# Syllabus

# Philosophy 3540–001: Judaism and Philosophy

FALL 2025

Tuesday/Thursday 2:00–3:20

ENV 120

INSTRUCTOR CONTACT

**Professor Martin D. Yaffe**

**Office Location:** ENV 310N

**Phone Number:** NA

**Office Hours:** Tues/Thurs 12:30–2:00 and by appointment (via Zoom)

**Email:** *yaffe@unt.edu* **For course-related e-mails, please use** **Canvas Inbox** **only.**

COURSE DESCRIPTION

 The subject matter of this course is Judaism as found both in the Hebrew Bible (or “Old Testament”) and in post-biblical Jewish life and thought. Our aim is to understand what it says about God and the world and human life. Our approach is to probe the views of various thoughtful Jews and non-Jews who are led by both religious and intellectual concerns to raise larger questions about Judaism’s practical and philosophical significance in modern times. Whatever their differences among themselves, all Jews ultimately trace their way of life as Jews to the Bible, one of the twin ancient roots of our modern way of life as well (the other ancient root being Greek philosophy). Our motive for studying Judaism carefully in this course, whether we are Jewish or not, is thus self-understanding.

 In the first half of this course, we look at how a number of our contemporaries are led into larger questions while seeking to defend Judaism against the widespread but dubious opinion that the Bible (notably Genesis 1:26–28) is somehow the cause of our current environmental crisis.

Subsequently we consider the life and thought of the excommunicated Jew Benedict Spinoza (1632–77), whose *Theologico-Political Treatise* (1670) is a philosophical founding-document of modern Judaism, by way of its being the philosophical founding-document of both modern biblical criticism and modern liberal democracy.

Meanwhile we also engage, as a focus group, in a dramatic reading of a translation-in-progress of Gotthold Ephraim Lessing’s *Nathan the Wise* (1779)—a poetic drama that probes the timely question of religious toleration among Jews, Christians and Muslims. Although Lessing sets his drama in medieval Jerusalem during the wars of the Crusades, he models its title character (anachronistically) on Spinoza. We consider why.

 This course emphasizes close reading, clear thinking and careful writing. Class sessions, open-book essay-exams and other requirements are geared to these emphases. Give-and-take class discussion is indispensable.

Communication Expectations

 All classes are in person. Attendance is required.

 Written assignments (about which more below) are to be submitted via Canvas. Assignments uploaded on or before the due date will be graded with helpful comments, usually within a few days—though longer submissions, such as exams, may take longer to grade. Due dates are listed in our Schedule of Classes, below.

 Reading quizzes (about which more below) are designed to be answered and graded on Canvas before each class session. Possible point totals are posted with each set of quiz questions. Correct answers and grades achieved are posted immediately on completion of each quiz.

 Instructor’s notes for each reading may be found in the appropriate Canvas modules. These include skeleton outlines, handy summaries, concise reviews, etc. They are designed for students’ hands-on use as appropriate throughout the course and need not (and should not) be documented in written essays. They are meant to be much more useful than routinely available secondary sources (whether popular or scholarly)—which are not encouraged since they tend to get in the way of the needed first-hand grasp of our subject matter. Bibliographies of instructor-approved (but optional) secondary sources may also be found in the appropriate Canvas module.

 Our class schedule also includes sessions for debates and reviews.

 Overall course obligations include:

 [1] attendance;

[2] pre-class reading quizzes (each correlated to a given class session);

 [3] open-book investigative reports (each correlated to an essay question in a forthcoming exam);

 [4] open-book essay-exams (each requiring two essay answers);

[5] post-class responses (optional but highly encouraged and meant for sharing a

possible comment or question arising from the immediately prior in-class discussion).

