





# Philosophy (PHIL) 231

## Introduction to Philosophy: West and East (Revision 2)

**Status:**

Replaced with new revision, see the [course listing](#)  for the current revision 

**Delivery mode:**

Individualized study online 

**Credits:**

3

**Areas of study:**

Arts or Humanities

**Prerequisites:**

None

**Precluded:**

PHIL 251 and PHIL 261 (PHIL 231 may not be taken for credit if credit has already been obtained for PHIL 251 or PHIL 261.)

**Challenge:**

PHIL 231 has a challenge for credit option.

**Faculty:**

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences 

## Overview



PHIL 231 introduces students to philosophical debate over some of the most fundamental questions humanity has encountered and continues to encounter. Through a study of some of the world's most influential thinkers—Socrates, Confucius, Chuang Tzu (Taoism) and the Buddha—we encounter debate and insights about our place in the universe, what it is to live the good life, what it is to overcome deception and falsity. “What exists?” “What can we know?” “What is the best way to lead our lives?” These questions mark three foundational areas of philosophical debate: Metaphysics, Epistemology, Ethics.

The course focuses on developing an ability to think critically and independently about these questions, initiating the process of making better decisions about which views are worth holding.

## Outline


- Unit 1: Introductory Concepts, Explanations, and Exercises - The *Apology*
- Unit 2: The *Phaedo* Part I
- Unit 3: The *Phaedo* Part II
- Unit 4: Confucius and the *Analects*
- Unit 5: Taoism
- Unit 6: Buddhism

## Evaluation

To **receive credit**  for this course you must complete all four assignments and achieve a minimum course composite grade of at least **D (50 percent)** . The weighting of the composite grade is as follows:

Activity	Weight
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Activity	Weight
Assignment 1: Descriptive exposition of a Socratic text (section)	15%
Assignment 2: Descriptive exposition of an Eastern text (section)	15%
Assignment 3: Comparative Essay	30%
Assignment 3: Comparative Essay	40%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

To learn more about assignments and examinations, please refer to Athabasca University's [online Calendar](#) .

## Materials


*Plato, The Trial and Death of Socrates* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) (G.M.A. Grube trans.) 2000.

Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co.  (Print)

*Plato, The Phaedo* (G.M.A. Grube trans.). 1977. Indianapolis: Hackett

Publishing Co.  (Print)

Confucius. (2005). *The analects of Confucius* (A. Waley, Trans.). Routledge.

(Original work published ca. 206 BC–220 AD)  (eBook)

*Chuang-tzu, Basic Writings* (Burton Watson, trans.). 1996 New York:

Columbia U.P.  (Print)

## Other Materials

Readings on Buddhism are provided online and embedded in the study guide.

# Challenge for credit

## Overview

The challenge for credit process allows you to demonstrate that you have acquired a command of the general subject matter, knowledge, intellectual and/or other skills that would normally be found in a university-level course.

Full information about **challenge for credit** [↗](#) can be found in the Undergraduate Calendar.

## Evaluation

To **receive credit** [↗](#) for the PHIL 231 challenge registration, you must achieve an overall grade of at least **D (50 percent)** [📄](#) .

Activity	Weight
Essay 1	50%
Essay 2	50%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Challenge for credit course registration form**

## Important links

- > [Academic advising](#) [↗](#)
- > [Program planning](#) [↗](#)
- > [Request assistance](#) [↗](#)
- > [Support services](#) [↗](#)

without notice. Courses offered by other delivery methods may vary from their individualized study counterparts.

*Opened in Revision 2, April 8, 2014*

*Updated October 3, 2024*

View **previous revision** [↗](#)

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