



## Philosophy 1305 CORR:

### Philosophy and Critical Thinking

**Academic Semester/Term:** Correspondence

***Course description (from catalog):** A study of universal philosophical problems and their solutions with a view toward developing clear thinking about knowledge, belief, and value. Approximately one half of this course will focus on the student's critical thinking skills.*

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Instructor: Ellen B. Stansell, Ph.D.

Course section number: PHIL 1305 CORR

Dates: Flexible

Instructor's office number: N/A. I hold office hours online in Zoom.

Departmental phone: (512) 245-2285

Email: ebs22@txstate.edu

Office hours: Please email me for my current office hours.

### General Education Core Curriculum (Code 040)

The following learning outcomes are established by the school for all sections of PHIL 1305.

### Language, Philosophy and Culture Component Outcomes

Students will explore behavior and interactions among individuals, groups, institutions, and events, examining their impact on the individual, society, and culture.

### Core Objectives/Competencies Outcomes

- *Critical Thinking*
  - Students will demonstrate creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.
- *Communication*

- Students will effectively develop, interpret and express ideas through written, oral and visual communication.
- *Social Responsibility*
  - Students will demonstrate intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.
- *Personal Responsibility*
  - Students will relate choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.

## Course Learning Objectives

The following learning outcomes are established by the instructor for this section of PHIL 1305. Please note that each Course Learning Objective is given label (CO1, CO2, and CO3) for easy reference throughout the course materials.

CO1: Analyze philosophical views and arguments

CO2: Evaluate philosophical views and arguments

CO3: Develop your own philosophical views and arguments

## Materials, Subscriptions, and Minimum Technology Requirements

### Textbooks & Online Subscription

To complete the course, you will need:

- A subscription to [Argumentation.io](https://www.argumentation.io), a web-based application (app)
- The textbook *With Good Reason* by Jonathan Surovell, an e-book posted on [Argumentation.io](https://www.argumentation.io) and accessible with your [Argumentation.io](https://www.argumentation.io) subscription
- The textbook *Introducing Philosophy: A Text With Integrated Readings* (13<sup>th</sup> Edition) by Robert C. Solomon, Kathleen M. Higgins, and Clancy Martin

These materials are **not included** in the Booksmart program. You are responsible for obtaining them on your own through purchase, rental, or library access.

### Technology Requirements

Students must:

- Activate their Texas State email address and check it regularly.
- Have access to the online Canvas system and the ability to use it to stream videos, record videos, take quizzes, check grades, download readings, and upload documents.
- Take the course using a device that has a working webcam (video camera) and microphone—no exceptions. You will need to make and post videos of yourself for some assignments.
- Have access to a printer that can print out PDF and Word documents
- Have access to a device that can take pictures of handwritten work and upload those pictures to Canvas

## Work and Grading

### Homework

Unscored homework includes reading, viewing videos and video lectures. Scored homework includes quizzes, argument mapping assignments, written assignments of 100-800 words, and video presentations (you create and post a video of yourself).

## Exams

There are no exams in the course.

## Grading

You will earn points by completing assignments. Following are the maximum points possible in each learning module:

Start Here	10 pts.
Module 1	40 pts.
Module 2	150 pts.
Module 3	150 pts.
Module 4	150 pts.
TOTAL	500 pts.

Your final course grade is calculated by adding up the total number of points you earned throughout the course and dividing that number by the total points possible for the course (500) to calculate your final percentage score.

Final percentage scores are calculated to 2 decimal places without rounding. The following grading scale will be applied to assign your minimum final grade:

90-100% = A  
80-89.99% = B  
70-79.99% = C  
60-69.99% = D  
Below 60 pts. = F

Final numerical course grades that are within 2% of the next highest grade level may or may not be rounded up at the instructor's discretion and based on a careful review of multiple aspects of your performance over the course.

