

Welcome to Philosophy 205: Introduction to the Bible

Greetings!

My name is Dr. Chris Gilbert, and I shall be your instructor in the online version of Introduction to the Bible (PHIL 205). The purpose of this letter is to inform you of some important details prior to the commencement of the course. Please read this page carefully!

Basic Requirements

This course requires you to have access to the Internet and an e-mail account. Please note that, since Cuesta College provides me with your college-generated e-mail address, this is the only e-mail address I will use when I need to contact you. Thus, you will need to do one of two things: either (a) check your Cuesta College e-mail account regularly, or (b) arrange for messages to be forwarded from your Cuesta College e-mail account to your personal e-mail account.

You will also need to purchase the two required texts for the course, which are on sale in the Cuesta College bookstore (<http://bookstore.cuesta.edu/>). One of the texts you are required to have is a copy of the Bible. I have ordered the Oxford New Revised Standard Version Bible for the bookstore. If you already own a Bible that you would like to use in this course, you may do so; I recommend the NRSV simply because it is an excellent translation.

Mandatory Meetings

There will be a total of five face-to-face class meetings, all of which will take place on the San Luis Obispo campus and all of which are mandatory. The first meeting is an orientation to the course; the other meetings will be for the sake of administering closed-book, closed-note examinations. All meetings will be held from 7:00-8:30 p.m. Do not register for this course if you are registering for another course that meets at those times. The dates and locations of these meetings are listed in the description of this course that appears in the Cuesta College Schedule of Classes. To see the meeting dates and locations when you are looking at the online Schedule of Classes, you must click on the highlighted section number for this class, then read the "Section Information Text" in the box that appears.

Any registered student who fails to appear at the first mandatory meeting will be dropped from the course, no exceptions. Students wishing to add the course must be in attendance at the first mandatory meeting, but please note that one's attendance at this meeting does not guarantee that one will be added.

Note that nothing will "happen" in the course until after the first mandatory meeting, at which we shall discuss how to access the course home page, due dates for the reading assignments and papers, etc. Thus, you do not need to do anything prior to that first meeting.

About the Course

There are a number of things you should know about our course right from the beginning. The first is that this course is designed for those who are computer literate. If you are not a person who is both confident and comfortable working with e-mail and the Internet, then the online version of PHIL 205 is not for you.

Second, this course demands a great deal of self-motivation. It is the student's responsibility to keep on top of the reading assignments, to log on to the course web site each week, to hand the two required papers in on time, and to show up for the four examinations. Thus, I recommend this course only to those who are both well-organized and self-disciplined.

Finally, this course requires a tremendous amount of reading; all of the instruction in this course will be coming to you in written form. If you read fairly quickly, and if you tend to retain the material that you have read, this fact should not pose much of a problem for you. On the other hand, if you are a slow reader, or if you tend not to retain what you read, then you will find this course extremely difficult.

I look forward to seeing you at our first meeting.

Sincerely,
Dr. Gilbert
cgilbert@cuesta.edu