

PHIL 4385-01: Philosophy of Marxism

Sam Houston State University

Spring 2024 — CRN: 25935

Instructor: Dr. Thomas Brommage

Office: CHSS 347

Office Hours: M/W 1–2:30 PM & by appt.

Office Phone: 936-294-2460

Google Voice: 267-CALL-DR-B

Email: brommage@shsu.edu

Course Description: An investigation into the history of philosophical analysis of humor and laughter. Content will include an understanding of the various theories of humor, and the basic terms and distinctions to analyze the funny, progressing as we go into more contemporary accounts of humor. By the end of the course, the student should have a comprehensive overview of the major figures and ideas within the field.

Prerequisites: N/A

Readings:

1. Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844* in Tucker, pp. 66-125.
2. Marx, “Theses on Feuerbach” in Tucker, pp. 146-200.
3. Marx, *German Ideology*, Part I in Tucker, pp. 146-203.
4. György Lukács, “History and Class Consciousness”
5. Louis Althusser, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses”
6. Engels, “Origin of the Family” in Tucker, p. 734-59.
7. Hartsock, “The Feminist Standpoint”
8. Marx, “Wage Labor and Capitalism” in Tucker, pp. 203-217.
9. Marx, *Capital* Volume I (selections) in Tucker, pp. 294-438.
10. Marx and Engels, “Manifesto of the Communist Party” in Tucker, pp. 469-500

Writing Enhanced: This is a “W” course, which means that at least 50 percent of your course grade will derive from writing activities designed to help you master course objectives. Writing in this course is one of the tools your instructor will use to help you learn course material. Some writing activities will require you to draft and revise your work, with or without instructor feedback. Others may not receive a grade but are designed to assist you in critical reflection of the course material. You should approach writing in this course as a tool to use as part of your learning as well as a tool your instructor will use to assess your level of learning.

Evaluation: The main point of evaluation will be two 1500-1750 word papers (about 6-8 pages double spaced), one due at the midpoint and a second due at the end of the semester. More details on guidelines and due dates will be made available through Blackboard. In addition, participation in weekly discussion meetings will constitute the remainder of the course grade.

The following weighting will be used to calculate your course grade:

Papers (1500-1750 words)	2 x 25% = 50%
Participation in Weekly Meetings	50%

Your rounded average of these assignments will determine your grade, based on the following scale:

A	100 - 89.5
B	89.4 - 79.5
C	79.4 - 69.5
D	69.4 - 59.5
F	59.4 - 0

Academic Dishonesty: Students are expected to maintain honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Please be aware that plagiarized work and any form of academic dishonesty will result in an “F” on the assignment. [SHSU Academic Policy Statement 810213](#) outlines the definition of academic honesty and the related disciplinary procedures.

You should also familiarize yourself with [Academic Policy Statement 900823](#), which outlines the procedures for students to file an academic grievance should you wish to appeal your grade for reasons other than academic dishonesty. Please read through these policies carefully.

Course Evaluations: In accordance with University policy every student will have an opportunity at a specified date and time near the end of the semester to complete a course evaluation form from the IDEA course evaluation system.

For University policies on Student Absences on Religious Holy Days, Students with Disabilities, and Visitors in the Classroom you may view to the official statements on the SHSU Website, <http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/>

Expectations, Suggestions and Mandates for an efficient class:

1. Especially true in philosophy more than most other subjects, diligence is important. Some of the reading will be difficult since we are looking at some of the most profound ideas in the history of the world. The difficulty of the subject is indirectly proportional to the amount of work put into the course.
2. Expect to have up to several hours a week of reading and practice in order to earn an “A” for the course. Additionally, for these reasons, attendance is of vital importance. *If you do not regularly log in or keep up with the reading and exercises, do not expect to pass this class!*

3. Please come to class prepared (i.e., any reading assigned read, any questions concerning exercises or lectures prepared, etc.)
4. Please feel free to make mistakes. We all will from time to time—including your omniscient instructor.
5. Please feel free to make an appointment to discuss the material you do not understand. Waiting until the last moment in the semester to catch up is not advisable. I am excellent at fixing small problems, but horrendous at fixing large ones. The only difference between small and large problems is time.
6. Have fun! The material is only as dry as you make it out to be. Sharpening one's mind can be an exhilarating process.