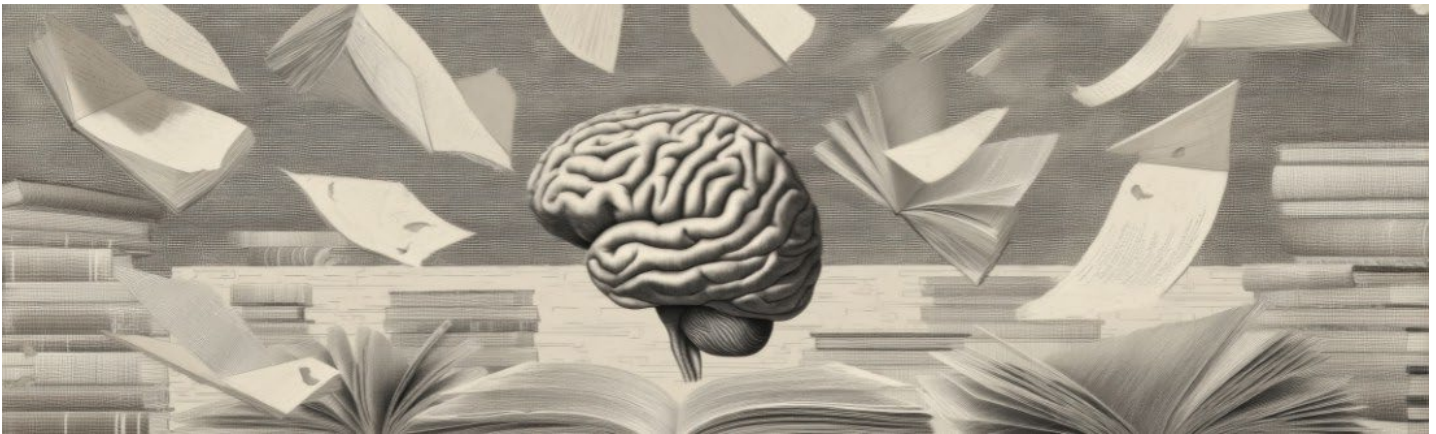


Recent Announcements

PHIL 1305

Philosophy and Critical Thinking

Self-Paced Course



Start Here

Syllabus

Modules

Pacing Guide

Welcome to PHIL 1305- Philosophy and Critical Thinking

Course Overview

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. Credit cannot be given for both PHIL 1305 and PHIL 3301. (WI). No prerequisite required.

Course Instructor



Dr. Ellen Briggs Stansell

Teacher

ebs22@txstate.edu

Ready to begin?

Click [Start Here](#) in the navigation bar above to begin your course.

Returning to this course?

Click [Modules](#) in the navigation bar above or in the left-hand course navigation and resume where you left off.

Questions about the course?

You are encouraged to contact your instructor if you have any concerns, questions, or problems.

- Check your Texas State email at least every 2 days to stay updated on course announcements and responses.
- I check and respond to email once per day, Monday through Friday. Emails sent over the weekend may be answered the following business day.
- To ensure timely delivery of all e-mails related to this course, you must use your official Texas State Bobcat Mail email address.
- Please feel free to reach out to your instructor regarding any questions or concerns you may have regarding course content, assignments, or grades at ebs22@txstate.edu
- You may contact Online and Extended Programs for course technical issues using the email address provided below:
- ☐ **Email:** corrstudy@txstate.edu



Start Here

Overview



Introduction

Welcome to the Start Here module! This module is designed to provide you with essential information and resources to help you navigate successfully through this correspondence course. From accessing course materials to understanding the grading system, this module will equip you with the tools and knowledge you need to succeed. Read through this module carefully and let's dive in and get started on your path to learning and achievement!



Syllabus

The course syllabus provides essential information about our course. Review the [course syllabus](#) for a better understanding of course policies, assignments, and expectations.







Course Materials

To be successful in this course, ensure you have access to the following materials and tools:

Required Textbooks and Resources

These materials are not included in the Booksmart program. Students are responsible for obtaining access through purchase, rental, or other means to complete required readings and assignments.