COURSE STRUCTURE

 Here is our schedule of classes and written assignments:

Tue., Aug. 19 INTRODUCTORY

Thu., Aug. 21 Cohen, Allen, with Introduction (Yaffe, pp. 73–79, 80–85, with 1–11)[[1]](#footnote-1)

Tue., Aug. 26 Kay, Schaffer (Yaffe, pp. 86–104, 112–24)

Thu., Aug. 28 Ehrenfield and Bentley, Blidstein (Yaffe, pp. 125–35, 136–42)

Tue., Sep. 2 Sacks (Yaffe, pp. 143–57)

Thu., Sep. 4 REVIEW

DEBATE: “Are Genesis 1 and Environmentalism Mutually Compatible?”

Tue., Sep. 9 Artson, Troster (Yaffe, pp. 161–71, 172–82)

Thu., Sep. 11 Rosenblum (Yaffe, pp. 183–205)

INVESTIGATIVE REPORT #1 DUE

Tue., Sep. 16 Benstein, Schwartz (Yaffe, pp. 206–29, 230–49)

Thu., Sep. 18 Jonas (Yaffe, pp. 250–63)

Tue., Sep. 23 TBA [*Rosh Hashana*]

Thu., Sep. 25 Wyschogrod, Schwartz, Katz (Yaffe, pp. 289–97, 297–308, 309–20)

Tue., Sep. 30 Levy, Bleich (2) (Yaffe, pp. 321–32, 333–70, 371–83)

Thu., Oct. 2 TBA [*Yom Kippur*]

Tue., Oct. 7 Kass (Yaffe, pp. 384–409)

Thu., Oct. 9 TRANSITION to Spinoza and Lessing

 MIDTERM EXAM DUE

Tue., Oct. 14 Spinoza, *Theologico-Political Treatise*, Preface (P.1.1–4.8; with pp. 267–82)[[2]](#footnote-2)

Thu., Oct. 16 Spinoza, *Theologico-Political Treatise*, Preface (P.5.1–7.2; with pp. 282–88)

Tue., Oct. 21 Lessing, *Nathan the Wise*, Act I[[3]](#footnote-3)

Thu., Oct. 23 Spinoza, *Theologico-Political Treatise*, pp. 288–301 (on Chapters 1–2)

Tue., Oct. 28 Lessing, *Nathan the Wise*, Act II

Thu., Oct. 30 Spinoza, *Theologico-Political Treatise*, pp. 301–16 (on Chapters 3–6)

Tue., Nov. 4 Lessing, *Nathan the Wise*, Act III

Thu., Nov. 6 Spinoza, *Theologico-Political Treatise*, pp. 316–25 (on Chapters 7–11)

Tue., Nov. 11 Lessing, *Nathan the Wise*, Act IV

 INVESTIGATIVE REPORT #2 DUE

Thu., Nov. 13 Spinoza, *Theologico-Political Treatise*, pp. 325–31 (on Chapters 12–15)

Tue., Nov. 18 Lessing, *Nathan the Wise*, Act V

Thu., Nov. 20 Spinoza, *Theologico-Political Treatise*, pp. 331–38 (on Chapters 16–17)

Tue., Nov. 25 THANKSGIVING

Thu., Nov. 27 THANKSGIVING

Tue., Dec. 2 RECAP of Lessing, *Nathan the Wise*, Act III, Scene 7 (Nathan’s parable)

 Spinoza, *Theologico-Political Treatise*, pp. 338–47 (on Chapters 18–20)

Thu., Dec. 4 REVIEW

Thu., Dec. 11 FINAL EXAM DUE by 2:00 p.m.

Course Prerequisites, ETC.

 1. The details of this course are designed to match the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences’ occasional mission statement: “The mission of UNT’s College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences is to kindle the thirst for truth, justice, and beauty; to foster cultural literacy and scientific investigation; and to cultivate thinking, speaking, and writing abilities characterized by clear expression and logically coherent, evidence–based arguments. We see these as the values, forms of knowledge, and skills most needed by citizens of a democracy and by productive members of the global workforce.”

 2. Reading quizzes, Post-Class Responses and Investigative Reports (acceptable in specified format only) are worth approximately one–third of your course grade.