# Course Learning Activities

## Start Here Module

### *Activities*

1. Start Here Module Quiz (5 pts.)
2. Course Pacing Guide (5 pts.)

## Module 1—What is Philosophy?

### *Module Learning Objectives*

MO1: Describe the goals of philosophy

MO2: Analyze philosophical arguments

### *Activities and Assessments*

1. Module 1 Concept Map (extra credit) (4 pts.)
2. Module 1 What is Philosophy Video Teach-Back (6 pts.)
3. Chapter 1 Quiz (6 pts.)
4. Chapter 2 Quiz (6 pts.)
5. Chapter 3 Quiz (6 pts.)
6. Chapter 4 Quiz (6 pts.)
7. Chapter 5 Quiz (6 pts.)

NOTE: You are required to achieve a minimum score of 80% on the Chapter 1 Quiz, Chapter 2 Quiz, Chapter 3 Quiz, and Chapter 4 Quiz. You will have the opportunity to take each quiz twice. Students who read the assigned textbook readings and do the practice exercises to prepare for these quizzes usually score at least 80%. Be sure to utilize these materials, take time to study, and reach out to the professor for help if you do not score at least 80% on your first attempt at these quizzes.

## Module 2—Does God Exist?

### *Module Learning Objectives*

MO1: Analyze views and arguments on metaphysical issues

MO2: Evaluate views and arguments on metaphysical issues

MO3: Develop your own views and arguments on metaphysical issues

### *Activities and Assessments*

1. Module 2 Concept Map (extra credit) (4 pts.)
2. Module 2 Argument Mapping Assignment (20 pts.)
3. Module 2 Paraphrasing Assignment (20 pts.)
4. Module 2 Argument Evaluation Assignment (20 pts.)
5. Module 2 Write Your Own Argument Assignment (10 pts.)
6. Module 2 Essay (40 pts.)
7. Module 2 Video Presentation (40 pts.)

## Module 3—How Do We Know?

### *Module Learning Objectives*

MO1: Analyze views and arguments on knowledge

MO2: Evaluate views and arguments on knowledge

MO3: Develop your own views and arguments on knowledge

### *Activities and Assessments*

1. Quiz: Module 3 Concept Map (extra credit) (4 pts.)
2. Module 3 Argument Mapping Assignment (20 pts.)
3. Module 3 Paraphrasing Assignment (20 pts.)
4. Module 3 Argument Evaluation Assignment (20 pts.)
5. Module 3 Write Your Own Argument Assignment (10 pts.)
6. Module 3 Essay (40 pts.)
7. Module 3 Video Presentation (40 pts.)

## Module 4—What is a Good Life?

### *Module Learning Objectives*

MO1: Analyze views and arguments on ethics

MO2: Evaluate views and arguments on ethics

MO3: Develop your own views and arguments on ethics

### *Activities and Assessments*

1. Quiz: Module 4 Concept Map (extra credit) (4 pts.)
2. Module 4 Argument Mapping Assignment (20 pts.)
3. Module 4 Paraphrasing Assignment (20 pts.)
4. Module 4 Argument Evaluation Assignment (20 pts.)
5. Module 4 Write Your Own Argument Assignment (10 pts.)
6. Module 4 Essay (40 pts.)
7. Module 4 Video Presentation (40 pts.)

There is no final exam for this course.

## Course Policies

### Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty includes cheating, collusion, deception, fabrication, plagiarism, sabotage, unauthorized collaboration, and other forms of misconduct. It is the student's responsibility to understand what counts as academic dishonesty and avoid it.

Plagiarism is perhaps the most common form of academic dishonesty. Sometimes students commit plagiarism unintentionally. Plagiarism includes copying another writer's content word-for-word, modifying another writer's content and presenting as one's own, using another author's sentence structure or sequence of ideas in a paragraph and filling in the structure with one's own words, self-plagiarism (such as turning in the same writing for more than one assignment or more than one course), and more. It is the student's responsibility to understand what counts as plagiarism and avoid it. For more information, see the "Originality" section below.

Any act of academic dishonesty, intentional or unintentional, may be penalized at the instructor's discretion. Penalties may range from a warning to a final grade of F for the course. The event may be reported to the school and disciplinary action may result.

All written work is subject to evaluation by a plagiarism checker such as SafeAssign or Turnitin with which the school has a contractual agreement. When one of these plagiarism checkers is used, your work may be uploaded to and stored in their database indefinitely.

