

# THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT TYLER

## Course Syllabus

PHIL 3304-001 (and 061): Existentialism

Combined section course: 061 is online | 001 meets MWF 10:10-11:05

Instructor: Gregory L. Bock, Ph.D.

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### Required Textbook:

*Basic Writings of Existentialism* by Marino, Gordon ISBN: 9780375759895

*I and Thou* by Buber, Martin ISBN: 9780684717258

### Catalog Description:

A study of humanity's place in the world as understood by philosophers like Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Buber, Sartre, and Camus

### Course Outcomes:

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to...

1. articulate a basic understanding of the questions and importance of philosophy
2. identify the precursors to the philosophical ideas of existentialism
3. explain the influence of existentialism on contemporary thinking
4. explain Kierkegaard's ideas of authenticity, passion, and ethics
5. explain Nietzsche's view of truth, power, and ethics
6. articulate Buber's thoughts on the I-Thou relationship
7. explain Sartre's ideas of absolute freedom and existence precedes essence
8. explain the meaning of *The Myth of Sisyphus*

### Grading Scale:

A=90-100%, B=80-89%, C=70-79%, D=60-69%, F=less than 60%

### Grading:

Regular Essays (2 @ 100 points each): 200 points

Martin Buber Project (1 @ 100 points each): 100 points

TOTAL: 300 points

## Assessment

### Essays

- 2000-2500 words
- Double-spaced
- No cover page
- Name and title at the top center of first page
- Page numbers on the bottom right of each page
- Standard twelve-point font (e.g. Times New Roman)
- One-inch margins
- .docx, rtf, or pdf file formats only
- The introduction should be no more than half a page.
- The conclusion should be no more than half a page and only review the main points.

ESSAY RUBRIC (100 POINTS)	
0-35 points	<b>Is the argument strong?</b> The essay makes a clear claim (whether interpretation, persuasion, or application) and supports its claims well.
0-35 points	<b>Are connections made with readings in the course?</b> Student makes multiple, relevant connections (with citations) to the textbook. Aim for at least two citations per paragraph.
0-30 points	<b>Is the paper well-written?</b> Grammar is polished, and citation style conforms to <a href="#">Chicago Manual of Style</a> .

Paper topics need to be approved by the instructor.

Additional instructions may be presented in the Canvas drop box.

Additional points will be deducted for late papers and papers that don't satisfy the "basic requirements" above. Cases of plagiarism earn an automatic zero and a possible F in the course. Plagiarized papers may be sent to UT Tyler Judicial Affairs to receive additional consequences. Using ChatGPT to write your paper is one example of plagiarism.

If you receive help from the Writing Center on an early draft and use the information to revise your paper, I will award you five extra credit points in the extra credit column, which amounts to half a letter grade on the paper. In order to receive extra credit, you must opt in to “email instructor” when you visit the Center. If I don’t receive an e-mail from the Writing Center, you will not receive credit. The Writing Center is often busy, so you must plan ahead and make an appointment. No exceptions will be made if you are too late in making your appointment.

### ***Martin Buber Project***

This project requires that students engage closely with the Martin Buber reading: *I and Thou*. This assignment varies, depending on whether the student signed up for the in-person section or the online section. In-person students will present an argument to the class in the form of an oral presentation at a time arranged with the instructor. Online students will submit a third essay that meets the requirements of the essay assignment above. This essay will be due at the end of the semester.

### **Course Policies:**

***Late work policy:*** Assignments must be submitted by the deadline. A penalty of half a letter grade per day up to two letter grades will be assessed for late assignments. This penalty will be waived only under special circumstances (e.g. a serious illness accompanied by a doctor’s note). Late discussion board posts are not accepted after the board closes.

***Communication policy:*** The best way to communicate with the instructor is through UT Tyler e-mail ([gbock@uttyler.edu](mailto:gbock@uttyler.edu)) or in Canvas. Students can expect replies within 48 hours excluding weekends and holidays. Students who do not receive a reply within this timeframe should attempt to contact the instructor again. The instructor communicates with the class via Canvas emails and announcements. It is important that students check their email and allow push notifications for class announcements.

***Class conduct policy:*** The subject matter of this class can make some people hot under the collar. This said, all comments and behavior must be classroom appropriate. What does “classroom appropriate” mean? It does *not* mean that students cannot express unpopular opinions. It means practicing reasoning and logical argumentation. It means being civil and listening with respect. Insults, snide comments, name-calling, cutting someone off, derogatory tones, sarcasm, ridicule, cussing, vulgarity, personal attacks, racial slurs, misogynistic remarks, etc. will not be allowed. If you are unsure about what counts as disrespectful, consult the instructor or the Golden Rule. The instructor will act as the final word on what is or is not classroom appropriate. Violators may be ejected from the class.

***Cell phone policy (face-to-face sections):*** Mobile devices can be used in the classroom if it is related to what is going on in class. If you have an electronic textbook or plan to take notes on your device, please let me know early in the semester. They are permissible as long as they don't distract you or your classmates from the lesson.

***Arriving late or leaving early policy (face-to-face sections):*** Arriving on time can sometimes be challenging, but it is better to be late than never. However, late arrivals and early departures can be disruptive. For this reason, please don't make a habit of it. If it becomes a regular issue, points will be deducted from the attendance grade.

***Extra credit policy:*** Extra credit is available in the class but only on discussion boards and only when they're open. Extra points can be earned by posting extra response posts that satisfy the basic requirements of response posts (see the requirements above). After you've posted the minimum number of qualifying response posts (5), each extra post will receive one point, up to five points max. By the way, five points of extra credit is equivalent to half a letter grade on the term paper.

***"It is what it is" final grade policy:*** Grades are final once the final grade percentage has been calculated in Canvas at the end of the semester. No changes will be made unless the instructor has made a mistake. Grades are not bumped up unless the student is within .5% of the next letter grade. For example, an 89.5% is an A. An 89.4% is a B. No extra credit opportunities will be given during the last week of class. The conditions for an "incomplete" are stated in the university handbook: "(a) the student has been making satisfactory progress in the course; (b) the student is unable to complete all course work or final exam due to unusual circumstances that are beyond personal control and are acceptable to the instructor; and (c) the student presents these reasons prior to the time that the final grade roster is due." The terms and deadline for satisfying an "incomplete" will be set by the instructor.

***Plagiarism policy:*** Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Plagiarism is taking credit for material that is not your own whether it is copied from a classmate, textbook, or online source, such as ChatGPT. Plagiarism is cheating, and cheating is the way of the Dark Side. If that isn't enough of a deterrent itself, plagiarizing will result in an F on the assignment and a possible F in the course. It could also mean suspension from the school. So, students should be sure to use proper citations and do their own work. If students are not sure whether something constitutes plagiarism, they should contact the instructor to ask about it before submitting the assignment. The penalty will apply whether the act of plagiarism is intentional or not.

#### [UT TYLER HONOR CODE](#)

I embrace honor and integrity.  
Therefore, I choose not to lie, cheat or steal, nor to accept the actions of those who do.