

# Introduction to Philosophy (through Science Fiction)

PHIL 101, Section 1002

University of Nevada Las Vegas

Spring 2023 | MW 1:00pm-2:15pm | CBC C148

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## COURSE INFORMATION

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Professor: James Woodbridge | Office: CDC 426 | Email: james.woodbridge@unlv.edu  
Office Hours: M 2:30pm-4pm, T 12:30pm-2pm, and by appt. | Dept. Phone: 702-895-3433  
External Course Website: <http://jwood.faculty.unlv.edu/unlv/Phil101S23.htm>

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## DESCRIPTION

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Could a robot qualify as a person? How do we know the world we experience isn't a computer simulation? Would the morality of an alien species still be right-for-them if it conflicted with ours? Would advanced technology support social and political justice? This course explores some central philosophical issues (such as: What are the criteria for personhood? What can we know beyond our sense-data? Are there universal moral principles?), as they get raised in various works of science fiction. "Sci-fi" provides an accessible platform for asking and trying to answer certain questions that philosophy investigates more systematically. We will consider a variety of issues as they are raised in various works of sci-fi, determine their philosophical underpinnings, and examine how various philosophers have investigated them. Some further questions (and their philosophical bases) that we will consider include: If my memories and consciousness were uploaded into a computer or a robot when my body died, would the result still be me? (What makes me the particular individual that I am?) Should we punish someone for a crime he has not yet committed, if we knew he would otherwise commit it in the future? (Do we have free will, and how does this issue relate to morality?) Would it be unjust for an advanced alien species to dictate how we are to live? (What responsibilities do the powerful have to the less powerful?) How do the reactions we might have to alien (or long-isolated human) societies—and that they might have to us—reveal problems with our own society? (Where do we manifest racism, patriarchy, and other forms of oppression?) What sort of dystopian world might develop if we fail to develop an ecological perspective? Is technology a danger for us? (What aspects of our society threaten our future? How can we fix them?) On these questions and others, science fiction will point the way!

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## REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS & COURSE MATERIALS

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Descartes, R. *Meditations on First Philosophy*, Third Edition. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 1993.  
Kant, I. *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1993.  
Mill, J.S. *Utilitarianism*, Second Edition. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2001.  
Nagel, T. *What Does it All Mean?* New York: Oxford University Press, 1987.  
Plato. *Six Great Dialogues*. Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, 2007.  
Perry, J. *A Dialogue on Personal Identity and Immortality*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1978.  
Russell, B. *The Problems of Philosophy*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Reprint of 1912.  
Weston, A. *A Rulebook for Arguments*, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2017.

You will also be required to read around **25 science-fiction short stories (labeled '[SF]' in the Course Schedule)**, plus several other **philosophy selections (labeled '[PH]')**, which will be made available online. In addition, you will be required to watch a few **science fiction movies** and **episodes of *Star Trek***.

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## STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

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Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify some central issues or debates in the different fields of philosophy
- Articulate and, when appropriate, compare or contrast, different views one might take with respect to these issues
- Recognize philosophical ideas and information as presented in a variety of formats
- Summarize major motivations or arguments for these alternative positions
- Present significant objections that have or could be raised to these positions
- Demonstrate the acquisition of critical thinking skills by assessing the relative merits of these arguments and objections

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## GRADES

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### Assessment:

<u>Requirements</u> .....	<u>Percent of Final Grade</u>
Class Participation.....	10%
Journal Entries.....	15%
Midterm Exam.....	25%
Essay or Presentation .....	25%
Final Exam .....	25%

### Class Participation

This is a course where attendance is required. Mere attendance, however, is not enough: you are expected to aim to contribute to the class discussion at every meeting. This means that you need to read and watch everything assigned for each meeting beforehand and be ready to discuss the material. You can also participate by posting on the Electronic Discussion Board (on WebCampus-Canvas).