*Policy on generative AI* For this class, "AI" has a broad definition and refers to any program or browser extension that can edit your writing or create new content, including text, images, and code. The use of AI or Generative AI tools, including those provided by Texas State University, such as Co-Pilot, Grammarly, ChatGPT, or similar programs, is strictly prohibited for all assignments. Relying on AI undermines certain learning objectives of this course and could be considered academic dishonesty. This includes using AI for brainstorming, proofreading, changing the tone and style, editing, summarizing, or drafting any part of your work. Violations will be treated as any other violation of the Honor Code as listed in this syllabus and will be reported to the Honor Code Council.

If you are unsure whether a tool is permitted, assume it is not, and consult with me first. You are responsible for your own original work and academic integrity. For writing assistance, please visit the University Writing Center.

*Response to suspected academic dishonesty* When the instructor finds a substantive reason to suspect AI use or any other form of academic dishonesty, she will:

- assign a score of 0 for the assignment
- explain the score in the comments field associated with the assignment and attach any supporting evidence there
- give the student an opportunity to discuss the assignment and contest the grade; this can occur via email or Zoom
- submit an academic dishonesty report to the school unless discussion with the student alleviates suspicion of intentional academic dishonesty

### Changes to the Course Requirements or Policies

Anything stated in the syllabus is subject to change at the instructor's discretion except the policies listed in the "University Policies and Services" section. The syllabus may also include errors. Any changes and corrections will be announced to the whole class and will apply to all students.

## Communication Policy

Always use the email account assigned to you by our school when emailing the instructor. Check and read your messages at least every 2 days. The instructor checks and answers email sent to her school email address at least once a day, Monday-Friday. Students are expected to be polite and mature in all communications.

## Email

Use your school email account when emailing the instructor or any other school official. Do not turn in work via email.

## Extra Credit

A number of extra credit opportunities are offered. These assignments are posted as worth 0 pts. in Canvas, and the assignment description states the maximum possible points of extra credit that can be earned. No additional extra credit opportunities will be provided.

## Feedback

Dr. Stansell writes feedback on all written work. To find this feedback:

- In the Canvas course area, go to “Grades”
- Click the assignment name
- Click on the speech-bubble icon

## Grading—Assignments

Assignments are graded using scoring rubrics that are posted along with each assignment in Canvas.

## Illness and Emergencies

This is a self-paced course with some limitations: you may not turn in more than 2 required, scored assignments per week (unscored and extra credit work does not count toward this 2-assignment limit) and you must complete the course in 6 months. Within those limits, you may turn in work as you are able. You will complete a Course Pacing Document in which you establish target due dates for each item due. However, the dates you enter on the Course Pacing Document are not rigid due dates. If you miss one due to illness, emergency, or another life event, continue working when you are able, as long as you complete the course within 6 months and do not turn in more than 2 required, scored assignments per week.

## Incompletes

If you experience a serious medical event or other difficulty that may prevent you from completing the work for this course, contact Prof. Stansell as soon as possible to discuss your situation.

## Late and Missed Work

This is a self-paced course with some limitations: you may not turn in more than 2 required, scored assignments per week (unscored and extra credit work does not count toward this 2-assignment limit) and you must complete the course in 6 months. Within those limits, you may turn in work as you are able. You will complete a Course Pacing Document in which you establish target due dates for each item due. However, the dates you enter on the Course Pacing Document are not rigid due dates. If you miss one due to illness, emergency, or another life event, continue working when you are able, as long as you complete the course within 6 months and do not turn in more than 2 required, scored assignments per week.

## Originality

Every written submission must be a student's own new, unique, original work. This means you must do your own writing and you may not reuse or recycle work you wrote previously for this course, another course, or a publication, unless the assignment instructions specifically explain that it is o.k. to do that.

Do not present someone else's ideas as your own, even if you have entirely reworded them.

Do not include quotes in your submissions unless the assignment instructions state that quotes are acceptable.

