



## PHIL 2303 - CRITICAL THINKING Spring 2024

### General Course Information

<b>Professor:</b>	Dr. Harry Adams	<b>Section # and CRN:</b> P01 23938
<b>Office Location:</b>	Woolfolk 207J, and online	<b>Office Phone:</b> x3207
<b>Email Address:</b>	hwadams@pvamu.edu	<b>Mode of Instruction:</b> in person
<b>Course Location:</b>	Hobart Bldg., Room 2B209, & on Canvas	<b>Class Days &amp; Times:</b> MWF 1-1:50pm
<b>Office Hours:</b>	M/W/F 11:10-12:10, Th. 8am (on Zoom), and by appointment	
<b>Catalog Description:</b>	"Develops students' ability to recognize and evaluate arguments. Focus will include: the most frequently encountered fallacies and errors in reasoning; the (ab)use of statistics; and principles of logic as applied to daily life."	
<b>Course Agenda:</b>	In this class, we'll learn the nuts and bolts of critical thinking (CT), and gain skills necessary not only for the logical analyses of strong and weak arguments, but also for the evaluation of many policies, opinions, evidence and perspectives that we face in our personal, social, and political lives. In doing so, we'll acquire both basic CT skills for evaluating these common arguments and informal views (using "argument outlines" to do so), and also skills and building blocks of formal, symbolic logic.	
<b>Prerequisites:</b>	<b>Prerequisite:</b> ENGL 1123	<b>No co-requisites</b>
<b>Required Text:</b>	<i>Logic</i> (2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> , but especially 3 <sup>rd</sup> , Editions are OK) Stan Baronett, Oxford University Press, NY, 2005. ISBN: 978-0199383405	
<b>Recommended Text:</b>	<i>Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy</i> , & <i>Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy</i> (both online)	

### Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:	Program Learning Outcome Alignment	Core Curriculum Outcome Alignment
1. recognize and apply basic patterns of logical reasoning	1,2,3	Humanities
2. describe selected theories as well as selected arguments for and against those theories	1,2,3	Humanities
3. demonstrate insight into their own approach to decision making	1,2,3	Humanities
4. define key concepts and terms associated with argumentation	1,2,3	Humanities
5. discuss in both oral and written discourse the methods of argumentation, and fallacies to avoid in argumentation	1,2,3	Humanities

### Major Course Requirements

#### Method of Determining Final Course Grade

Course Grade Requirement	Value	Total
1. Textbook	5%	5%
2. Argument Outlines (3)	8%	24%
3. Debate	10%	10%
4. Regular Exams (#s 1 and 3)	12%	24%
5. Midterm Exam and Final Exam	14%	28%
6. Attendance and Discussion	5%	5%
7. Assessment Assignment	4%	4%
8. Curve Points and Extra Credit	? (see note)	?
Grand Total:		100%

#### Grading Criteria and Conversion:

A = 100 – 90pts; B = 89 – 80pts; C = 79 – 70pts; D = 69 – 60pts; F = 59 pts or below

**New PV Policy:** “If a student has stopped attending the course (i.e. “stopped out”) at any point after the first day of class but did not officially withdraw from the course and has missed assignments and exams, including the final exam, and performed below the grade level of a D, a grade of FN (failed non-attendance) will be assigned for the final course grade to ensure compliance with the federal Title IV financial aid regulations. In contrast, if the student has completed all assignments and exams, including the final exam, but performed below the grade level of a D, a grade of F will be assigned for the final course grade.”

### **Detailed Description of Major Course Requirements:**

**1. Textbook:** You may earn 5% of your grade merely by getting your own copy of our *Logic* textbook, and verifying with me by 1/29 (in person or by a photo attachment sent to my PV email address) that you have *your own* copy (not one shared with others). If you send me a photo, please send/attach me a shot of page 24, with your initials signed up in the top corner of the page. If you verify or send this later than 1/29, you may only get some of these 5 points, with a half point lost for each week later. Also, I’ve left a copy of our book in Library Reserves, if it helps you to make copies from that.

**2.** You will write and submit three **Argument Outlines** this semester. Starting from the first week of class, we will learn about the logical structure of arguments and how they work. Writing these Outlines will provide practice at evaluating others’ and constructing your own arguments. You must do *your own individual work* on these—without collaborating with others. Copying or writing these with other students will constitute cheating and lower your grade, potentially earning you an “F.” Here are the 3 topics (and Conclusions) for your Debate and Outlines (you’ll write Outlines on all three, but be in only one Debate):

**DEBATE/OUTLINE #1: (Conclusion A):** Therefore, Texas Governor Abbott’s Operation Lone Star is a good program, and should be enforced!

