Content**
This course provides an online introduction to the study of philosophy. Not only will students learn about important philosophical figures, movements, and methodology, but they will be encouraged to identify their own philosophical positions and consider how these positions relate to those of the philosophers we study. Students are also encouraged to consider how particular philosophical issues have been important in their own lives, and to discuss philosophical problems with friends and family outside of class.
Representative topics covered in this course include epistemology, metaphysics, and ethics. Discussion of these topics will give rise to such questions as 'What is knowledge?'; 'Am I free?';

'Is moral value objective?'; 'What is consciousness?', and, 'What is the fundamental 'stuff' of the universe?'.

At the end of the course, students will be able to explain key philosophical concepts and the positions of major figures, and will demonstrate skill in philosophical argumentation. Finally, students will have awareness of their own philosophical positions and the evaluative skills needed for clear, critical and analytic thinking. **This course satisfies the University of Texas at Arlington core curriculum requirement in Language, Philosophy & Culture.**

## UTA Core Curriculum Objectives
- Critical Thinking Skills: creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information
- Communication Skills: effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication
- Social Responsibility: intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national and global communities
- Personal Responsibility: the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision- making

## Student Learning Outcomes
1) Understand the nature of reasoning and argumentation (Critical Thinking Skills)

(2) Understand many of the ways in which historical philosophers have attempted to address philosophical problems, including the problem of the relation of the individual to society in both its ethical and political dimensions (Personal and Social Responsibility)

(3) Be able to identify various philosophical themes and influences and specify their relation to the contemporary world

(4) Demonstrate competency in oral and written communication (Communication Skills)

(5) Work effectively in a collaborative environment.

## Required Textbooks and Other Course Materials
John W. Carroll & Ned Markosian, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, (A Cambridge Introduction to Philosophy), Cambridge University Press, United Kingdom, 2010. **Paperback ISBN: 9780521533683**
**UTA Bookstore link** https://www.bkstr.com/texasatarlingtonstore/home

**Descriptions of major assignments and examinations (See Course Schedule for due dates)**

**Discussion Boards/Quizzes:** A series of Discussion Boards and Quizzes (6 in all) will be opened, in which students are required to either post in response to a prompt with a minimum of 250 words, or answer quiz questions.

**Signature Assessment: Research Paper:** Students will research and write an essay of a minimum of 1500 words on a topic of their choice (which will be made and refined in consultation with the Instructor). Students are to demonstrate good research skills, and proper citation conventions for this paper. Drafts will be reviewed by both the Instructor and fellow student peers. The draft, and the review of a peer's essay will each be assessed separately.

**Exam:** A final exam comprising of a series of short answer questions will be made available online in the finals week. It will be open for 24 hours only, and must be completed during that time.

**Course Outcomes and Performance Measurement:**

| Course Objective(s) | Module Number and Objective(s) | Assignment (Practice) | Assessment Item (Showing Mastery) |
|---|---|---|---|
| SLO: 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5 | **Unit 1:** Identify some objectives and methods of philosophy, as well as identify some sub-topics in the discipline. Engage with ancient philosophical literature in order to recognize the historical connections within the discipline. Summarize and analyze philosophical texts. Respond critically to, and engage intellectually with others. | | Discussion Board #1 post and replies |
| SLO: 1 | **Unit 2**: Identify and name different argument fallacies. Critically assess a variety of informal and formal arguments for validity and soundness. Recognize persuasive, yet fallacious, techniques of argumentation aimed at influencing thinking and behavior. Translate natural language arguments into symbolic forms. | Practice/self-assessment logic quizzes | Formal and Informal Logic quizzes |