### Journal Entries

Nearly every week you will need to make an entry in the Journal section of the Assignments area on the course WebCampus-Canvas page. These entries will involve discussing, explaining, and relating one sci-fi work [**SF**] and one philosophy reading [**PH**] (using no outside resources). Entries should be 500-600 words. Content is more the focus than writing niceties, but proper grammar and spelling are still a goal.

### Midterm Exam

There will be a timed, online, open-book **Midterm Exam** in the 8<sup>th</sup> week of the course. The exam will consist of answer one from each of five pairs of short essay questions pertaining to the course materials and the lectures and discussions about them.

### Research Project: Individual Essay or Group Presentation

For this project, you may either write a 6-page (2000-word) Essay or give an in-class Group Presentation. For either option, you identify and explain a philosophical issue and summarize two separate works of science fiction (a short story, novel, film, or TV-show)—outside of the works assigned for the class—that raise this issue (explaining precisely how they do so). You also introduce a philosopher (one who has not been assigned for the class) who has views on that issue, summarize those views (including the reasons your philosopher gives for holding them) and explain how the sci-fi works relate to those views on the issue. Presentations should be 20 minutes long and include some sort of visual aide (e.g., power-point, drawn posters, etc.). Presenters must also submit a 600-word summary outline of their presentation.

### Final Exam

There will be a 2-hour, online, open-book **Final Exam** during the scheduled time for the course, **Monday, May 8, 2023 at 1pm**. The exam will consist of answering some short essay questions from several groups, addressing the course materials and the lectures and discussions about them.

### Grade Scale:

<b>A</b>	100-93	<b>C</b>	76-73
<b>A-</b>	92-90	<b>C-</b>	72-70
<b>B+</b>	89-87	<b>D+</b>	69-67
<b>B</b>	86-83	<b>D</b>	66-63
<b>B-</b>	82-80	<b>D-</b>	62-60
<b>C+</b>	79-77	<b>F</b>	59-00

You must satisfactorily complete all of the major course requirements in order to pass the course. Students are responsible for confirming all assignments are received by the instructor.

### COURSE SCHEDULE

<b>Week</b>	<b>Class Topic</b>	<b>Readings/Viewings</b>	<b>Assignment Due</b>
<b>1 : W 1/18</b>	Introduction to class and syllabus	N/A	N/A
<b>2: M 1/23</b>	Philosophy: Purpose, Aims, Methods	Ch. 1, <i>What Does it All Mean?</i> by T. Nagel [PH]  "On the Study of Philosophy" by J. Perry and M. Bratman [PH]  "The Value of Philosophy" by Bertrand Russell [PH]  Watch "What Does a Philosopher Do?" by Kwame Appiah [PH]  "Logic Toolkit" by Perry, Bratman, and Fischer [PH]	Mini Task 1: Email me directly from your RebelMail account (not via WebCampus-Canvas) with the student info I requested.
<b>W 1/25</b>	Critical Thinking, Reasoning, and Arguments	"Apology" by Plato [PH]  "Critical Thinking: A Very Short Introduction" by Ian Dove [PH]  <i>A Rulebook for Arguments</i> , Chs. I-III, V-VI, Appendix I, by Anthony Weston [PH]	Mini Task 2: Complete the Reading Questions for "Apology" and the Practice Problems from Dove's "Critical Thinking".