*Policy on generative AI* For this class, "AI" has a broad definition and refers to any program or browser extension that can edit your writing or create new content, including text, images, and code. The use of AI or Generative AI tools, including those provided by Texas State University, such as Co-Pilot, Grammarly, ChatGPT, or similar programs, is strictly prohibited for all assignments. Relying on AI undermines certain learning objectives of this course and could be considered academic dishonesty. This includes using AI for brainstorming, proofreading, changing the tone and style, editing, summarizing, or drafting any part of your work. Violations will be treated as any other violation of the Honor Code as listed in this syllabus and will be reported to the Honor Code Council.

If you are unsure whether a tool is permitted, assume it is not, and consult with me. You are responsible for your own original work and academic integrity. For writing assistance, please visit the University Writing Center.

*Originality guidelines* Do not copy words, phrases, or sentences written/spoken by others or generated by AI and include this content in your work; this is considered plagiarism. It is also not permissible to start with words, phrases, or sentences written/spoken by others or generated by AI and modify it by replacing words with synonyms or changing basic elements of the sentence structure. Your writing must meet the following four originality requirements:

1. Wording--key words and phrases are original and were not created by starting from someone else's writing and replacing words with synonyms.
2. The grammatical structure of key phrases and sentences is original.
3. The sequence of ideas presented is original.
4. An original strategy to express key ideas is used.

*Paraphrasing* Paraphrasing is using your own writing to express someone else's ideas. A paraphrase is considered your own original writing and your own intellectual property, even though it expresses what someone else said or wrote. Thus, the source for the paraphrase generally must be cited (however, if you are answering a short homework question about an assigned author's thoughts, you do not need to cite your source, because it is assumed you are using the assigned reading) and your writing must meet the four originality requirements listed in the previous paragraph.

The instructor recognizes three types of paraphrasing:

1. Unacceptable: the source you paraphrased was not cited and/or keywords are replaced with synonyms, but sentence structure is not significantly changed and many connecting words (such as verbs, conjunctions, and prepositions) remain the same. Similarities between the original sentence and the student's submission are readily apparent. It is easy to see that the student's work was written by modifying the original author's work. Generally, when this form of paraphrasing is detected in a student's work, the student will receive a 0 for the portion of the assignment that was affected. But, this form of paraphrasing is plagiarism, and if it happens more than once, the instructor may not allow additional revision opportunities. Here is an example of this type of paraphrasing:

Original quote: "The reality is that we cannot recycle our way out of the plastics pollution crisis using the system we have in place."



Unacceptable paraphrase: “The author argues that we cannot use recycling to find our path out of this environmental emergency utilizing the programs we have installed.”

Similarities: 1.) Wording: much wording is the same (“we cannot,” “our...out of,” “we have”). It is o.k. that both use “recycle” because that is a necessary keyword when discussing this topic. 2.) Structure: The grammatical structure of key phrases and the sentence is the same. 3.) The sequence of ideas is the same. 4.) The strategy used to express the ideas is the same.

2. Minimally acceptable: all keywords are replaced with appropriate synonyms and an original sentence structure is employed, this means the sentence structure is significantly changed so that new verbs, conjunctions, prepositions, and punctuation are used. A new sentence has been created, but it was written based on someone else’s writing. This is not truly original writing and does not show strong college-level writing skills. Work including this form of paraphrasing is eligible for passing scores but not high scores. Example:

Original quote: “The reality is that we cannot recycle our way out of the plastics pollution crisis using the system we have in place. The heart of the problem lies in the simple fact that big corporations are producing plastic such as packaging, bags and foam that end up being unrecyclable.”

Minimally acceptable paraphrase: “The author argues that as long as businesses keep making new plastic packages that cannot be recycled, this problem cannot be resolved by recycling.”

Differences: 1.) Wording: key phrases were significantly reworded, such as “this problem cannot be resolved by recycling” in place of “we cannot recycle our way out of the plastics pollution crisis.” Note that it is fine to use key words like “recycle,” “plastic,” and “pollution” since these are necessary for discussing this particular topic. 2.) Structure: the structure of phrases is different, for example “this problem cannot be resolved by recycling” is different enough from “we cannot recycle our way out of the plastics pollution crisis.” 3.) The order of the two main phrases of the sentence are switched, which makes the sequence of ideas different. However, switching the order of key phrases is light modification of the author’s writing; it is not as good as crafting a completely original grammatical structure for the sentence. And, it does not count as an original strategy to express the ideas.