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| | Assess validity of formal arguments. Construct valid and sound arguments. | | |
| SLO: 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5 | **Unit 3:** Describe, summarize, and critically assess the basic arguments about human knowledge in the historical and introductory literature. Discuss the philosophical problem of what knowledge consists in and how we may acquire it, and to defend and support a reasoned view of one's own. Identify the key characteristics of both Rationalism and Empiricism. Develop and demonstrate good discussion skills. | | Discussion Board #2 post and replies |
| SLO: 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5 | **Unit 4:** Describe, summarize, and critically assess the basic arguments about the relationship between the mind and the brain in the introductory philosophical literature. Identify the argument structures in the readings. Discuss the problems in the philosophy of mind, to defend and support a reasoned view of one's own, and to write clearly about it. | | Discussion Board # 3 AND #4 post and replies |
| SLO: 1, 3 & 4 | **Unit 5:** Develop and demonstrate good literature research skills. Develop and demonstrate good written communication skills. Construct and develop a sound philosophical argument. Consolidate good bibliographical and citation skills. | Choose a Research Paper topic. Find resources, begin research, and writing of draft. | Write a Thesis Statement |
| SLO: 2, 3, 4 & 5 | **UNIT 6:** Describe, summarize, and critically assess the basic arguments about the fundamental structure of reality in the historical | Peer reviewing each others' Research Paper Drafts | Submit a Draft research Essay Submit a Peer Review |

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| | philosophical literature. Recognize and discuss the difference between a 'substance' and a 'property'. Describe, summarize, and critically assess the basic arguments in ontology about what exists at the fundamental level of reality. Identify and analyze the argument structures in the readings, and assess their merits. Demonstrate competent research and writing skills in humanities-based subjects. Design and propose constructive criticism on the views and arguments of one's peers; and to make use of constructive criticism offered effectively. | | |
| SLO: 4, 5 | **Unit 7:** Describe, summarize, and critically assess the basic arguments proposed in texts. Recognize and discuss the concepts of free will, physical, social, and biological determinism. Describe, summarize, and critically assess the basic arguments in the philosophical literature on the question of free will and determinism. Identify and analyze the argument structures in the readings. | Continue working on Research Paper. | |
| SLO: 2, 3 & 4 | **Unit 8:** Identify the many ways in which historical philosophers have attempted to address philosophical problems. Research various philosophical themes and influences and specify their relations to the contemporary world. Demonstrate competence in oral and written communications. | | Submit Final Research Paper |
| SLO: 2, 3 & 4 | **Unit 9:** Recognize and discuss | Begin preparation for Final | |

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|---|---|---|---|
| | the concepts of personal identity, and psychological and physical continuity. Describe, summarize, and critically assess the basic arguments in the philosophical literature on the question of selfhood and personal identity. Identify and analyze the argument structures in the readings. | Exam. | |
| SLO: 2, 3 & 4 | **Unit 10:** Recognize and discuss the theories of Moral/Ethical Realism and Moral/Ethical Relativism. Describe, summarize, and critically assess the basic arguments in the philosophical literature on the question of whether moral value is objective or relative. Identify and analyze the argument structures in the readings. Demonstrate competence in discussing and writing about moral value, and the theories of Moral/Ethical Realism and Moral/Ethical Relativism. | Continue review and revise for final exam. | |
| SLO: 1, 2, 3 & 4 | **Unit 11:** Analyze and assess the nature of reasoning and argumentation. Identify many of the ways in which historical philosophers have attempted to address philosophical problems. Research various philosophical themes and influences and specify their relation to the contemporary world. Demonstrate competence in oral and written communications. | | Final comprehensive exam. |

**Attendance Policy**
At The University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required. Rather, each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students' academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. The instructor of this section, given that it is an online course, will not take attendance, but will regularly check your access and participation on this website – including page views. If I am concerned about your participation level, you will be contacted.

**Other Requirements**
This course is offered in entirety as an online format through Blackboard. It is a requirement and responsibility of each student to have access to a computer and a high speed Internet connection on a daily basis. Review UT Arlington's hardware recommendations: http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/hardware/student-laptop-recommend.php and Blackboard's browser requirements: http://www.uta.edu/blackboard/browsertest/browsertest.php.