– or – **(Conclusion B):** Therefore, no, Operation Lone Star is a bad program, and should be stopped!

(For starting reference, see: Abbott Signs Law Allowing Texas to Arrest Migrants, Setting Up Federal Showdown - The New York Times (nytimes.com))

**DEBATE/OUTLINE #2: (Conclusion A):** Therefore, *Dobbs v. Jackson* was a good U.S. Supreme Court ruling, and should be continued and applied!

– or – **(Conclusion B):** Therefore, no, *Dobbs v. Jackson* was a bad U.S. Supreme Court ruling, and should be overturned!

**DEBATE/OUTLINE #3: (Conclusion A):** Therefore, global warming is being made much worse by human action, and we need to take serious steps to curb it!

– or – **(Conclusion B):** Therefore, no, the threat of global warming is exaggerated and is not being made much worse by human action; and we need not do much to curb it!

You will submit your Outlines in Canvas “Assignments,” by the due dates listed on our Semester Calendar. It will be your choice whether you write and defend Conclusion A or B for each one. Each of your Outlines will consist of at least six Points/Premises (numbered P1, P2, . . . P6. . .), written at the top of your page, and ending with the Conclusion written at the bottom of your page. So you’ll supply all the Premises. But I’ve given you the Conclusions (above) you’ll end up with: you’ll simply cut-and-paste A or B onto the bottom of each of your Outlines.

Here is how grading for these Outlines will work: **i)** each Premise should be *one* declarative sentence long—not presented as a mere phrase or question or set of sentences; **ii)** every Premise should be relevant to, and supportive of, the Conclusion. (So if some premise or sentence or thought is irrelevant or unrelated to C, then you should *not* include it in your Outline!); **iii)** each Premise should be clear and *free of spelling and grammatical errors*; **iv)** the overall flow and structure of your Outline should be clear; **v)** you should use or integrate information in your Premises from **at least 2 outside sources**, beyond our *Logic* textbook; and **vi)** you should provide full citations for *all* your sources at the end of your Outline (after the Conclusion). So an “**A**-quality Outline” will fulfill all six of these criteria; fulfilling most of these criteria will earn a **B**; a **C** will fulfill some of these; and a **D or F** will fulfill few or none of these. (Btw, I will offer you examples of such Outlines periodically in class.)

**3.** For the **Debate**, students will defend (or critique) *one* of the above topics (not all three). They will do this in an oral debate in front of class, explaining and defending or attacking the topic and its distinctive strengths and weaknesses. (Students who strongly prefer not to debate may write a 5-page Paper instead.)

In these Debates, you’ll be expected to provide helpful information and arguments that support your Conclusion—either A or B. Although this will be done in front of class with fellow team members, each student will be graded individually for his/her own contribution and performance. To be ready for these Debates will require real preparation: on an informational level, this will mean explaining to the class any relevant facts, historical developments, laws or court cases, etc.. And on a critical thinking level, this will mean clarifying and arguing *why* your Conclusion is stronger or more reasonable than your opponent’s.

Grading for your Debate will work as follows: students who come well prepared—with clear and convincing arguments, a good grasp of the issues, use of our textbook and outside sources, and stimulation of class discussion—will get an A. Students who come generally prepared, who participate a little and show some familiarity with the issues and relevant textbook readings, will get a B or C. Students who come ill prepared, who say nothing or seem to make up stuff on the spot, will get a D. And students who don't show when scheduled up will get an F and *no credit*—0 out of the 10 points.

**4-5.** You will take two **Regular Exams** (#s 1 and 3): Exam #1 will cover all the material up to 2/16, and Exam #3 will cover the material from 3/8 to 4/12. The **Midterm** will cover everything up to 3/8, and the **Final** will cover all the material after 3/8. These Exams will have about 30-35 multiple choice questions and will all be in-person; and you'll need a green Scantron to take them. Students who take any Exam late may have to take a short answer/essay version of the Exam as make-up. (These make-up versions will cover the same material as, and be no more or less difficult than, the regular multiple-choice versions of the Exams.)

**6. Good Attendance and Discussion** (with students getting involved and sharing their thoughts, questions, etc.) will be important parts of the class and help you earn a relatively higher grade. So students will not get all 5 points for this part of the course if they never have anything to say and have more than two unexcused absences. (And only verifiable documentation of valid excuses will count to excuse absences; so please don't send me emails merely mentioning that you'll miss a class.)