<b>3: M</b> <b>1/30</b>	Appearance and Reality	<p>“Allegory of the Cave” from <i>The Republic</i> by Plato <b>[PH]</b></p> <p>“The Electric Ant” by Philip K. Dick <b>[SF]</b></p> <p>“Appearance and Reality” by B. Russell <b>[PH]</b></p>	Journal Entry #1: Discuss parallels between the Plato’s “Allegory” & the Philip K. Dick story.
<b>W</b> <b>2/1</b>	<p>Belief and Doubt</p> <p>Could we be living in a simulation?</p> <p>Would it be a bad thing if we were?</p>	<p>“A Brain in a Vat” by Jonathan Pollock <b>[SF]</b></p> <p>Ch. 2 of Nagel <b>[PH]</b></p> <p>Watch <i>The Matrix</i> <b>[SF]</b></p> <p>“The Experience Machine” by Robert Nozick <b>[PH]</b></p>	
<b>4: M</b> <b>2/6</b>	Knowledge and Skepticism	<p>Watch the original pilot for <i>Star Trek: TOS</i>, “The Cage” [S1:Ep0/1] <b>[SF]</b></p> <p>“Meditations I and II” by René Descartes <b>[PH]</b></p> <p>“They” by R. Heinlein <b>[SF]</b></p>	
<b>W</b> <b>2/8</b>	Skepticism and Certainty	<p>“Meditation III” by René Descartes <b>[PH]</b></p> <p>“The Existence of Matter” by B. Russell <b>[PH]</b></p>	Journal Entry #2: Using one <b>new</b> [SF] work and one <b>new</b> [PH] work, discuss why knowledge may be impossible.
<b>5: M</b> <b>2/13</b>	<p>Minds and Bodies</p> <p>What am I? A mind (soul)? A body?</p>	<p>Ch. 4 of Nagel <b>[PH]</b></p> <p>“The Ontological Problem” (pp. 7-21 on Dualism) by Paul Churchland <b>[PH]</b></p> <p>“Meditation VI” by René Descartes <b>[PH]</b></p> <p>“Correspondence between Descartes and Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia” <b>[PH]</b></p>	
<b>W</b> <b>2/15</b>	<p>Minds, Persons, and Identity Across Time</p> <p>Could I continue to exist after death?</p>	<p>Ch. 9 of Nagel <b>[PH]</b></p> <p>“The First Night” from <i>A Dialogue on Personal Identity and Immortality</i>, by John Perry <b>[PH]</b></p> <p><i>Star Trek: TOS</i>, “Turnabout Intruder” [S3:Ep24] <b>[SF]</b></p>	Journal Entry #3: Relate the <i>Star Trek: TOS</i> episode assigned for today to Miller’s view in the “First Night” section of John Perry’s dialogue.

<b>6: M</b> <b>2/20</b>	<b>Presidents' Day!</b> [No Class]		
<b>W</b> <b>2/22</b>	<p>What makes me the particular person that I am?</p> <p>Is it something mental? Is it something physical?</p>	<p>"The Second Night" and "The Third Night" from the Perry book <b>[PH]</b></p> <p><i>Star Trek: TNG</i>, "Second Chances" [S6:Ep24] <b>[SF]</b></p> <p>"The Meeting" by F. Pohl and C.M. Kornbluth <b>[SF]</b></p>	<b>Extra Credit</b> Journal Entry: Watch <i>Star Trek: TOS</i> , "What Are Little Girls Made Of?" [S1:Ep7/8] and relate it to Perry's dialogue.
<b>7: M</b> <b>2/27</b>	<p>What does it take to have mentality / to be a mind?</p> <p>Could a robot or android count as a person?</p> <p>The Turing Test</p> <p>Against the Turing Test and the Possibility of AI</p>	<p>"Learning to Be Me" by Greg Egan <b>[SF]</b></p> <p>"The Ontological Problem" (pp. 36-42) by Paul Churchland <b>[PH]</b></p> <p><i>Star Trek: TNG</i>, "The Measure of a Man" [S2:Ep9] <b>[SF]</b></p> <p>Ch. 3 of Nagel <b>[PH]</b></p> <p>"Turing Test" in <i>Wikipedia</i> <b>[PH]</b></p> <p>"Searle and the Chinese Room Argument: Parts I and II" D. Anderson <b>[PH]</b></p> <p>Watch <i>Ex Machina</i> <b>[SF]</b></p>	Journal Entry #4: Pick one new [SF] work and one new [PH] reading assigned for Wed of week 6 or Mon of week 7 to explain, discuss, and relate.
<b>W</b> <b>3/1</b>	Free Will, Foreknowledge, and Determinism	<p>Ch. 6 of Nagel <b>[PH]</b></p> <p>"What's Expected of Us" by Ted Chiang <b>[SF]</b></p> <p>"Please Don't Tell Me How the Story Ends" by Thomas Davis <b>[SF]</b></p>	
<b>8: M</b> <b>3/6</b>	<p>Are free will and determinism incompatible?</p> <p>What would having free will require?</p>	<p>"Freedom and Determinism" by Richard Taylor <b>[PH]</b></p> <p>"Story of Your Life" by Ted Chiang <b>[SF]</b></p> <p>"What Kind of Free Will Did the Buddha Teach?" by A. Federman <b>[PH]</b></p>	Journal Entry #5: Pick one new [SF] work and one new [PH] reading assigned for Wed of week 7 or Mon of week 8 to explain, discuss, and relate.
<b>W</b> <b>3/8</b>	<b>Midterm Exam</b>		Study for the midterm!