- ♦ 1. Introducing Philosophy: A Text with Integrated Readings, Thirteenth Edition
 - ◊ *Authors:* Robert C. Solomon, Kathleen M. Higgins, and Clancy Martin
 - ◊ *E-book ISBN:* 9780197773932 (Reflowable Layout) | *Print ISBN:* 9780197773925
- ♦ 2. With Good Reason
 - ◊ *Author:* Jonathan Surovell

- ISBN: 979-8-9890054-0-6
- Availability: This textbook is not available in stores. Access this textbook with a subscription at [Argumentation.io](https://www.argumentation.io) 
- 3. Argumentation.io Web Application
 - This course requires regular use of [Argumentation.io](https://www.argumentation.io)  for interactive assignments and exercises.
 - Students must use the web-based app at [Argumentation.io](https://www.argumentation.io)  to complete required course activities.
 - To purchase a subscription, go to [Argumentation.io](https://www.argumentation.io),  create an account, then click the main menu button (three lines) in the upper left corner of the screen, then click "Subscribe" in the drop-down menu. Once you have activated your subscription, a "Textbook" link will appear in this same menu.

Additional Course Materials

- Assigned Readings & Multimedia Content:
Includes instructor-led videos, curated external websites, and reading materials. Audio capabilities are required to fully engage with all video and multimedia content.
- Audio & Video Capabilities:
A device with working audio and video is essential for lectures, presentations, and other course media.
- Reliable Internet Access:
A stable connection is necessary for accessing content, participating in discussions, and submitting assignments.
- Microsoft Office Programs:
Access to Word is required for assignments.
- Device & Browser:
A computer or tablet with an up-to-date browser is needed for interacting with course components, including any virtual meetings or recorded content.

 Syllabus and Course Materials



Course Outcomes

Course outcomes describe the knowledge, skills, and abilities you will leave this course with.

1. CO1: Analyze philosophical views and arguments

2. CO2: Evaluate philosophical views and arguments
3. CO3: Develop your own philosophical views and arguments

Program Outcomes:

1. Critical Thinking “Students will demonstrate creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.”
2. Communication “Students will effectively develop, interpret and express ideas through written, oral and visual communication.”
3. Social Responsibility “Students will demonstrate intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.”
4. Personal Responsibility “Students will relate choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.”

Module Learning Objectives

This course is divided into learning modules. Each module has distinct learning objectives that contribute to the achievement of the overall Course Outcomes. Refer to the [Syllabus](#) to better understand the relationship between Course Outcomes (COs) and Module Learning Objectives (MLOs).



Assignments

- Course Pacing Guide (Due within two weeks of your course start date)
- Start Here Module Quiz



Start Here

Meet Your Instructor



Welcome to PHIL 1305: Philosophy and Critical Thinking

Hello and welcome to PHIL 1305: Philosophy and Critical Thinking!

We're excited to have you join this self-paced online course, designed to give you the same depth, challenge, and academic quality as a traditional classroom experience—with the added flexibility to complete it on your own schedule. Whether you're balancing work, travel, family responsibilities, or simply prefer a more independent learning environment, this format gives you the freedom to engage with the material wherever and whenever it suits you best.

Welcome to PHIL 1305

Prof. Ellen Stansell

What You'll Learn

This course explores some of the universal problems in philosophy—questions about knowledge, belief, value, and the nature of human thought. Half of the course is dedicated to developing your critical thinking skills, helping you analyze arguments, evaluate ideas, and think more clearly and effectively.

Through readings, videos, activities, and assessments, you'll work toward these important outcomes:

- Think critically and ethically about philosophical problems and everyday decisions
- Analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information to form strong, well-reasoned conclusions
- Communicate clearly and thoughtfully through written, visual, and multimedia formats
- Engage with big ideas that connect you to social and civic responsibilities in today's world

About the Self-Paced Format

This self-paced course is offered fully online and developed by Texas State-approved faculty. While it covers the same content as our on-campus version, you are in charge of when and how you complete the work.

That means you can move through the material at your own speed—fast or slow—depending on your schedule.

Self-paced learning is ideal for students who need flexibility, but it also requires discipline, time management, and self-motivation. There are no regular class meetings, so it's up to you to set goals and meet deadlines within the course timeframe.