**7. Assessment Assignment** – this is meant to fulfill an assignment PV has required, for all core classes like ours. This must be submitted in the Canvas Assignments tab by or before 4/25; see page 9 (“Philosophy Assessment THECB Assignment”) for details about this.

**8.** I may not give any **curve points** (as on Exams) or **extra credit** opportunities this semester. But if I do, they will NOT be given to students who: **a)** have not shown or sent me copies of the textbook on time (see #1 above), or **b)** violate any of our Course Procedures/Policies (see below).

### **COURSE PROCEDURES/ADDITIONAL CLASS POLICIES:**

Most of these apply to our in-person classes, although some apply to any Zoom sessions we have. Students who want to learn should be able to do so in an environment that makes learning easy and interesting and that supports mutual respect. In order to maintain this positive environment, these policies should be followed:

**1. Late Policy:** Students may not be allowed into class after the first ten minutes (or less, if lateness remains a problem), unless they have a valid written excuse. And students who come late more than three times may not be allowed into class at all. (See #2 about excuses for chronic lateness or absence.)

**2. Chronic lateness and absences** will be considered unexcused, unless students give me written, verifiable notes explaining why, with phone numbers or evidence for verification. (Please don't send me emails merely saying that you're missing class, without verification: merely saying this won't suffice to excuse you for the absence.)

**3.** These behaviors, in particular, may cause students to lose points on Exams: frequently coming in late; leaving class early without letting me know before class starts; making noise, whispering or talking to neighbors during class; etc. Depending on the frequency or severity of the disruption, students may lose up to five points from Exam grades—for *each* disruption.

**4.** Cheating by forging other's names on the Attendance Sheet (or letting others do this) may result in an “F” for the course (per the PVAMU Rules and Procedures on Academic Dishonesty; see page 6 below).

**5.** Copying work from other students' Argument Outlines, copying answers from neighbors in-person Exams (with many identical *wrong* answers), or using notes, cheat-sheets, or cell phones on Exams may earn a student an “F” for the class, or even get them expelled from PV. (See PV's policy on this on p. 6.)

**6. Cell Phone Policy:** I strongly encourage students **not** to have cell phones out in class. Doing so may distract students and set a bad example (of not paying attention or taking the class seriously). I won't simply prohibit their use in class; but if students have them out regularly, they may not receive any curve points or extra credit opportunities that I give out.

**7.** And although I won't assign seats or require this, please try to sit in the same seat all semester (because, among other things, this will help me learn your names more quickly, if I do a seating chart).

*Students who break these policies (1-6) won't be entitled to any curve points or extra credit opportunities I may give out.*

(Peace. I Timothy 1:9 - "the law isn't made for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels." ☺)

## **SEMESTER CALENDAR**

### **Week One, of 1/17:**

Readings: Ch. 1, sections A&B (so get, and start reading, the textbook asap)

### **Week Two, of 1/22:**

Readings: Ch. 1, E through H

### **Week Three, of 1/29:**

Readings: Ch. 4, A & B

### **Week Four, of 2/5:**

Readings: Ch. 4, C & D

### **Week Five, of 2/12:**

Readings: Ch. 7, A & B

### **Week Six, of 2/19:**

Readings: Ch. 8, A & B

### **Week Seven, of 2/26:**

Readings: Ch. 8E, and Ch. 10

### **Week Eight, of 3/4:**

read & review Chs. 1,4,7, 8, 10

### **Week Nine, of 3/11:**

### **Week Ten, of 3/18:**

Readings: Ch. 11, F

### **Week Eleven, of 3/25:**

Readings: Ch. 11G, and 12A

### **Week Twelve, of 4/1:**

Readings: Ch. 12 D & B

### **Week Thirteen, of 4/8:**

Readings: Ch. 12 B

### **Week Fourteen, of 4/15:**

Readings: Ch. 14, B, E, G & H

### **Week Fifteen, of 4/22:**

Readings: Ch. 13, F & G

### **Week Sixteen, of 4/29:**

This Calendar is your roadmap for the semester: refer to it weekly.