Similarities: 4.) Strategy: the same strategy to express key ideas is used in the paraphrase as in the original.

Here’s a better paraphrase that fully meets all four originality criteria: “Recycling can only work with recyclable materials. It cannot stop non-recyclable materials from creating pollution. Therefore, recycling is only a partial solution. We also need manufacturers to stop producing non-recyclable materials.”

3. Excellent: the author’s ideas are expressed in a truly original way. This form of paraphrasing is not a translation or modification of the authors sentences. Instead, the student identifies the ideas to be summarized and describes them in their own way. Work including this form of paraphrasing is eligible for high scores.

Excellent paraphrasing is not performed sentence-by-sentence, but summarizes key ideas, so for this example we will need to look at a longer original quote: “Eight of the 10 most commonly polluted plastic items, which include utensils and food wrappers, are not recyclable in America’s municipal recycling system. Over 90% of U.S. plastic waste is never recycled. And so every year, about 32 million tons of plastic are landfilled or incinerated. That doesn’t count the amount that directly litters our environment or that we ship to developing countries to handle. The reality is that we cannot recycle our way out of this crisis using the system we have in place. The heart of the problem lies in the simple fact that big corporations are producing plastic such as packaging, bags and foam that end up being unrecyclable. Once these plastic products are used, no businesses want to buy the scraps to recycle them. They end up as eternal plastic waste instead.”

Original paraphrase: “The author explains that despite the public’s faith in recycling as an effective way to reduce pollution, plastics continue to be produced in the US that are not recycled or even recyclable, and millions of tons of plastic waste pollutes the air when incinerated, the land in landfills, and the environment as litter per year in the US. The author argues recycling is not a solution to this problem.”

For additional explanation of these three categories of paraphrasing, the following videos are very helpful:

[How to Paraphrase](#) by QUT Library  
[Good and Bad Paraphrasing](#) by Univ. of Akron Libraries

It is always acceptable to use a few keywords that are essential to a topic. For example, if writing about a philosopher's view on human rights in Ethics, you can use the terms "human rights" and "rights" even if they did too because these are essential keywords. Or, as another example, if you are writing about Bertrand Russell's view of sense data, which is a special term he coined, the term "sense data" will need to appear in your writing.

*Guidelines for writing original arguments* When writing your own original arguments and evaluations, it is o.k. to include ideas from assigned readings and videos when you have incorporated these ideas into your own thought. However, whenever you do so, you must name the source of the idea. For this class, the instructor does not require in-text citations or a works-cited page, just that you mention that the idea came from another person, and that you give that person's name.

Q: What if ideas in my original work happen to also appear in assigned course materials, but I had these ideas before entering the course and I did not get them from the assigned material?

A: In that case, you do not need to credit the author, but you are required to mention that you and the author/speaker share the idea in question. Mention their name when you discuss the idea.

When students are assigned to write an original argument or an original argument evaluation (which is a type of argument), submissions consisting entirely of ideas borrowed from other sources will receive a low score. The more original content, the higher your submission stands to score.

*Self-plagiarism* When students submit content they have submitted for another assignment in this course or another course, or content they have published elsewhere, this is considered self-plagiarism. Resubmitting content you submitted for a previous assignment in the course is only acceptable for an Essay or Term Paper that is designed to utilize content from previous assignments. When it is acceptable to reuse previously submitted content, this will be mentioned in assignment instructions.

## Problem Resolution

If you are having a problem related to this course or related to your professor, your first step generally should be to speak with your professor. If I cannot resolve the problem or satisfy your concern, or, if for some reason you would prefer not to address the issue with your professor, you may contact: Prof. Craig Hanks, Chair of the Department of Philosophy, [craig.hanks@txstate.edu](mailto:craig.hanks@txstate.edu)

## Submission of Work

Type your work unless another format is specified in the assignment instructions. Submit all work to the appropriate drop box in the online learning system (Canvas). Work will not be accepted via email.