Final Thoughts

We hope you'll find this course both thought-provoking and personally meaningful. Philosophy isn't just about abstract ideas—it's about learning to think deeply, act ethically, and engage intelligently with the world around you.

We're glad you're here, and we look forward to seeing how you grow through the course!



About Me



Hello! I'm Dr. Ellen Briggs Stansell, Associate Professor of Instruction in Philosophy at Texas State University. I earned my Ph.D. from the University of Texas at Austin in 2008, with a focus on Indian religious philosophies. My academic work explores themes in Indian ethics, spiritual practice, and metaphysical systems, and has been published in peer-reviewed journals. I've had the privilege of presenting my research at respected conferences such as the East-West Philosopher's Conference, the Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy Annual Conference, and the Parliament of the World's Religions.

In the classroom—whether in person or online—I apply a Competency-Based Education (CBE) approach. This teaching model emphasizes not just what students know, but what they can *do* with that knowledge. I incorporate hands-on activities that help students actively engage with philosophical concepts and practice critical thinking skills in real time. My teaching and research interests include Indian religious philosophy, Indian ethics, sexual morality, business ethics, and of course, critical thinking.

I look forward to helping you develop your own philosophical voice in this course!



Contact Me

Email: @txstate.edu

If you have questions about the course content, assignments, or need clarification on anything, please don't hesitate to reach out. Communication is key to your success in this course!

Instructor: Dr. Ellen Briggs Stansell | Associate Professor of Instruction – Philosophy

Office: Online | Phone: [512-245-2285](tel:512-245-2285)

Important Guidelines for Communication:

- Use your official Texas State email account when contacting me. Emails from personal accounts may be missed or delayed.
- Check your Texas State email at least every 2 days to stay updated on course announcements and responses.
- I check and respond to email once per day, Monday through Friday. Emails sent over the weekend may be answered the following business day.
- Please be polite, respectful, and professional in all communications. Clear and mature communication helps ensure a smooth and productive learning experience for everyone.

I'm here to support your learning, so don't hesitate to reach out when you need guidance!

Start Here

Syllabus and Course Materials



Syllabus

To help ensure your success in this course, click [Syllabus](#) and read carefully to understand course expectations and requirements.

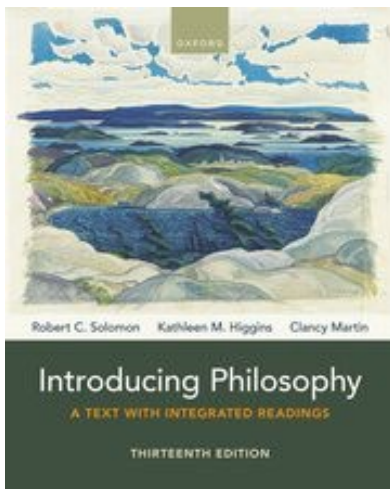


Course Materials

To be successful in this self-paced course, you'll need consistent access to the following textbooks, tools, and technologies. Please read the details carefully to make sure you're fully prepared.

Required Textbooks and Resources

Note: These materials are not included in the Booksmart program. You are responsible for obtaining them on your own through purchase, rental, or library access. Delays in obtaining these materials may affect your ability to complete assignments on time.



1. *Introducing Philosophy: A Text with Integrated Readings* (13th Edition)

- Authors: Robert C. Solomon, Kathleen M. Higgins, and Clancy Martin
- E-book ISBN: 9780197773932 (Reflowable Layout)
- Print ISBN: 9780197773925

- Where to Get It:
 - Available through major online retailers like Amazon, Oxford University Press, or campus bookstores.
 - You may choose to buy, rent, or use an e-book version, but make sure it is the 13th edition.
-

2. *With Good Reason* | Author: Jonathan Surovell

- ISBN-13: 979-8-9890054-0-6
 - Where to Get It:
 - This book is not sold in stores.
 - Access this textbook with a subscription at [Argumentation.io](https://www.argumentation.io). To purchase a subscription, go to Argumentation.io, and click the main menu button (three lines) in the upper left corner of the screen, then click "Subscribe" in the drop-down menu. Once you have activated your subscription, a "Textbook" link will appear in this same menu.
-