### **Intro. to Class, Arguments and the Basics of Critical Thinking**

(although I don't require you to do the Exercises at the end of each section, it will help you learn the material to review some of these on your own)

### **Deductive and Inductive Arguments**

### **Informal Fallacies**

1<sup>st</sup> Debate on 2/2; Outline #1 also due by 2/2

### **Informal Fallacies**

### **Propositional Logic**

### **Exam #1 on 2/16**

### **Natural Deduction**

### **Natural Deduction, and Analogical Arguments**

**Analogical Arguments**, and Midterm review on 3/6

### **Midterm Exam on 3/8**

**Spring Break**, no classes 3/11 – 3/16

### **Legal Arguments**

2<sup>nd</sup> Debate on 3/22; Outline #2 also due by 3/22

### **Legal Arguments, and Moral Arguments**

### **Moral Arguments**

### **Moral Arguments**

review for Exam #3 on 4/10; and **Exam #3 on 4/12**

### **Causality and Scientific Arguments**

### **Scientific Arguments; and Statistics and Probability**

3<sup>rd</sup> Debate on 4/22, Outline #3 also due by 4/22; Assessment Assignment due by 4/26

**Final Exam - TBA** (in person)

## **STUDENT SUPPORT and SUCCESS:**

### **John B. Coleman Library**

The library and its partners have as their mission to provide resources and instructional material in support of the evolving curriculum, as a partner in Prairie View A&M University's mission of teaching, research, and service and to support the University's core values of access and quality, diversity, leadership, relevance, and social responsibility through emphasis on ten key areas of service. It maintains library collections and access both on campus, online, and through local agreements to further the educational goals of students and faculty. Phone: 936-261-1500; Website: [J. B. Coleman Library](#).

### **Academic Advising Services (AAS)**

AAS offers students a variety of services that contribute to student success and leads towards graduation. We assist students with understanding university policies and procedures that affect academic progress. We support the early alert program to help students get connected to success early in the semester. We help refer students to the appropriate academic support services when the student is unsure of the best resource for their needs. Some students are supported by faculty advisors in their respective colleges. Your faculty advisor can be identified in PantherTracks. Advisors with AAS are available to all students. We are located across campus. You can find your advisor's location by academic major at the [Academic Advising Website](#), Phone: 936-261-5911.

### **The University Tutoring Center**

The University Tutoring Center (UTC) offers free tutoring and academic support to all registered PVAMU students. The mission of the UTC is to help provide a solid academic foundation that enables students to become confident,

capable, independent learners. Competent and caring staff and peer tutors guide students in identifying, acquiring, and enhancing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to reach their desired goals. Tutoring and academic support is offered face-to-face in the [UTC, in virtual face-to-face sessions](#), and through [online sessions at PVPlace](#). Other support services available for students include Supplemental Instruction, Study Break, Academic Success Workshops, and Algebra Study Jam. Location: J. B. Coleman Library, Rm. 307; Phone: 936-261-1561; Email: [pvtutoring@pvamu.edu](mailto:pvtutoring@pvamu.edu); Website: [University Tutoring Center](#).

### **The Writing Center**

The Writing Center provides well-trained peer tutors that assist students with writing assignments at any stage of the writing process. Tutors help students with various writing tasks from understanding assignments, brainstorming, drafting, revising, editing, researching, and integrating sources. Students have free access to Grammarly online writing assistance. Grammarly is an automated proofreading and plagiarism detection tool. Student must register for Grammarly by using their student email address. In addition, students have access to face-to-face as well as virtual tutoring services either asynchronously via email or synchronously via Zoom. Location: J. B. Coleman Library, Rm. 209; Phone: 936-261-3724; Website: [The Writing Center](#); [Grammarly Registration](#).

### **Academic Early Alert**

Academic Early Alert is a proactive system of communication and collaboration between faculty, academic advisors, and PVAMU students that is designed to support student success by promptly identifying issues and allowing for intervention. Academic Early Alert helps students by providing a central location to schedule advising appointments, view advisor contact information, and request assistance. Students who recognize that they have a problem that is negatively affecting their academic performance or ability to continue school may self-refer an Academic Early Alert. To do so, students will log in to PVPlace and click on Academic Early Alert on the left sidebar. Phone: 936-261-5902; Website: [Academic Early Alert](#).

### **Student Counseling Services**

The Student Counseling Services unit offers a range of services and programs to assist students in maximizing their potential for success: short-term individual, couples, and group counseling, as well as crisis intervention, outreach, consultation, and referral services. The staff is licensed by the State of Texas and provides assistance to students who are dealing with academic skills concerns, situational crises, adjustment problems, and emotional difficulties. Information shared with the staff is treated confidentially and in accordance with Texas State Law. Location: Hobart Taylor, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor; Phone: 936-261-3564; Website: [Student Counseling Services](#).

### **Office of Testing Services**

Testing Services serves to create opportunities by offering suite of exams that aid in the students' academic and professional success. Currently we administer entrance (HESI A2), college readiness (TSI assessment), Prior Learning (CLEP, DSST), and proctored exams. Location: Wilhelmina Delco, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Rm. 305; Phone: 936-261-3627; Email: [aetesting@pvamu.edu](mailto:aetesting@pvamu.edu); Website: [Testing Services](#).