 3. A reading quiz accompanies each class for which there is an assigned reading. Each quiz consists of 10 True/False questions about that reading and is automatically assigned and graded on Canvas. Point totals for the semester, at 1 point per correct answer, will be combined with the two Investigative Report grades, at a maximum of 10 points per Report, and curved into a letter grade. Due dates for quiz answers will be posted with each quiz.

 4. Each Investigative Report consists of an approximately 500–750 word (or more) closely documented essay-answer to a detailed question about the reading in question. These may be revised and recycled into your answer to a corresponding (but fuller) open-book exam question.

 5. Post-class Responses are highly encouraged as a means for sharing a possible comment or question arising from the immediately prior in-class discussion. Each Response earns a maximum of 10 points, according to how aptly it is shown to emerge from that discussion. Your having been in attendance during that particular class is required. Your Response must be uploaded by midnight of the following day.

 6. A midterm open-book essay-exam comprises approximately one-third of your course grade.

 7. A final open-book essay-exam comprises approximately one-third of your course grade. The final exam is due on Thursday, December 11, 2025, by 2:00 p.m.

 8. You must earn passing grades on *both* questions of *both* exams to pass the course.

 9. Class attendance is required. Absences may be excused by your attaching to an explanatory message addressed to Dr. Yaffe—via the Canvas Inbox only—pertinent written documentation or, alternatively, a 500–750 word essay as an optional written assignment summarizing that day’s scheduled reading and including a properly formatted cover-page or header—to be submitted as an Optional Assignment. (See the following concerning the proper format for written assignments.)

 10. Written assignments (Investigative Reports, Midterm and Final Exams) must be submitted online in Word, using Times New Roman 11– or 12–point font (9– or 10–point in any footnotes), with a single cover-page or header clearly listing the following information *only*: course prefix and number, course name, instructor (including formal title, e.g., Professor or Dr.), date, name of assignment (exactly as found in the assignment instructions), and student’s name and student-number.

 11. Leave one-inch margins on all sides of each page.

 12. Double-space everything, *including cover-page, header and subheadings*.

 13. Spelling counts. So does grammar. Our authority is *Harbrace Handbook*. On the need for correct punctuation, see Lynne Truss, *Eats, Shoots & Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation* (New York: Gotham, 2004). On the need for plain, jargon–free, non–ideologized language, see Diane Ravitch, *The Language Police: How Pressure Groups Restrict What Students Learn* (New York: Vintage, 2003). On how to be an effective student, see James Duban, *Be a College Achiever: The Complete Guide to Academic Stardom* (Victoria, BC: Trafford Publications, 2005), especially sections 3 and 4.

 14. Responsibility for documenting primary and secondary sources adequately and correctly rests with the student. Proper footnote, endnote or parenthetical citations, etc., are especially needed where you are relying directly on another’s published work. You are expected to adhere to UNT’s policies concerning academic dishonesty: *[https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003.](http://www.unt.edu/policy/UNT_Policy/volume3/18_1_11.html)* [Using GenAI in written submissions will be considered academic dishonesty.](http://www.unt.edu/policy/UNT_Policy/volume3/18_1_11.html)

 15. When you are citing works that have standard reference formats (as spelled out in class and on the instructor’s handouts), you *must* use those formats exclusively (e.g., Genesis 1:1). As a general rule, always use the formats for textual citations, bibliographies, and footnotes or endnotes or running notes as specified in class and/or found on the course syllabus and in the instructor’s handouts. *Do not use the formats found on booksellers’ websites*, etc.—these are designed for merchants who sell books, not scholars who read them.

 16. Carelessness or sloppiness counts against you. The burden is first and foremost on the writer to make things reasonably clear. If your writing skills do not yet meet the minimum requirements for college-level work, you are encouraged to visit the University Writing Center for remedial help. (Even so, you alone remain responsible for the grammatical correctness, etc., of your written work.)

 17.Written assignments that are deficient in any of the aforementioned ways may receive a grade of F or D, at the instructor’s discretion. The instructor may offer to read a suitably revised assignment for a possibly improved grade. If so, the revised assignment will be treated as a late submission. (See the next item, below.)