When submitting a document, you must use one of the following file types: .doc, .docx, .docm, .odt, .txt, .rtf, .pdf, or .html. Unfortunately, other file types, including Google Docs and Pages, cannot be accepted because they cannot be opened or read in the school's online learning system. It is your responsibility to check that your work was submitted successfully. No special extensions will be offered because work was not submitted properly or successfully.

## Technical Difficulties

You are responsible for maintaining your device (including webcam and microphone), software, and internet access. Unfortunately, if any of these malfunction, you will not be granted an extension.

If you experience technical difficulties with using Canvas or any content or materials provided by the instructor, do all three of the following before the assignment deadline:

1. Review the [Canvas Student Guide](#) which is searchable and may help you address the issue yourself.
2. Contact [ITAC](#) at TXST for technical assistance. They can help students with a wide variety of issues—you may be surprised! Do not assume they cannot help you. Contact them!
3. Take a screenshot showing the problem you are having. Email the instructor and attach the screen shot to the email. IMPORTANT: Be sure to provide your course code and the exact name of the assignment as it appears in Canvas. Otherwise, the instructor's first email back to you will be to ask for this information. Your request for help is not considered to have been made until you provide this information.

## Withdrawals

It is the responsibility of each student to ensure that their name is removed from the rolls should they decide to withdraw from the class. The instructor does, however, reserve the right to drop a student should she feel it is necessary. If a student decides to withdraw, they should also verify that the withdrawal is recorded before the final withdrawal date posted on the Academic Calendar on the school website. The student is encouraged to keep any paperwork.

Students are responsible for understanding the impact that withdrawal from a course may have on their financial aid, veterans' benefits, and international student status. Per state law, students enrolling for the first time in Fall 2007 or later at any public Texas college or university may not withdraw (receive a W) from more than six courses during their undergraduate college education. Students are encouraged to meet with an advisor when making decisions course withdrawals.

## Conclusion—Other Issues

This concludes the section on course policies. Situations that arise around any issue not listed here will be handled at the instructor's discretion.

## University Policies and Services

### Need Help and Not Sure Where to Start? Just Raise Your Hand

If you're unsure where to start or need help with something specific—like tutoring, financial aid, or personal support—use the Hand Raise feature in [NavigateTXST](#). It's a quick way to let someone know you need assistance; a staff member will follow up to connect you with the right resources.

### Health and Wellbeing

Feeling overwhelmed? Worried about a friend? Just need someone to talk to? We've got options:

- CARE Team: Submit a [Here to Help](#) form, and someone will reach out with 1-on-1 support and get you connected to the right campus resources.
- [Counseling Center](#): In-person and virtual mental health services including short-term individual, group, and crisis counseling, as well as outreach and workshops.
- [Student Health Center](#): Offers accessible, affordable care including medical, mental health, and wellness support.

[TimelyCare](#): FREE 24/7 virtual mental health support including immediate TalkNow chats and scheduled counseling sessions

### Missing a Class? Here's What to Know About Absence Notifications

Life happens—and sometimes that means missing class. Every professor has their own rules when it comes to absences, so it's important to reach out to them directly as soon as possible. If your absence is for a university-sponsored event or a religious holy day, check out [UPPS 02.06.03](#) and [02.06.01](#) to see what you need to do. If your professor asks for documentation, fill out the form on the [Absence Notifications](#) page. Want to learn more about what additional support is available to you? Visit the [Student Success website](#).

### Instant Access to Your Course Materials

As an undergraduate student, you are automatically enrolled in BookSmart @ TXST. BookSmart provides you with all your required course materials before your first day of class. Please visit our [BookSmart FAQ page](#) for more information.

Students will have access to the course materials until census (the 12<sup>th</sup> day of class). If you choose to opt out of the program, you will lose access after that date. This includes access to eBooks, courseware, homework and testing platforms, print materials, etc. You will be responsible for sourcing the required course materials on your own directly from the publisher or ordering individually at The Bobcat Store in the LBJ Student Center at regular retail price.