### **Office of Diagnostic Testing and Disability Services**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services. As a federally-mandated educational support unit, the Office of Disability Services serves as the repository for confidential disability files for faculty, staff, and students. For persons with a disability, the Office develops individualized ADA letters of request for accommodations. Other services include: learning style inventories, awareness workshops, accessibility pathways, webinars, computer laboratory with adapted hardware and software, adapted furniture, proctoring of non-standardized test administrations, ASL interpreters, ALDs, digital recorders, livescribe, and a comprehensive referral network across campus and the broader community. Location: Hobart Taylor, Rm. 1D128; Phone: 936-261-3583; Website: [Disability Services](#).

### **Center for Instructional Innovation and Technology Services (CIITS)**

Distance Learning, also referred to as Distance Education, is the employment of alternative instructional delivery methods to extend programs and services to persons unable to attend college in the traditional manner. The Center for Instructional Innovation and Technology Services (CIITS) supports student learning through online, hybrid, web-assisted and 2-way video course delivery. For more details and contact information, visit: [CIITS Student Webpage](#); Phone: 936-261-3283.

### **Veteran Affairs**

Veteran Services works with student veterans, current military and their dependents to support their transition to the college environment and perseverance to graduation. The Office coordinates and certifies benefits for both the G.I. Bill and the Texas Hazlewood Act. Location: Evans Hall, Rm. 102; Phone: 936-261-3563; Website: [Veteran Affairs](#).

### **Office for Student Engagement**

The Office for Student Engagement delivers comprehensive programs and services designed to meet the co-curricular needs of students. The Office implements inclusive and accessible programs and services that enhance

student development through exposure to and participation in diverse and relevant social, cultural, intellectual, recreational, community service, leadership development and campus governance. Location: Memorial Student Center, Rm. 221; Phone: 936-261-1340; Website: [Office for Student Engagement](#).

### **Career Services**

Career Services supports students through professional development, career readiness, and placement and employment assistance. The Office provides one-on-one career coaching, interview preparation, resume and letter writing, and career exploration workshops and seminars. Services are provided for students at the Northwest Houston Center and College of Nursing in the Medical Center twice a month or on a requested basis. Distance Learning students are encouraged to visit the Career Services website for information regarding services provided. Location: Anderson Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor; Phone: 936-261-3570; Website: [Career Services](#).

## **UNIVERSITY RULES and PROCEDURES (copied from the PV Catalogue):**

### **Academic Misconduct (See Student Planner)**

You are expected to practice academic honesty in every aspect of this course and all other courses. Make sure you are familiar with your Student Planner, especially the section on academic misconduct (see *University Administrative Guidelines on Academic Integrity*). Students who engage in academic misconduct are subject to university disciplinary procedures. As listed in the PVAMU Undergraduate Catalog, Graduate Catalog, and the Student Planner, the following are examples of prohibited conduct. This list is not designed to be all-inclusive or exhaustive. In addition to academic sanctions, any student found to have committed or to have attempted to commit the following academic misconduct may also be subject to disciplinary review and action as outlined in the PVAMU Student Planner.

### **Forms of Academic Dishonesty:**

1. **Cheating:** Deception in which a student misrepresents that he/she has mastered information on an academic exercise that he/she has not learned, giving or receiving aid unauthorized by the instructor on assignments or examinations. Examples: unauthorized use of notes for a test; using a “cheat sheet” on a quiz or exam; any alteration made on a graded test or exam which is then resubmitted to the teacher.
2. **Plagiarism:** Careless or deliberate use of the work or the ideas of another; representation of another’s work, words, ideas, or data as your own without permission or appropriate acknowledgment. Examples: copying another’s paper or answers, failure to identify information or essays from the Internet and submitting or representing it as your own; submitting an assignment which has been partially or wholly done by another and claiming it as yours; not properly acknowledging a source which has been summarized or paraphrased in your work; failure to acknowledge the use of another’s words with quotation marks. Plagiarism is a serious academic crime, and our Program has a strict, rigorous enforcement policy for students who commit plagiarism. In general, plagiarism is using another person’s or artificially generated program’s words, statistics, and/or ideas as if they were your own. Plagiarism, which is formally defined in the University Rules and Procedures section of this syllabus, can come in many forms, such as directly quoting a source without quotation marks, taking another student’s work, directly quoting a source without giving a reference citation, paraphrasing a source without giving a reference citation and so forth. It is incumbent on students to seek help from the instructor or other University resources to avoid even the appearance of plagiarism in their work. If in doubt, CITE THE SOURCE! Any student caught committing ANY type of plagiarism in a Political Science course will receive one OR MORE of the following punishments, depending on the severity of the offense and in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct:
  - a. Grade Penalty (an F for the assignment or for the course) in addition to cancellation of any extra credit points
  - b. Letter of Reprimand
  - c. Probation
  - d. Suspension
  - e. Dismissal from Academic Program
  - f. Expulsion from the University.