3. Argumentation.io – Web Application & Companion App

- This course makes extensive use of Argumentation.io, a web-based tool designed to help you visually map and analyze arguments. You'll use it to complete several interactive assignments focused on critical thinking and logic.
 - What It Does: Argumentation.io allows you to create, view, and share argument maps—visual diagrams that represent the structure of reasoning. The platform includes helpful features like an "inference box", which guides you in identifying logical connections between claims and conclusions.
 - You can save your maps, share them via URL, or export them as image or PDF files for submission. The app also provides built-in learning materials to help you improve your skills with practice.
 - What You Need to Do:
 - Visit [argumentation.io](https://www.argumentation.io) to begin using the platform.
 - Create a free account.
 - Then, purchase a subscription. To purchase a subscription, go to [Argumentation.io](https://www.argumentation.io), and click the main menu button (three lines) in the upper left corner of the screen, then click "Subscribe" in the drop-down menu. Once you have activated your subscription, a "Textbook" link will appear in this same menu.
-

Additional Course Materials & Technology Requirements

Camera Requirement:

- Some assignments may require you to record yourself and submit a video with clear audio and visuals. You'll need access to a device with a working camera and microphone (such as a phone, tablet, or computer) to create and upload these recordings.

Assigned Readings & Multimedia Content

- Throughout the course, you'll engage with instructor-led videos, external websites, and academic readings.
- Make sure your device has working audio so you can hear lectures, and access to a browser that supports streaming content.

Audio & Video Capabilities

- A computer, laptop, or tablet with functional audio and video is required for viewing lectures and multimedia. Headphones or speakers are recommended for best quality.

Reliable Internet Access

- A stable, high-speed internet connection is necessary to access course materials, upload assignments, and participate in online activities. If you plan to travel or have limited internet access, download materials in advance when possible.

Microsoft Office Programs

- You will need access to Word to complete written assignments. This program is available free through your Texas State student account.

Device & Browser

- Use a modern internet browser (like Chrome, Firefox, or Edge) and keep it updated to avoid technical issues.
- Tablets are fine for viewing materials, but a laptop or desktop computer is strongly recommended for writing and completing assignments.

Having these materials in place from the beginning will help you stay on track and make the most of your learning experience. If you have questions or need help accessing any materials, don't hesitate to contact me.

[Start Here](#)

Correspondence Course Information



Important Reminders

- This is a **6-month**, online, correspondence self-paced course.
- **All submissions, including exams, must be completed by the course expiration date.** When you registered for the course, you were sent an email to your Texas State account indicating registration and expiration dates.
- **Standard pace:** You may not submit more than 2 assignments per week. Note that this limit applies only to scored, required assignments. Unsourced, optional, and/or extra credit work does not count toward the two-assignment limit.
 - *Instructor discretion to allow students to complete more than two assignments per week, with emphasis on waiting for feedback before progressing.*
- At the end of the course, you will be asked to **complete a brief course evaluation**. Your input will help improve the course.




Orientation Video

Please view this orientation video to help you get started in this correspondence course. This video addresses many topics such as Bobcat Mail, navigating this course site, test requests, and more.





Correspondence Policies

As a correspondence studies student, it is your responsibility to be familiar with correspondence-related policies and services. To this end, I encourage you to review the [Correspondence Course Information page](#). 



Start Here


Technical Requirements and Support



Technical Requirements

This online course requires technical skills and access to certain technology and software that face-to-face courses may not require.



- Learn about [skills and technology](#) you need to be successful in this course.
Also review these [tips](#) and [interaction guidelines](#) to be a successful online learner
-

Many users encounter fewer problems when they use [Chrome](#)  to access **Canvas courses**.



Technical Support

Here's how to get help with Canvas:

- 24/7 [Live chat](#) 
- 24/7 Phone support: 245.ITAC (4822)
- [Tool-specific help](#) 
- Click Help in the left navigation of any Canvas course

Vendor Statements

This Canvas course is designed to provide an accessible and secure online learning space. In this course, we will be using some tools external to Canvas. Click below to read their accessibility and privacy statements.




