

# Syllabus

## Spring Session 2011

There are many clickable links to websites in the online version of this syllabus, which is linked on the course home page.

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Synonym:	25286	Campus:	South Austin	Days:	Tuesday and Thursday
Section:	049	Room:	1315	Time:	1:20-2:40pm (80 minutes)

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### For Your Immediate Attention on the First Day of Class

- The following are required assignments to be completed before the next class
  - Read this syllabus. If there is anything in it or missing from it that you don't understand, ask about it in the next class.
  - Read the [course description](#) (linked on the course home web page).
  - Go to [Assignments and Announcements](#) for PHIL 1301 on the course home web page and do whatever is assigned there. **Check that page frequently.**

### Contact Information

- Email the professor: [adechene@austincc.edu](mailto:adechene@austincc.edu).
- Home page of the course Web site: <http://www.austincc.edu/adechene/>.
- If you are having a problem related to this course or related to me as your professor your first step generally should be to speak with me. If I cannot resolve the problem or satisfy your concern, or, if for some reason you would prefer not to address the issue with me, you can appeal to the Chair of the Department for help.

### Office Hours/Consultations with the Professor

- Before or after class most class days. Make appointment in class or by email.

### Course Description

- From the ACC catalogue: "Students will be introduced to various significant philosophical issues and thinkers and to the practice of philosophical analysis."
- Professor Dechene's sections of Introduction to Philosophy will take an historical (history of philosophy) and comparative approach, and will focus on specific philosophers, philosophies, questions, and issues.
  - A more extensive description of the course is linked on the course homepage.

### Prerequisites

- There are no course prerequisites, other than:
  - A passing score or the equivalent on the reading portion of the TASP is required.
  - Basic computer skills.
    - The ability to find textual materials for the course on the Internet and print them.
      - I will upload files to my course website in PDF format. You will need to have a PDF reader

- 40 installed on your computer to read them.
- 41 • PDF readers are available to download for free. I recommend Foxit Reader.
- 42 • The ability to play and listen to audio materials. I recommend the free Media Player Classic for  
43 Windows (which is used at ACC), or the Google Chrome browser, which has a built-in media  
44 player.
- 45 • The ability to email the professor if necessary.
- 46 • The ability to look up your grade information on Blackboard.
- 47 • Note: This course requires serious study and the ability to read well (it is a college level course).
- 48 • As with most courses, you can expect you will need to study about two hours for every class hour.
- 49 • If you need help improving your reading and studying methods:
- 50 • Read [Professor Dechene's how to study guide](#), linked on the course home page.
- 51 • Visit the Learning Lab on your campus and speak with one of the staff.
- 52 • ACC offers courses on reading and study skills. See "Reading Skills" and "Study Skills" in the course  
53 schedule booklet.
- 54 • You can also find help at several Websites, for example, [How-To-Study.com](#). Google "how to study  
55 effectively" to find many websites on improving study skills.

#### 56 **Required Readings**

- 57 • For the required textbook and other readings, go to "Required Readings" on the course home web-  
58 page.

#### 59 **Instructional Methodology**

- 60 • Lecture and discussion in class, and homework.
- 61 • Audio and video presentations (some may be homework).
- 62 • Required readings (textbook and other).
- 63 • Tests.

#### 64 **Course Rationale**

- 65 • Philosophy is one of the principal forces that have shaped Western civilization and history, so a basic  
66 understanding of the methods and subject matter of philosophy affords a deeper understanding of  
67 ourselves and an informed grasp of the present. In addition, critical thinking skills are so central to the  
68 methods of philosophy that the study of philosophy provides an excellent opportunity to learn and  
69 practice those skills in a focused way.

#### 70 **Course Objectives**

- 71 • Departmental Objectives/Outcomes
- 72 • Students will demonstrate improved critical reading, thinking, and writing skills.
- 73 • Students will be able to reason philosophically about issues of both personal and universal signific-  
74 ance.
- 75 • Students will be able to identify major divisions and concepts in philosophy.

#### 76 **Course Evaluation/Grading System**

- 77 • The final grade for this course will be based on four tests, one short essay, and on attendance.
- 78 • Tests and the essay will account for 100% of your final numeric grade before deduction of days ab-  
79 sent.
- 80 • Each test/essay will account for 25% of your final grade.