<b>9: M</b> <b>3/20</b>	Ethics and Morality  Why be moral? Does might make right?  What is the basis of morality? Is morality based on religion?	“The Ring of Gyges,” from <i>The Republic</i> by Plato <b>[PH]</b>  Watch <i>The Invisible Man</i> (from 1933) <b>[SF]</b>  Ch. 7 of Nagel <b>[PH]</b>  “Good Minus God” by Louise Antony <b>[PH]</b>	
<b>W</b> <b>3/22</b>	What conclusions should we draw about morality on the basis of moral difference?  Is morality relative?	“The Monsters” by Robert Sheckley <b>[SF]</b>  “The Challenge of Cultural Relativism” by James Rachels <b>[PH]</b>  “Three Worlds Collide” by Eliezer Yudkowsky <b>[SF]</b>	Journal Entry #6: Pick one new <b>[SF]</b> work and one new <b>[PH]</b> reading from week 9 to explain, discuss, and relate.
<b>10: M</b> <b>3/27</b>	Could there be general universal moral principles?  Could morality be a matter of rational duties?	Watch <i>Star Trek: TOS</i> , “Journey to Babel” [S2:Ep10] <b>[SF]</b>  “First Section” and “Second Section” from <i>Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals</i> by I. Kant <b>[PH]</b>	Mini Task 3: Let me know via email whether you plan to do a Group Presentation or an Individual Essay.
<b>W</b> <b>3/29</b>	Do moral principles apply absolutely, regardless of circumstances?	“The Cold Equations” by Tom Godwin <b>[SF]</b>	
<b>11: M</b> <b>4/3</b>	Are consequences what determine the morality of actions?	Ch. 1-2, <i>Utilitarianism</i> by J.S. Mill <b>[PH]</b>  Watch <i>Star Trek: SNW</i> , “Lift Us Where Suffering Cannot Reach” [S1:Ep6] <b>[SF]</b>  “The Ones who Walk Away from Omelas” by Ursula K. LeGuin <b>[SF]</b>	Journal Entry #7: Pick one new <b>[SF]</b> work and one new <b>[PH]</b> reading from weeks 10 or 11 to discuss and relate.
<b>W</b> <b>4/5</b>	Inequality and Justice  The Limits of Equality	Ch. 8 of Nagel <b>[PH]</b>  “Harrison Bergeron” by Kurt Vonnegut <b>[SF]</b>	
<b>12: M</b> <b>4/10</b>	Justice, Individuals, and Society	“Beggars in Spain” by Nancy Kress <b>[SF]</b>  From <i>Anarchy, State, and Utopia</i> by R. Nozick <b>[PH]</b>  “Libertarianism: Matriarchy, Slavery, and Dystopia” by S. Okin <b>[PH]</b>	Mini Task 4: Confer with me via email about your Group Presentation or Individual Essay progress. (Submit a basic outline.)