Students must consult the University’s Code of Conduct for other forms of academic dishonesty and punishments. PV’s General Statement on the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence Tools in the Classroom: Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI), specifically foundational models that can create writing, computer code, and/or images using minimal human prompting, are increasingly becoming pervasive. Even though ChatGPT is one of the most well-known GAIs currently available, this statement includes any and all past, current, and future generations of GAI software. PVAMU expects that all work produced for a grade in any course, be it face-to-face or virtual, will be the sole product of a student’s endeavors to meet those academic goals. However, should an instructor permit their students to use artificial intelligence as a resource or tool, students must not substitute the substance of their original work with the results of using such GAI tools. This clearly violates the University’s Administrative Guidelines on Academic Integrity and its underlying academic values.

3. **Multiple Submission:** Submission of work from one course to satisfy a requirement in another course without explicit permission. Example: using a paper prepared and graded for credit in one course to fulfill a requirement and receive credit in a different course.
4. **Conspiracy:** Agreeing with one or more persons to commit an act of academic/scholastic dishonesty.
5. **Fabrication of Information/Forgery:** Use or submission of contrived, invented, forged, or altered information in any assignment, laboratory exercise, or test; tampering with or production of a counterfeit document, particularly

documents which make up the student's academic record. Examples: making up a source or citing nonexistent publication or article; representing made up data as real for an experiment in a science laboratory class; forging a change of grade or student withdrawal record; falsifying any document related to a student academic exercise.

### **Nonacademic Misconduct (See Student Planner)**

The University respects the rights of instructors to teach and students to learn. Maintenance of these rights requires campus conditions that do not impede their exercise. Campus behavior that interferes with either (1) the instructor's ability to conduct the class, or (2) the ability of students to benefit from the instructional program, or (3) the rights of others will not be tolerated. An individual engaging in such disruptive behavior may be subject to disciplinary action. Such incidents will be adjudicated by the Office for Student Conduct under nonacademic procedures.

### **Sexual Misconduct**

Sexual harassment of students and employees at Prairie View A&M University is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Any member of the university community violating the university's sexual harassment policy will be subject to disciplinary action. In accordance with the Texas A&M University System guidelines, your instructor is obligated to report to the Office of Title IX Compliance ([titleixteam@pvamu.edu](mailto:titleixteam@pvamu.edu)) any instance of sexual misconduct involving a student, which includes sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, domestic violence, and sexual harassment, about which the instructor becomes aware during this course through writing, discussion, or personal disclosure. The faculty and staff of PVAMU actively strive to provide a learning, working, and living environment that promotes respect that is free from sexual misconduct, discrimination, and all forms of violence. If students, faculty, or staff would like assistance, or have questions, they may contact the Title IX Coordinator at 936-261-2144 or [titleixteam@pvamu.edu](mailto:titleixteam@pvamu.edu). More information can be found at the [Title IX Webpage](#) including confidential resources available on campus.

### **Pregnancy, Pregnancy-related, and Parenting Accommodations**

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination, which includes discrimination based on pregnancy, marital status, or parental status. Students seeking accommodations related to pregnancy, pregnancy-related condition, or parenting (reasonably immediate postpartum period) are encouraged to contact Student Disability Services or the Dean of Students' Office for additional information and to request accommodations. More information can be found at this [webpage](#).

### **Non-Discrimination Statement**

Prairie View A&M University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity in its programs and activities. The University is committed to supporting students and complying with the Texas A&M University System non-discrimination policy. It seeks to establish an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you experience an incident of discrimination or harassment, we encourage you to report it. If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you privacy or confidentiality, there are individuals who can meet with you. The Director of Equal Opportunity & Diversity has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies, and can be reached at Harrington Science Building, Suite 109 or by phone 936-261-1744 or 1792.