You will use your Netid and password to login to Blackboard at https://elearn.uta.edu/. It is your responsibility to become familiar with Blackboard and how to access course components. There are several Blackboard resources for students including http://www.uta.edu/blackboard/students/index.php and http://help.blackboard.com/.

This course requires the use of word processing and presentation software that is compatible with Microsoft Office formats. Students may purchase this software (in person or by mail) at a significant discount from the UT Arlington bookstore http://www.uta.edu/bookstore.

**Grading Policy**
Students are expected to keep track of their performance throughout the semester and seek guidance from available sources (including the instructor) if their performance drops below satisfactory levels.

Course Grading Scale
A = 90 to 100
B = 80-89
C = 70-79
D = 60 to 69
F = below 59

| Required Components for Course Credit | Weight / Percentage Value Within the Course |
|---|---|
| Discussion Board posts and replies x 4 | 5% each – 20% of course total |
| Logic Quizzes x 2 | 5% each – 10% of course total |
| Thesis Statement | 5% of course total |
| Research Paper Draft | 10% of course total |
| Peer Review of Research Paper Draft | 10% of course total |
| Final Research Paper | 25% of course total |
| Final Exam | 20% of course total |
| | |
| | =100% |

**Grade Grievances**

Any appeal of a grade in this course must follow the procedures and deadlines for grade-related grievances as published in the current University Catalog.
http://www.uta.edu/deanofstudents/student-complaints/index.php.

**Late Assignments / Assessments:**

Late Discussion Board posts MAY be accepted if you discuss with your Instructor *before* the due date, and you have a relevant excuse.
Late logic quizzes cannot be accepted.
Late Online Group Debate Wikis cannot be accepted as this affects the entire group.
Late Research papers MAY be accepted *with documented excuse*.
Late exams are not accepted.
Make-up exams MAY be possible with a *documented excuse*.

**Expectations of Out-of-Class Study**

(The following is from the UTA Student Handbook) "A general rule of thumb is this: for every credit hour earned, a student should spend 3 hours per week working outside of class. Hence, a 3-credit course might have a minimum expectation of 9 hours of reading, study, etc. Beyond the time required to attend each class meeting, students enrolled in this course should expect to spend at least an additional 9 hours per week of their own time in course-related activities, including reading required materials, completing assignments, preparing for exams, etc." This may be somewhat ambitious. However, you should expect a minimum of an hour of outside class-time study for every hour in-class. **For online classes, expect to spend about 4 - 6 hours *minimum* on each 3-credit class, per week to be successful.**

**Drop Policy**

Regulations pertaining to adding or dropping courses are described below. Adds and drops may be made through late registration either on the Web at MyMav or in person through the student's academic department. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-**

**attendance**. Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. Contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships at http://www.uta.edu/fao/  The last day to drop a course is listed in the Academic Calendar available at http://www.uta.edu/uta/acadcal.php?session=20166.

> **Census Day: 09/07/2018**
> **Last day to drop or withdraw by 4:00 p.m.**

**Disability Accommodations**
UT Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including *The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA),* and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.* All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of disability. Students are responsible for providing the instructor with official notification in the form of **a letter certified** by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD).  Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting:

**The Office for Students with Disabilities, (OSD)**  www.uta.edu/disability or calling 817-272-3364. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability.

**Counseling and Psychological Services, (CAPS)**   www.uta.edu/caps/ or calling 817-272-3671 is also available to all students to help increase their understanding of personal issues, address mental and behavioral health problems and make positive changes in their lives.

**Non-Discrimination Policy**
*The University of Texas at Arlington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, genetic information, and/or veteran status in its educational programs or activities it operates. For more information, visit uta.edu/eos.*

**Title IX Policy**
The University of Texas at Arlington ("University") is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from discrimination based on sex in accordance with Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs or activities; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), which prohibits sex discrimination in employment; and the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE Act). Sexual misconduct is a form of sex discrimination and will not be

tolerated. *For information regarding Title IX, visit* www.uta.edu/titleIX or contact Ms. Jean Hood, Vice President and Title IX Coordinator at (817) 272-7091 or jmhood@uta.edu.