W 4/12	Justice as Fairness and Ideal Theory	From <i>A Theory of Justice</i> by John Rawls [PH] "Rawls Rules" from <i>The Economist</i> [PH] "The Day Before the Revolution" by Ursula K. LeGuin [SF]	Journal Entry #8: Pick one new [SF] work and one new [PH] reading from weeks 11 or 12 to explain, discuss, and relate.
13: M 4/17	Prejudice and Oppression:  Individual vs. Structural/Institutional Racism	<i>The Racial Contract</i> , Intro and Ch. 1, by C. Mills [PH] "Out of All Them Bright Stars" by Nancy Kress [SF] "The Space Traders" by Derrick Bell [SF]  Watch <i>Star Trek: TOS</i> , "Let That Be Your Last Battlefield" [S3:Ep15] [SF]  <b>Recommended:</b> "The Uncompleted Argument: Du Bois and the Illusion of Race" by K. Appiah [PH]	Mini Task 5: Submit a detailed outline of your Individual Essay or Group Presentation.
W 4/19	Society, Gender Roles, Patriarchy	"When it Changed" by Joanna Russ [SF]  "Understanding Patriarchy" by bell hooks [PH]	
14: M 4/24	Gender Prejudice and Oppression  Social Construction  Student presentation and discussion	"The World Well Lost" by Theodore Sturgeon [SF]  "The Metaphysics of Gender" by Elizabeth Barnes [PH]  Watch <i>Star Trek: TNG</i> , "The Outcast" [S5:Ep17] [SF]	<b>Individual Essay</b> option due via Turnitin.com by 5pm.
W 4/26	Society, the Environment, and Resources  Student presentation and discussion	"The Tamarisk Hunter" and <i>The Water Knife</i> , Ch. 1, by Paolo Bacigalupi [SF]  "Aldo Leopold, Environmental Ethics, and the Land Ethic" by Michael Nelson [PH]  "The Land Ethic" by J. Baird Callicott [PH]	Journal Entry #9: Pick one new [SF] work and one new [PH] reading assigned for weeks 13 or 14 to explain, discuss, and relate.

<b>15: M</b> <b>5/1</b>	Technology and Society  Student presentations and discussions	“The Machine Stops” by E.M. Forster <b>[SF]</b>  “Cultivating Humanity: Towards a Non-Humanist Ethics of Technology” by Peter-Paul Verbeek <b>[PH]</b>	
<b>W</b> <b>5/3</b>	The Big Picture  Student presentations and discussions	“The Last Question” by Isaac Asimov <b>[SF]</b>  “The Future of Humanity” by Nick Bostrom <b>[PH]</b>  Ch. 10 of Nagel <b>[PH]</b>	Journal Entry #10: Pick one new [SF] work and one new [PH] reading assigned for weeks 14 or 15 to explain, discuss, and relate.
<b>M</b> <b>5/8</b>	<b>Final Exam</b>		Study for the Final!

**\*The instructor of this course reserves the right to change any aspect of the syllabus, with the understanding that any such changes will be announced in class.**

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## UNIVERSITY POLICIES

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### Public Health Directives

Students must follow all active UNLV public health directives while enrolled in this class. UNLV public health directives are found at <https://www.unlv.edu/coronavirus/health-requirements>. Students who do not comply with these directives may be asked to leave the classroom. Refusal to follow the guidelines may result in further disciplinary action according to the UNLV Student Conduct Code, [https://www.unlv.edu/sites/default/files/page\\_files/27/StudentConduct-Code.pdf](https://www.unlv.edu/sites/default/files/page_files/27/StudentConduct-Code.pdf), including being administratively withdrawn from the course.

### Academic Misconduct

Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the University community. We all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility, and professionalism. By choosing to join the UNLV community, students accept the expectations of the Student Academic Misconduct Policy, and are encouraged to always take the ethical path whenever faced with choices. Students enrolling at UNLV assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UNLV’s educational mission. An example of academic misconduct is plagiarism. Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another person, from the Internet or any other source without proper citation of the source(s). See the Student Conduct Code, <https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/student-conduct>.

### Auditing a Course

Auditing a course allows a student to continue attending the lectures and/or laboratories and discussion sessions associated with the course, but the student will not earn a grade for any component of the course. Students who audit a course receive the same educational experience as students taking the course for a grade, but will be excused from exams, assessments, and other evaluative measures that serve the primary purpose of assigning a grade.