Vendor Accessibility Statement

Review the following accessibility statements for information on known accessibility barriers and solutions for the tools we will be using:

- [Articulate Rise](#) 
- [H5P](#)
- [Yuja](#)
- [Zoom](#)
- [Microsoft Teams](#)
- [Argumentation.io](#) 

Vendor Privacy Statements

Your online privacy is important. Review the following privacy statements for information on how your data is being used and protected:

- [Articulate Rise](#) 
- [H5P](#) 
- [Yuja](#) 
- [Zoom](#) 
- [Microsoft Teams](#) 
- [Argumentation.io](#) 

Access it directly in Canvas or at: [Library Guide](#)



Using the Library Guide


This course includes a Library Guide link in the left-hand menu. The guide, created by the Texas State University Library, supports your digital information literacy skills—essential for online learning and research.

What You'll Find

- Finding credible sources: Learn to locate scholarly articles and media using library databases.
- Evaluating information: Identify reliable and relevant digital resources.
- Citing and paraphrasing: Access citation guides and tools to avoid plagiarism.
- Research tools: Explore tutorials for citation managers and search strategies.

Start Here

Student Support

Links to academic resources can be found on the [Current Students](#)  page in the Academics section.

These resources include:


- **Academic Advising:** can help you register for classes, plan your pathway to graduation, and support you in meeting your credit requirements.
- **The Library:** offers research support through online and in-person catalogs, collections, and supportive staff.
- **The Honor Code Council:** provides resources regarding academic integrity and avoiding plagiarism and other Honor Code violations.





The [Student Learning Assistance Center \(SLAC\)](#)  also offers the academic support services, including:

- **Tutoring:** in a variety of subjects including math, science, business, writing, and more.
- **Online Writing Lab:** provides students with constructive feedback on their papers from a SLAC Writing Tutor.
- **The Veteran Academic Success Center:** provides connections, referrals, and academic support such as tutoring for student veterans and other members of the military-connected community.

The following links provide further information regarding student services:

[Financial Aid](#)  can assist you with grants, scholarships, and paying for college.

[Virtual Mental Health Services](#)  can support your wellbeing from afar. Schedule an appointment with a

[Career Services](#)  can help you with all things career planning, including resume building, mock interviews, and internships.



The Office of Online and Extended Programs is committed to helping students with disabilities achieve their educational goals.

A disability is not a barrier to distance study, and we provide reasonable accommodations to individuals in coursework and test taking.

Students who require special accommodations need to provide verification of their disability to the [Office of Disability Services](#), Suite 5-5.1 LBJ Student Center, 512.245.3451 (voice/TTY).

Students should then notify the [Online and Extended Programs](#) of any disability-related accommodation needs as soon as possible to avoid a delay in accommodations.

Learn more about [Texas State University Statement on Accessibility](#).



[Tips for Success Online](#)

Success in online courses requires self-discipline, active engagement, and effective time management. By implementing these tips, you can maximize your learning experience and thrive in your online course.




Start Here

Communication and Engagement



Communication

Canvas is the primary means of communicating with your instructor in this course.

[Interacting Online](#)  This webpage discusses various tools, techniques, and guidelines that support communicating with your instructor in an online environment.

Netiquette (Online Etiquette)

It is important to observe netiquette or online etiquette in the online classroom. This includes:

1. **Respectful and Professional Communication:** Use polite and professional language, avoiding all caps or offensive content.
2. **Timely Participation:** Respond promptly to emails and adhere to course deadlines.
3. **Focused and Constructive Contributions:** Contribute meaningfully, staying on-topic, and providing constructive feedback when asked.
4. **Academic Integrity:** Cite sources properly, uphold academic honesty, and submit your work independently.
5. **Inclusive Environment:** Respect diverse perspectives and foster an inclusive and supportive learning space.



Engagement Expectations


What You Can Expect From Me

I will...

- Grade assignments with feedback (if needed) within a week.
- Reply to your questions within 48 hours, Monday through Friday (excluding holidays).
- Make myself available via my posted Office Hours.
- Provide timely updates about any potential changes to the course schedule, assignments, or policies.

What I Expect of You

You should...