If you have any questions about BookSmart @ TXST or the charge to your student account, please contact The Bobcat Store via email at [txstate@bkstr.com](mailto:txstate@bkstr.com) or call 512-245-2273.

## Syllabus Content Reminders (see section 5 of AA/PPS 02.03.01 for all syllabus requirements)

1. Required class materials, access to materials, use of Canvas, and/or instructional strategies
2. Technology or software needed for the class, including getting support from [ITAC](#)
3. Exams, assignments, grading rubrics, assessment and testing, and due dates
4. Office hours
5. Attendance policy and record-keeping procedures
6. Assessment and testing strategies to enhance academic integrity
7. Disability Statement (text included below)

## Class Instruction Modes and Substantive Interaction

Classes will be fully implemented in the instruction mode that appears on the fall 2025 Schedule of Classes in [Catsweb](#). In all courses, faculty members provide regular and substantive interaction with students. This interaction is instructor-driven, content-oriented, frequent, and consistent throughout the semester.

## Statement on Civility in the Classroom and Instructional Settings

Civility in instructional settings is fundamental to an effective educational process and is everyone's responsibility. The university's shared values, sense of community, and collective commitment to respect, civil dialogue, and the free exchange of ideas are the cornerstones of successful teaching and learning. If students have questions about appropriate behavior in a particular class, they should address them with their instructor first. Although rare, disciplinary procedures may be implemented for refusing to follow an instructor's directive, disrupting classroom activities, or disregarding university policies. For more information regarding conduct in the classroom, please review policies at [AA/PPS 02.03.01](#), Section 03: Courteous and Civil Learning Environment, and [Code of Student Conduct](#), number II, Responsibilities of Students, Section 2.02: Conduct Prohibited.

## Academic Integrity and Student Conduct

Information regarding academic integrity and student code of conduct may be found at the links indicated below.

[Code of Student Conduct](#)

[The Honor Code](#)

## AI in Teaching and Learning

We recognize the increasing role that Artificial Intelligence is playing in teaching and learning. In the coming days, we will be sharing guidance on the appropriate and effective use of AI in our classrooms to support academic integrity and enhance student learning. Please watch for this forthcoming message.

## Instructor Absences

Faculty who are absent from class coordinate with their department chairs/school directors to ensure continuity of instruction. In some cases, a faculty member teaching face-to-face may transition to remote learning for a brief period by using Zoom, Teams, Canvas, or other tools. For extended absences, another faculty member may be asked to assume responsibility for the class. Deans and department chairs/school directors may contact the Office of the Provost for support or guidance. Provisions for faculty sick leave are found in [UPPS 04.04.30](#), Section 03, Sick Leave Procedures.

## Emergency Management

In the event of an emergency, students, faculty, and staff should monitor the [Safety and Emergency Communications web page](#). This page will be updated with the latest information available to the university, in addition to providing links to information concerning safety resources and emergency procedures. Faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to sign up for the [TXState Alert](#) system

## Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (SB17)

During the 88<sup>th</sup> Regular Session of the Texas Legislature, [Senate Bill 17](#) was passed and signed into law, effective January 1, 2024. SB 17 addresses diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives at public higher education institutions. For an explanation of SB17's provisions along with questions and answers, please visit the [Texas State University System's General Counsel Guidance on Implementation of Senate Bill 17](#).

## Sexual Misconduct Reporting (SB 212)

Effective January 2, 2020, state law (SB 212) requires all university employees, acting in the course and scope of employment, who witness or receive information concerning an incident of sexual misconduct involving an enrolled student or employee to report all relevant information known about the incident to the university's Title IX office. According to SB 212, employees who knowingly fail to report or knowingly file a false report shall be terminated in accordance with university and system policy. Please access the webpage of the [Office of Equal Opportunity and Title IX](#) for more information.

## Need Accommodations?

If you're managing ADHD, a learning difference, a health condition, or any disability, [Disability Services](#) (DS) can work with you to set up accommodations that support your learning. Reach out early—both staff and your instructors are here to support your success. You can contact DS at 512-245-3451 or via email at [ods@txstate.edu](mailto:ods@txstate.edu).