**Classroom Conduct**

Students have a responsibility to conduct themselves in class and in the libraries in ways that do not interfere with the rights of other students to learn, or of instructors to teach. Use of devices such as cellular phones and pagers, or other potentially disruptive activities are only permitted with the prior explicit consent of the instructor. Students are specifically prohibited to record classes without instructor authorization, including online/remote classes (either audio only, or video and audio). The instructor may rescind permission at any time during the class. If a student does not comply with established requirements or obstructs the functioning of the class, the instructor may initiate an administrative withdrawal of the student from the course.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic forced some instruction to be delivered remotely starting in Spring 2020, numerous students have asked instructors to record their synchronous classes, so that they can access them at their convenience. Instructors who agree to record their classes (audio only, or video and audio) should inform students in advance. Recorded lectures may not be broadly released to anyone, but made available exclusively to those students enrolled in the class during the particular academic term. Recorded lectures must be stored securely, and are subject to the Nevada System of Higher Education's Records Retention Policy, meaning that the recordings can only be deleted 120 days after the end of class (i.e., after grades are posted). Once this requirement is met, the recordings should be deleted. Class recordings are protected from disclosure, as they are deemed part of an educational record under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

**Copyright**

The University requires all members of the University Community to familiarize themselves with, and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The University will neither protect nor defend you, nor assume any responsibility for student or employee violations of fair use laws. Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies. Additional copyright policy information is available at <https://www.unlv.edu/provost/copyright>.

**Disability Resource Center (DRC)**

The UNLV Disability Resource Center (Student Services Complex, SSC-A, Room 143, <https://www.unlv.edu/drc>, telephone 702-895-0866) provides resources for students with disabilities. Students who believe that they may need academic accommodations due to a permanent disability, temporary or permanent medical need, or academic support due to pregnancy are encouraged to contact the DRC as early as possible in the academic term. A Disabilities Specialist will discuss what options may be available to you. Students who are already registered with the DRC should request their accommodations online each semester, and make an appointment to discuss their accommodations with their instructors.

**Final Examinations**

The University requires that final exams given at the end of a course occur on the date and at the time specified in the Final Exam schedule. The Final Exam schedule is typically available at the start of the semester, and the classroom locations are available approximately one month before the end of the semester. See the Final Exam Schedule, <https://www.unlv.edu/registrar/calendars>.

**Identity Verification in Online Courses**

All UNLV students must use their Campus-issued ACE ID and password to log in to WebCampus-Canvas. UNLV students enrolled in online or hybrid courses are expected to read and adhere to the Student Academic Misconduct Policy, <https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/misconduct/policy>, which states that "acting or attempting to act as a substitute for another, or using or attempting to use a substitute,

in any academic evaluation or assignment” is a form of academic misconduct. Intentionally sharing ACE login credentials with another person may be considered an attempt to use a substitute, and could result in investigation and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Academic Misconduct Policy. UNLV students enrolled in online courses are also expected to read and adhere to the Acceptable Use of Computing and Information Technology Resources Policy, <https://www.it.unlv.edu/policies/acceptable-use-computing-and-information-technology-resources-policy>, which prohibits sharing university accounts with other persons without authorization.

To the greatest extent possible, all graded assignments and assessments in UNLV online courses should be hosted in WebCampus-Canvas or another UNLV-managed platform that requires ACE login credentials for access.

### **Incomplete Grades**

The grade of “I” (Incomplete) may be granted when a student has satisfactorily completed three-fourths of course work for that semester/session, but cannot complete the last part of the course for reason(s) beyond the student’s control and acceptable to the instructor, and the instructor believes that the student can finish the course without repeating it. For undergraduate courses, the incomplete work must be made up before the end of the following regular semester. Graduate students receiving “I” grades in 500-, 600-, or 700-level courses have up to one calendar year to complete the work, at the discretion of the instructor. If course requirements are not completed within the period indicated, a grade of “F” will be recorded, and the student’s GPA will be adjusted accordingly. Students who are fulfilling an Incomplete grade do not register for the course, but make individual arrangements with the instructor who assigned the “I” grade.