**Academic Integrity**
All students enrolled in this course are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

> *I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington's tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.*
>
> *I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources.  I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.*

UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code as they see fit in their courses, including (but not limited to) having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted.

Per UT System Regents' Rule 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university's standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with the University policy, which may result in the student's suspension or expulsion from the University. Additional information is available at https://www.uta.edu/conduct/.

"Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts."

**Plagiarism**
Copying another student's paper or any portion of it is plagiarism. Copying a portion of published material (e.g., books or journals) without adequately documenting the source is plagiarism. Consistent with APA format, if five or more words in sequence are taken from a source, those words must be placed in quotes and the source referenced with author's name, date of publication, and page number of publication. If the author's ideas are rephrased, by transposing words or expressing the same idea using different words, the idea must be attributed to the author by proper referencing giving the author's name and date of publication. If a single author's ideas are discussed in more than one paragraph, the author must be referenced, according to APA format. Authors whose words or ideas have been used in the preparation of a paper must be listed in the references cited at the end of the paper. Students are expected to review the plagiarism module from the UT Arlington Central Library via http://library.uta.edu/plagiarism/index.html.

**Student Support Services**
UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to resources@uta.edu, or view the information at http://www.uta.edu/universitycollege/resources/index.php.

University Tutorial & Supplemental Instruction (Ransom Hall 205): UTSI offers a variety of academic support services for undergraduate students, including: 60 minute one-on-one tutoring sessions, Start Strong Freshman tutoring program, and Supplemental Instruction. Office hours are Monday-Friday 8:00am-5:00pm. For more information visit www.uta.edu/utsi or call 817-272-2617.

The IDEAS Center (2nd Floor of Central Library) offers free tutoring to all students with a focus on transfer students, sophomores, veterans and others undergoing a transition to UT Arlington. To schedule an appointment with a peer tutor or mentor email IDEAS@uta.edu or call (817) 272-6593.

The English Writing Center (411LIBR): The Writing Center Offers free tutoring in 20-, 40-, or 60-minute face-to-face and online sessions to all UTA students on any phase of their UTA coursework. Our hours are 9 am to 8 pm Mon.-Thurs., 9 am-3 pm Fri. and Noon-6 pm Sat. and Sun. Register and make appointments online at http://uta.mywconline.com Classroom Visits, workshops, and specialized services for graduate students are also available. Please see www.uta.edu/owl for detailed information on all our programs and services.

The Library's 2nd floor Academic Plaza offers students a central hub of support services, including IDEAS Center, University Advising Services, Transfer UTA and various college/school advising hours. Services are available during the library's hours of operation. http://library.uta.edu/academic-plaza

Library Home Page library.uta.edu

**Resources for Students**
Academic Help
Academic Plaza Consultation Services library.uta.edu/academic-plaza
Ask Us ask.uta.edu/
Library Tutorials library.uta.edu/how-to
Subject and Course Research Guides libguides.uta.edu
Subject Librarians library.uta.edu/subject-librarians
Resources
A to Z List of Library Databases libguides.uta.edu/az.php

Course Reserves pulse.uta.edu/vwebv/enterCourseReserve.do
FabLab fablab.uta.edu/
Special Collections library.uta.edu/special-collections
Study Room Reservations openroom.uta.edu/
Undergraduate Research Skills Instruction, Gretchen Trkay gtrkay@uta.edu or your subject librarian.

## Campus Carry
Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law  (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes as prohibited. Under the new law, openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit http://www.uta.edu/news/info/campus-carry/

## Electronic Communication
UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. **All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly.** There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php.

If you are unable to resolve your issue contact the Helpdesk at helpdesk@uta.edu.