- 81 • Four tests/one essay will be administered/required, and your lowest grade of these five will be  
82 ignored in final grading.
- 83 • Thus, students may skip one test or the essay without penalty (but not skipping one of these  
84 may increase your chance of receiving a higher final grade).
- 85 • Absenteeism will lower your final grade.
- 86 • One point will be deducted from your final numeric grade for:
- 87 • Each class missed.
- 88 • Arriving late (arriving after roll has been called).
- 89 • Leaving class before the end of the class without the professor's prior permission.
- 90 • Students who first start attending the course after the first class will be marked absent for the  
91 classes they missed at the beginning of the course.
- 92 • There will be no excused absences—you're either present or absent. Thus, you need not bring  
93 excuses such as a physician's note to justify your absence.
- 94 • If you have to leave a class before it ends, please have the courtesy to inform the professor at  
95 the beginning of the class (if possible), and sit close to the door.
- 96 • Coming in late disturbs the flow of the class, so please be on time. Students who come late  
97 four times (i.e., on four days) will be dropped from the course.
- 98 • Tests.
- 99 • Tests usually will be Scantron-type (true/false, multiple choice, and/or matching), but may be part-  
100 ly or entirely essay type.
- 101 • Students must supply their own green Scantron cards and a #2 pencil for Scantron tests. These  
102 can be purchased in the ACC Bookstore.
- 103 • Scantron cards cannot be filled out with other media, such as pen, because our Scantron grad-  
104 ing machines do not recognize anything other than #2 pencil.
- 105 • Scantron cards will not grade properly if they are creased, wrinkled, or dog-eared. Use only  
106 cards that are in their original condition. If a Scantron card will not grade properly, the student  
107 will not receive a grade.
- 108 • Recommendation: marks on Scantron cards do not erase easily, so bring an eraser that you  
109 know works well for this purpose. Standard pencil-top erasers do not work well.
- 110 • Each test, including the last test, will emphasize material covered since the previous test (for test  
111 1, since the first day of class), with less emphasis on material from before that.
- 112 • See the course calendar for dates of tests. Tests may be rescheduled to fit better with the cover-  
113 age of topics in class, or for other appropriate reasons.
- 114 • Tests will normally last 45 minutes, and will start at the beginning of the class. If you arrive late for  
115 class on the test day you will have less than 45 minutes to complete your test.
- 116 • Students who have problems taking tests (e.g., severe test anxiety or dyslexia) should discuss this  
117 with the Office for Students with Disabilities.
- 118 • Test grades will be published only on [Blackboard](#). Incremental and final grades will not be given  
119 out verbally, in person, by email, or to anyone other than the student, due to ACC policy and fed-  
120 eral law.
- 121 • Students who miss two or more tests will receive an F final grade.
- 122 • Make-up tests.
- 123 • The make-up test must be completed no later than the day before the next regularly scheduled



167 graduate college career. Some exemptions for good cause could allow a student to withdraw from a  
168 course without having it count toward this limit. Students are encouraged to carefully select courses;  
169 contact an advisor or counselor for assistance. See the Student Handbook, p. 22, for additional infor-  
170 mation.

#### 171 **Problem Resolution**

- 172 • If you should have any problem with the course or the instructor, please have the courtesy to discuss it  
173 first with the instructor.

#### 174 **Incomplete Grades**

- 175 • Incomplete grades normally will not be issued. The only reasons accepted for granting an incomplete  
176 will be unforeseen and unforeseeable serious reasons for not being able to complete the class on time.  
177 The student will have to document, in detail, the reasons why s/he is requesting the incomplete, and  
178 why s/he could not have foreseen or avoided the problem, and her/his exact plan for completing the  
179 course (with completion date, which will not be extended). Most requests for an incomplete grade will  
180 be rejected.

#### 181 **Scholastic Dishonesty**

- 182 • See the current edition of the Student Handbook, at <http://www.austincc.edu/handbook/>.

#### 183 **Academic Freedom**

- 184 • Students have the right to believe whatever they happen to believe and, within the appropriate con-  
185 straints that follow from the organization of a course and its class meetings, to express those beliefs.  
186 Grades will never be based on the beliefs that a student maintains, but only on the quality of the work  
187 performed by a student in conjunction with the course.

#### 188 **Office for Students with Disabilities**

- 189 • Be sure to read the section in the Student Handbook: Services for Students with Disabilities.
- 190 • Each ACC campus offers support services for students with documented physical or psychological dis-  
191 abilities. Students with disabilities must request reasonable accommodations through the Office for  
192 Students with Disabilities (OSD) on the campus where they expect to take the majority of their classes.  
193 Students are encouraged to do this three weeks before the start of the semester.
- 194 • For students authorized by the OSD to take tests in an other-than-classroom environment, tests will be  
195 available at the Office for Students with Disabilities on the day and time the test is scheduled for the  
196 rest of the class.

#### 197 **Course Outline, Calendar, and Announcements**

- 198 • The course calendar is hyperlinked to Professor Dechene's course home webpage.
- 199 • An announcements page is also hyperlinked there. Consult it frequently (at least once a week, more  
200 often during a condensed summer session), and always prior to tests.

#### 201 **The Student Handbook and Other ACC Information is Accessible Online**

- 202 • Go to <http://www.austincc.edu/handbook/>, regarding the above items (policies, disabilities, accepta-  
203 ble behavior, student support services, etc.)
- 204 • Also be aware there is a great deal of useful information for students that is accessible from the ACC  
205 home page at <http://www.austincc.edu/>.

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Revised January 19, 2011.