### **Library Resources**

Librarians are available to consult with students on research needs, including developing research topics, finding information, and evaluating sources. To make an appointment with a subject expert for this class, please visit the Libraries’ Research Consultation website, <https://guides.library.unlv.edu/appointments/librarian>. You can also ask the library staff questions via chat and text message at <https://ask.library.unlv.edu/>.

### **Missed Classwork**

Any student missing class, quizzes, examinations, or any other class or laboratory work because of observance of religious holidays will be given an opportunity during that semester to make up the missed work. The make-up opportunity will apply to the religious holiday absence only. It is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor within the first 14 calendar days of the course for Fall and Spring courses (except for modular courses), or within the first 7 calendar days of the course for Summer and modular courses, of their intention to participate in religious holidays which do not fall on state holidays or periods of class recess. For additional information, please visit the Missed Classwork policy, under Registration Policies, on the Academic Policies webpage, <https://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=32&navoid=8271&hl=>.

In accordance with the policy approved by the Faculty Senate regarding missed class time and assignments, students who represent UNLV in any official extracurricular activity will also have the opportunity to make up assignments, provided that the student submits official written notification to the instructor no less than one week prior to the missed class(es).

The spirit and intent of the policy for missed classwork is to offer fair and equitable assessment opportunities to all students, including those representing the University in extracurricular activities. Instructors should consider, for example, that in courses which offer a “Drop one” option for the lowest assignment, quiz, or exam, assigning the student a grade of zero for an excused absence for

extracurricular activity is both contrary to the intent of the Faculty Senate's policy, and an infringement on the student's right to complete all work for the course.

This policy will not apply in the event that completing the assignment or administering the examination at an alternate time would impose an undue hardship on the instructor or the University that could be reasonably avoided. There should be a good faith effort by both the instructor and the student to agree to a reasonable resolution. When disagreements regarding this policy arise, decisions can be appealed to the Department Chair/School Director, College/School Dean, and/or the Faculty Senate Academic Standards Committee.

For purposes of definition, extracurricular activities may include, but are not limited to academic recruitment activities, competitive intercollegiate athletics, fine arts activities, liberal arts competitions, science and engineering competitions, and any other event or activity sanctioned by a College/School Dean, and/or by the Executive Vice President and Provost.

### **Rebelmail**

Rebelmail is UNLV's official email system for students and by University policy, instructors and staff should only send emails to students' Rebelmail accounts. Rebelmail is one of the primary ways in which students receive official University communications, information about deadlines, major Campus events, and announcements. All UNLV students receive a Rebelmail account after they have been admitted to the University. Sending emails within WebCampus-Canvas is also acceptable.

### **Tutoring and Coaching**

The Academic Success Center (ASC), at the Claude I. Howard Building, provides tutoring, academic success coaching, and other academic assistance for all UNLV undergraduate students. For information regarding tutoring subjects, tutoring times, and other ASC programs and services, please visit the ASC website, <https://www.unlv.edu/asc>, or call 702-895-3177. The ASC is located across from the Student Services Complex (SSC). Academic success coaching is located on the second floor of SSC A, Room 254. Drop-in tutoring is located on the second floor of the Lied Library, and on the second floor of the College of Engineering building (TBE A 207).

### **UNLV Writing Center**

One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to UNLV students at the Writing Center, <https://writingcenter.unlv.edu/>, located in the Central Desert Complex, Building 3, Room 301 (CDC 3-301). Walk-in consultations are sometimes available, but students with appointments receive priority assistance. Students may make appointments in person or by calling the Center, telephone 702-895-3908. Students are requested to bring to their appointments their Rebel ID Card, a copy of the instructions for their assignment, and two copies of any writing they have completed on their assignment.