- Log into Canvas daily to check for announcements, feedback, and other course communications.
- Comply with [Texas State Honor Code](#)  by not plagiarizing, cheating, or otherwise submitting work that is not your own.
- Reach out to me with questions if you are confused or need support.
- Practice proactive problem-solving related to technical issues with basic trouble-shooting and contacting technical support when needed.

Paraphrasing

What is paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is an important writing skill for scholars because a big part of what scholars do is read books and articles and then tell others, through their own writing, what those books and articles say. When you paraphrase, you explain what an author wrote, expressing it in your own original way while staying true to the original meaning. Effective paraphrasing shows that you understand the source material and can express it in your own way.

A paraphrase is considered your own original writing; when you write a paraphrase, you are the author of that paraphrase. For this reason, it must meet standards of originality to avoid plagiarism. Your paraphrase must employ original:

- wording
- phrasing
- sentence structure
- sequence of ideas

This is why *rewording is not good paraphrasing*. When you reword an author's sentence, you are using their sentence structure and sequence of ideas. It is academic theft to utilize someone else's sentence structure and sequence of ideas and present it as your own writing. To avoid plagiarism, your paraphrase must be completely original--and yet, at the same time, you must express the author's ideas.



Three types of paraphrasing

I would like to describe three types of paraphrasing: unacceptable, minimally acceptable, and excellent. / *always want you to do excellent paraphrasing in this class.*

Unacceptable

In this type of paraphrasing, 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--what I am describing is rewording. Rewording is unacceptable. Similarities between the original sentence and the student's submission will be readily apparent. It is easy to see that the student's work was written by modifying the original author's work. This form of paraphrasing is plagiarism. 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 student paraphrase: "The author argues that we cannot use recycling to find our path out of this environmental emergency utilizing the programs we have installed."

Minimally acceptable

All keywords are replaced with appropriate synonyms and an original sentence structure is employed, this means the sentence structure is significantly changed to 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.

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."

Unacceptable student paraphrase: "The author argues that as long as businesses keep producing new plastic packaging that cannot be recycled, this problem cannot be resolved by recycling."

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.

Example:

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."

Keywords

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.



An excellent video explanation

For additional explanation of these three types of paraphrasing, see [How to Paraphrase](#)  by QUT Library.



QUT Library. (2015). How To Paraphrase. In *YouTube*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SObGEcok06U>

- Due No due date
- Points 5
- Questions 5
- Time Limit None
- Allowed Attempts 2

Instructions



Start Here

Quiz

This quiz will cover the important course information covered the start here module. The course Start Here Module Quiz is designed to ensure that you have a solid understanding of the course structure, policies, and expectations. By carefully reviewing the provided materials and answering the quiz questions thoughtfully, you will be better prepared to navigate the course successfully.

[Take the Quiz](#)

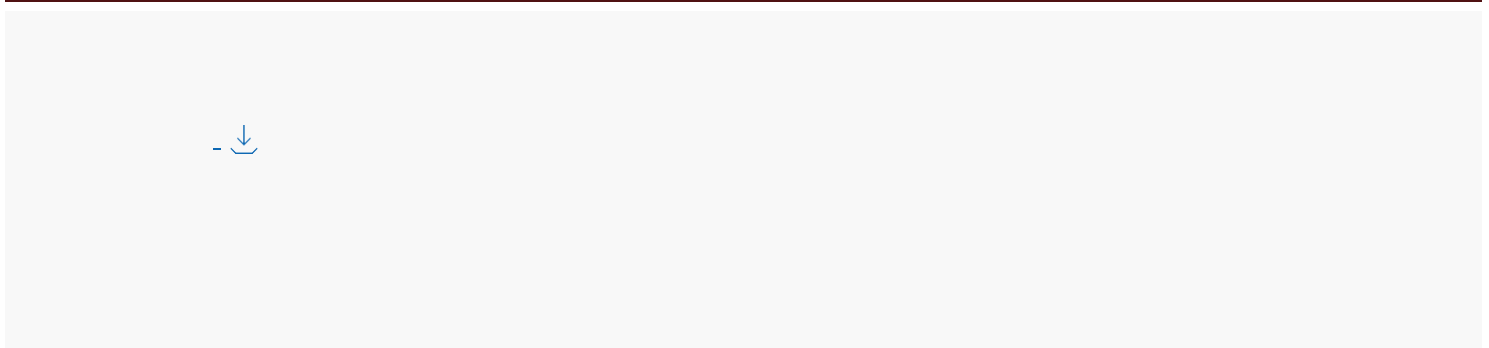
- Due No due date
- Points 5
- Questions 1
- Time Limit None