### **Class Attendance Policy (See Catalog for Full Attendance Policy)**

Prairie View A&M University requires regular class attendance. Attending all classes supports full academic development of each learner whether classes are taught with the instructor physically present or via distance learning technologies such as interactive video and/or internet. Excessive absenteeism, whether excused or unexcused, may result in a student's course grade being reduced or in assignment of a grade of "F". Absences are accumulated beginning with the first day of class during regular semesters and summer terms. Each faculty member will include the University's attendance policy in each course syllabus.

### **Student Academic Appeals Process**

Authority and responsibility for assigning grades to students rests with the faculty. However, in those instances where students believe that miscommunication, errors, or unfairness of any kind may have adversely affected the instructor's assessment of their academic performance, the student has a right to appeal by the procedure listed in the University Catalog and by doing so within thirty days of receiving the grade or experiencing any other problematic academic event that prompted the complaint. Students can file Academic Complaints and/or Grade Appeals at this [webpage](#).

## **TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

### **Minimum Recommended Hardware and Software:**

- Intel PC or Laptop with Windows 10 or later version; Mac with OS High Sierra\*
- Smartphone or iPad/Tablet with Wi-Fi\* High speed Internet access
- 8 GB Memory Hard drive with 320 GB storage space
- 15" monitor, 800x600, color or 16 bit Sound card w/speakers
- Microphone and recording software Keyboard & mouse
- Most current version of Google Chrome, Safari or Firefox

\*Smartphone, Google Chrome books and Android tablets may not be supported. iPads are the only tablets supported.

**Note:** Be sure to enable Java & pop-ups in the Web browser preferences

**Participants should have a basic proficiency of the following computer skills:**

- Sending and receiving emails
  - Microsoft Word (or a program convertible to Word)
  - Windows or Mac OS
- A working knowledge of the Internet  
Acrobat PDF Reader  
Video conferencing software

**Netiquette (online etiquette)**

Students are expected to participate in all discussions and virtual classroom chats as directed. Students are to be respectful and courteous to others on discussions boards. Foul or abusive language will not be tolerated. Do not use ALL CAPS for communicating to others AS IT CAN BE INTERPRETED AS YELLING. Avoid slang terms such as “wassup?” and texting abbreviations such as “u” instead of “you.” Limit and possibly avoid the use of emoticons. Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm as tone is sometimes lost in an email or discussion post and the message might be taken seriously or sound offensive.

**Video Conferencing Etiquette**

When using Zoom, WebEx or other video conferencing tools, confirm the visible area is tidy, clear of background clutter, inappropriate or offensive posters, and other distractions. Ensure you dress appropriately and avoid using high traffic or noisy areas. Stay muted when you are not speaking and avoid eating/drinking during session. Before class session begins, test audio, video and lighting to alleviate technology issues.

**Technical Support**

Students should go to the [Password Reset Tool](#) if they have password issues. The page will provide instructions for resetting passwords and contact information if login issues persist. For other technical questions regarding eCourses, contact the Center for Instructional Innovation & Technology Services (CIITS) at 936-261-3283 or [ciits@pvamu.edu](mailto:ciits@pvamu.edu).

**Communication Expectations and Standards**

Emails or discussion postings will receive a response from the instructor, usually in less than 48 hours. Urgent emails should be marked as such. Check regularly for responses.

**Discussion Requirement**

Online courses often require minimal to no face-to-face meetings. However, conversations about the readings, lectures, materials, and other aspects of the course can take place in a seminar fashion. This will be accomplished by the use of the discussion board. The exact use of discussion will be determined by the instructor.

**It is strongly suggested** that students type their discussion postings in a word processing application such as Word and save it to their PC or a removable drive before posting to the discussion board. This is important for two reasons: 1) If for some reason your discussion responses are lost in your online course, you will have another copy; 2) Grammatical errors can be greatly minimized by the use of the spell-and-grammar check functions in word processing applications. Once the post(s) have been typed and corrected in the word processing application, copy and paste to the discussion board.

**COVID-19 Campus Safety Measures**

To promote public safety and protect students, faculty, and staff during the coronavirus pandemic, PVAMU has adopted policies and practices to limit virus transmission.