## Student Feedback Survey
At the end of each term, students enrolled in face-to-face and online classes categorized as "lecture," "seminar," or "laboratory" are directed to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student's feedback via the SFS database is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. Students' anonymity will be protected to the extent that the law allows. UT Arlington's effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law and aggregate results are posted online. Data from SFS is also used for faculty and program evaluations. For more information, visit http://www.uta.edu/sfs.

## Final Review Week
For semester-long courses**,** a period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any

portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

**Course Schedule**
Please note that your Instructor reserves the right to adjust this schedule as needs arise, with notice to students.

*2300 Intro to Philosophy Online Schedule Fall 2018*

| Week begins: | Unit | WEEK | Admin/INFO. | READING | TOPIC | ACTIVITY/ASSESSMENT (due midnight of due date, unless otherwise noted) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **08/22 (Weds, 1st day of classes)** | 1 Intro | 1 | Don't forget to post on the Who We Are discussion board! | Russell Plato | Intro to Phil The value of phil | Discussion #1: due 08/26 |
| **08/27** | 2:1 Logic | 2 | | Weston | Informal Logic/fallacies | Informal Logic Quiz due: 09/02 |
| **09/03** | 2:2 Logic | 3 | Labor Day Hol. on 09/03 Census date 09/07 | Magnus | Formal Logic | Formal Logic Quiz due: 09/09 |
| **09/10** | 3:1 Knowledge | 4 | | Plato Descartes | What is knowledge? How do we acquire it? | Discussion #2: due 09/16 |
| **09/17** | 3:2 Knowledge | 5 | | Putnam | Skepticism about our knowledge of the external world. | |
| **09/24** | 4:1 Mind | 6 | | Carroll & Markosian Descartes Smart | What is the 'mind'? Is it a physical or non-physical thing? | Discussion #3: due 09/30 |
| | | | | | | |

| Monday (BEGIN WEEK) | Unit | WEEK No. | Admin/INFO. | READING | TOPIC | ACTIVITY/ASSESSMENT (due midnight of due date, unless otherwise noted) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10/01 | 4:2 Mind | 7 | | Jackson Turing | Is the mind a machine? Can a machine 'think'? | Discussion #4: due 10/07 |
| 10/08 | 5 Special Unit on Essay Writing | 8 | | Online materials | | Choose your topic for your Research Paper and email to discuss with Instructor. |
| 10/15 | 6:1 Metaphysics | 9 | | Carroll & Markosian Spinoza Leibniz | Substances and properties, universals and particulars. | Thesis Statement due: 10/21 |
| 10/22 | 6:2 Metaphysics | 10 | Last day to drop: 11/02 before 4pm. Daylight saving ends 11/04 | Carroll & Markosian | What are 'things' composed of? Are there many 'substances' or just one? | |
| 10/29 | Review/Draft | 11 | | | | Research Paper drafts for peer review due **MON 11/05** – access your peer's draft for review. |
| 11/05 | 7:1 Free Will | 12 | | Carroll & Markosian D'Holbach | Do we really have 'free will'? Or are we determined in some way? | Peer Review of Research paper Drafts due: 11/11 |

| Monday (BEGIN WEEK) | Unit | WEEK No. | Admin/INFO. | READING | TOPIC | ACTIVITY/ASSESSMENT (due midnight of due date, unless otherwise noted) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 11/12 | 7:2 Free Will | 13 | | Kane Beckermann | What does the term 'free will' mean? Is free will perhaps *compatible* with determinism? | |
| 11/19 | 8 Self | 14 | TG Hols. 11/21 – 11/23 | Carroll & Markosian Chapter 5 Hume | What is a 'self'? What unifies a self over time and change? | Research Papers due: 11/25 |
| 11/26 | 9 Ethics | 15 | | Harman & Thompson | Are 'right' and 'wrong' objective? | |
| 12/03 | Course review/exam prep. | 16 | **Last day of class 12/04** | | | Course review/exam prep. |
| 12/06 – 12/12 | Finals week | | | | Final Exam goes online: Mon DEC 10 at 7am | Exam closes Tue DEC 11 at 7am. |