Instructions



Start Here

Course Pacing Guide Submission



[Take the Quiz](#)



Module 1

Overview



Introduction

Welcome to Module 1 of our course — I'm excited to have you here as we begin our philosophical journey together! This week, we're diving into one of the most fundamental questions: "What is philosophy?" Through our videos, readings, and activities, you'll explore the big-picture goals of philosophy, learn about its major branches, and begin to understand how philosophers ask questions and seek answers. You'll also start sharpening your skills in analyzing arguments by identifying their goals, elements, and structure.

Why is this important? Because philosophy is about learning to think clearly, question deeply, and understand broadly. These are skills that will help you not just in this course, but in every area of life. As you work through the content in this module, you'll build a solid foundation that we'll keep returning to throughout the course. Don't worry if some of it feels unfamiliar or challenging at first — that's all part of the process. Take your time, engage with the material, and reach out if you have questions. Let's get started!



Objectives

Upon completion of this module, you will be able to:

1. Describe the goals of philosophy, including its major questions, branches, and methods of inquiry. (CLO 1, 2, 3)
2. Analyze philosophical arguments by identifying their structure, evaluating reasoning, and applying standards of justification. (CLO 1, 2, 3)



Your Learning Toolkit

The following materials are provided to you in this module and are necessary to successfully complete coursework:

- Welcome to PHIL 1305 (MO1, MO2)

- Philosophical Questions and Responses (MO1)
- Standards of Justification in Philosophy (MO2)

Video:

- Crash Course Philosophy Preview by CrashCourse (MO1)
- What is Philosophy: Crash Course Philosophy #1 by CrashCourse (MO1)

Readings:

- *Introducing Philosophy*, Introduction, Sections A-C (MO1)
- *With Good Reason*, chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 (MO2)



Assignments

When approaching module assignments, carefully read the instructions and ensure you understand the requirements. Break down the tasks into manageable steps, create a timeline, and allocate sufficient time for research, drafting, and revision if needed.

Graded-

- Concept Map- What is Philosophy? (MO1, MO2)
- What Is Philosophy Video Teach-Back (MO1)
- Chapter 1 Quiz (MO2)
- Chapter 2 Quiz (MO2)
- Chapter 3 Quiz (MO2)
- Chapter 4 Quiz (MO2)
- Chapter 5 Quiz (MO2)

Ungraded-

- Argument Mapping: Chapter 1 Practice Exercises (MO2)
- Argument Mapping: Chapter 2 Practice Exercises (MO2)
- Argument Mapping: Chapter 3 Practice Exercises (MO2)
- Argument Mapping: Chapter 4 Practice Exercises (MO2)
- Argument Mapping: Chapter 5 Practice Exercises (MO2)



Module 1

Lesson Page

What is Philosophy?



Readings

These readings are designed to introduce you to the foundations of philosophy and help you begin developing the tools to think and argue like a philosopher. I've selected texts that are both accessible and thought-provoking. They'll give you essential background on the nature of philosophy, while also helping you practice key skills like identifying arguments and evaluating reasoning. Don't worry if you don't understand everything on the first read. Take your time, reread sections, and send your questions to the instructor. That's part of doing philosophy.



Introducing Philosophy, Introduction, Sections A–C (MO1)

This textbook introduction will help you get your bearings as we begin our journey. It lays out what philosophy is, what kinds of questions it asks, and why it matters. You'll also get an overview of the major branches of philosophy — ethics, metaphysics, and epistemology — and learn how philosophy is different from other ways of thinking about the world.