- **Self-reporting** – Students who test positive for COVID-19 are required to report their positive test results within 48 hours using the [PVAMU Self-Reporting Form](#). Proof of off-campus and self-administered home test results must be sent to [covid-19@pvamu.edu](mailto:covid-19@pvamu.edu). Proof for self-administered home test is a picture of the test with a photo ID in the same photo.
- **Self-monitoring** – Students should follow public health guidance to help slow the spread of the virus, including being vaccinated. Students who have a fever or exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 should not participate in face-to-face instruction.
- **Face Coverings** – Face coverings (KN-95, surgical mask, etc.) are highly recommended in classrooms, teaching laboratories, common spaces such as lobbies and hallways, public study spaces, libraries, academic resource and support offices, and outdoor spaces where 6 feet of physical distancing is challenging to maintain reliably.
- **Physical Distancing** – Physical distancing should be maintained between students, instructors, and others in course and course-related activities where possible.
- **Personal Illness and Quarantine** – Students required to quarantine are to participate in courses and course-related activities remotely and must not attend face-to-face course activities. Communication with the student’s instructor for remote support will take place by the Office of the Assistant Vice President for Academic Engagement and Success. Students under quarantine are expected to participate in courses and complete graded work unless they have symptoms that are too severe to participate in course activities. Students experiencing personal injury or illness that is too severe for the student to attend class may qualify

for an excused absence. To receive an excused absence, students must provide appropriate documentation to the Office for Student Conduct, [studentconduct@pvamu.edu](mailto:studentconduct@pvamu.edu).

**Questions** – For answers regarding COVID-19 policies and/or procedures, students should refer to [www.pvamu.edu/coronavirus](http://www.pvamu.edu/coronavirus) or email [covid-19@pvamu.edu](mailto:covid-19@pvamu.edu).

## Philosophy Assessment THECB Assignment for Core Courses

### Purpose of Assignment:

This assignment is designed to satisfy the Language, Philosophy, and Culture Section of the core undergraduate curriculum requirement, as specified by the THECB. Courses appropriate to this Assignment are ones that: 1) focus on ideas, values, beliefs, and other aspects of culture that affect human experience; 2) involve the exploration of ideas that foster aesthetic and intellectual creation in order to understand the human condition across cultures; and 3) address critical thinking skills, communication skills, personal responsibility, and social responsibility.

### Brief Description of Assignment:

Student participants will write a response according to the Instructions given below. This Assignment must follow an official Writing and Citation Style (MLA, APA, or Chicago Style) and, if students wish to add these, other works used, with references/footnotes cited in parentheses. What students write should be about 1 page long (a little longer, but not shorter, will be OK, and will be double-spaced with 12-point font).

### Instructions:

Read the *New York Times* article, “We Need a New Language for Talking about Race” by Henry Louis Gates Jr. and Andrew S. Curran<sup>1</sup> (the link/web-address for this is provided at the bottom). Then, write a 1-page paper that does the two things mentioned below, especially with this quoted assertion in mind: In their third paragraph, Gates and Curran assert that to “push back against a very long and sad history of the misuse of science for pernicious purposes,” we need a better understanding of how *race* (“a toxic social construction”) and *ancestry* (“a shared genetic history”) are “distinct [and] fundamentally opposed. . .” So you need to re-construct their argument, and also explain why you agree or disagree with their assertion. (Do you agree with it? If so, why? If you do not agree with the assertion, why not?) In other words, your 1-page paper should do two things; it should:

- briefly but accurately reiterate Gates and Curran’s argument and assertion here, and
- clearly express your own response to (reasons why you agree or disagree with) them.

And this should be *all your own* work and words, *not* done in collaboration with other students. So if students copy to or from others, then they will earn an “F,” or be penalized with a lower grade for this.

Grading Rubric:	Exceeds Expectations (90-100%)	Meets Expectations (80-89%)	Approaches Expectations (70-79%)	Meets a few expectations (60-69%)	Does Not Meet Expectations (Below 60%)
<b>Argumentation</b> (40% of grade)	The submission uses excellent logic; it is well organized and coherent.	The submission uses logic; it is well organized.	The submission needs organization and/or a better application of logic.	The submission lacks logic and organization.	The submission does not follow the instructions.
<b>Accurate Representation of Gates and Curran</b> (30% of grade)	The submission accurately represents the assertions of the author.	The submission represents the assertions of the author. However, more support was needed.	The submission demonstrates a partial understanding of the author’s assertions.	The submission does not accurately represent the assertions of the author.	The submission does not follow the instructions.
<b>Correct Formatting and Style</b> (30% of grade)	The submission consistently follows a formatting and style guide.	The submission mostly follows a formatting and style guide.	The submission needs a stronger application of a formatting and style guide.	The submission does not use or accurately follow a formatting and style guide.	The submission does not follow the instructions.

<sup>1</sup> Gates, Henry Louis, Jr. and Andrew S. Curran. “We Need a New Language for Talking about Race.” *New York Times*, 3/3/22. [Opinion | We Need a New Language for Talking About Race - The New York Times \(nytimes.com\)](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/03/opinion/we-need-a-new-language-for-talking-about-race.html)