As you read, pay attention to:

- The definition of philosophy and its main goals
- The kinds of questions philosophers ask
- How philosophy has been practiced across time and cultures

With Good Reason, Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 (MO2)

These chapters are all about argumentation — which is central to everything we do in this course. I've chosen these sections to help you build your skills in analyzing arguments, identifying assumptions, and evaluating reasoning. You'll learn how to spot the structure of an argument (premises and conclusions), understand common logical patterns, and recognize both good and bad reasoning.

- How arguments are built and broken down

- How elements of an argument relate to one another
- Basic principles of logic and critical thinking you'll use all semester



Instructor Lectures

These videos are your introduction to the course and the heart of what we'd cover together in a traditional classroom setting. As your instructor, I've designed these lectures to guide you through the foundational ideas of philosophy — not just what philosophers have said, but how they think, ask questions, and use arguments. I recommend watching with a notebook nearby, pausing to reflect or rewatch when needed. These lectures will support everything else you do in this module, from readings to assignments, and help you begin thinking philosophically.

This lecture introduces the kinds of questions philosophers ask and the kinds of answers (or attempts at answers) they offer. You'll begin to see how philosophy addresses big-picture issues in ethics, knowledge, reality, and human existence. It also defines the different branches of philosophy and how each approaches its subject matter.

What to Look For:

- Examples of central philosophical questions
- The distinction between philosophical and non-philosophical thinking
- The major branches of philosophy: metaphysics, epistemology, ethics
- How these questions relate to your own thinking and worldview



Videos

These external videos are a great way to supplement your readings and lectures. They're short, engaging, and packed with helpful examples to reinforce what you're learning this week. Think of these as another way to visualize the key ideas we're exploring, especially if you're a visual or auditory learner. I encourage you to take notes while you watch and reflect on how these concepts connect to our readings.

[Crash Course Philosophy Preview](#) by CrashCourse (MO1)

This quick preview gives you a snapshot of what philosophy is all about. This is a great way to get a sense of how philosophy can be both intellectually rigorous and deeply relevant to everyday life.

Watch this to:

- Get a sense of the broader goals of philosophy
- See how philosophical questions are made accessible and engaging
- Get excited about the journey ahead



[What is Philosophy? — Crash Course Philosophy #1](#) by CrashCourse (MO1)

The first episode dives right into the central question of this week: What is philosophy? It introduces some of the major themes we're discussing, like metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, and critical

thinking, and shows how these areas raise questions that are still relevant today. This video pairs well with your textbook reading and helps reinforce the big picture of what philosophy tries to do.

Watch this to:

- Understand the core areas of philosophy and what they focus on
- See examples of philosophical questions in action
- Begin thinking about how philosophy shows up in your own life



Knowledge Check

This activity is for practice only—your response will not be graded or saved. Think of it as a tool to help you check your understanding before moving on.

These flashcards are designed to help you learn the main topics and ideas covered in your course.

What is the main purpose of Crash Course Philosophy?

☐ Turn

Card 1 of 10



☐ Reuse

I am confused ☐



Learning Resources

Below you'll find the full citations for the readings, videos, and other materials used in this module. These are provided for your reference, to support further exploration, and to acknowledge the original creators of the content.

Sources & References



Surovell, Jonathan. (2023). *With Good Reason*. Argumentation.

Solomon, R. C., Kathleen Marie Higgins, & Martin, C. (2024). *Introducing Philosophy*. Oxford University Press, USA.

CrashCourse. (2016). Crash Course Philosophy Preview. In *YouTube*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BNYJQaZUDrI>

CrashCourse. (2016). What is Philosophy?: Crash Course Philosophy #1 [Video]. In *YouTube*. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1A_CAKYt3GY

Watch this to explore:

- What makes a question “philosophical”
- The major branches of philosophy (ethics, metaphysics, and epistemology)
- How philosophy begins with questions, not just answers

In this lecture, I introduce you to one of the most important tools in philosophy: argumentation. I explain what it means to *justify* a belief or claim, and how philosophers use logic and reasoning to support their views. You’ll also learn that philosophical explanations can justify philosophical views and can be evaluated according to their explanatory power.

Watch this to understand:

- How philosophers support their claims
- What makes an argument strong, weak, or flawed
- The basic structure of philosophical reasoning