 18. Every effort will be made to grade written assignments in a timely manner. Late submissions will be accepted if they are uploaded onto Canvas *before the class-day prior to the due date for the next assignment*, but they may then be graded with reduced comments and at the instructor’s convenience.

 19. Handouts, including written assignments, bibliographies, outlines, etc., will be posted on Canvas.

 20. If you wish to drop the class, please refer for scheduling and deadline information to: [*http://essc.unt.edu/registrar/schedule/scheduleclass.html*](http://essc.unt.edu/registrar/schedule/scheduleclass.html).

 21. The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of reasonable should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information, refer to the Office of Disability Access website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>. You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565- 4323.

## Course Objectives

## The course emphasizes close reading, clear thinking, and careful writing. Your success in meeting these aims is measured as follows:

1. Reading: A True/False reading quiz accompanies each day’s assigned reading.

2. Writing: Written assignments (open-book Investigative Reports, and open-book Midterm and Final exams) are graded according to their clarity (as regards grammar and overall organization) and accuracy (as regards the textual and other evidence adduced in support of their particular arguments)—including the clarity and accuracy of the required supporting documentation.

3. Thinking: Written assignments are graded in addition according to their rational or logical coherence both in detail and overall. Post-class Responses are graded according to their engagement with the previous in-class discussion.

REQUIRED TEXTS[[4]](#footnote-4)

*JPS Hebrew-English Tanakh*. 2nd ed. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1999.

 —or any reliable text and/or translation of the Hebrew Bible (“Old Testament”)

*Judaism and Environmental Ethics: A Reader*. Edited by Martin D. Yaffe. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2001.

Spinoza, Benedict. *Theologico-Political Treatise*. Translated by Martin D. Yaffe. Focus

Philosophical Library. Newburyport, MA: Pullins, 2004; reprint, Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 2014.

*Harbrace Handbook*. 15th ed. Boston: Wadsworth, 2004.

—or any other edition; or any comparable handbook concerning grammar and style

TEACHING APPROACH

 Our course understands “philosophy” according to its original, literal or Socratic meaning, namely, as “love of wisdom,” i.e., search for or pursuit of wisdom—as opposed to a merely doctrinaire, dogmatic or arbitrary presumption of wisdom.

 With the Socratic model to guide us, the course emphasizes close reading, clear thinking and careful writing. All course requirements and materials, including the instructor’s outlines posted on Canvas, are geared to that reading, etc. Give-and-take discussion is indispensable—especially during debate and review days.

## Grading

 One-third of your course grade is based on the combined point totals of your reading quizzes and your Investigative Reports, curved so as to arrive at a letter grade. The other two-thirds of your course grade consists of the grades achieved on your open-book essay-exams. Passing grades are needed for *both* questions on *both* exams in order for you to pass the course.

 Grades for written assignments are to be awarded according to the abovementioned “Course Objectives” as regards writing (clarity and accuracy) and thinking (coherence). An A is awarded for exemplary clarity, accuracy and coherence; a B is awarded for proficient clarity, accuracy and coherence; a C is awarded for more or less satisfactory clarity, accuracy and coherence; a D is awarded for manifest but not entirely satisfactory efforts at clarity, accuracy and coherence.

 Written assignments that do not provide proper source documentation in appropriate detail, especially as regards primary (textual) sources where needed, will not achieve a passing grade.

 Numerical equivalents of letter grades in Investigative Reports are as follows: A = 9; B = 8; C = 7; D = 6; F = 5 (this last in acknowledgement of the effort spent for submitting the Report). Any written assignment may be revised for a possibly higher grade, provided that it is resubmitted by the class-date *before* the due date for the next written assignment. Late submissions will be accepted provided that they are submitted by the class-date *before* the due date for the next written assignment, though these may be graded with reduced grader’s comments. Grader’s comments on Investigative Reports are meant to be helpful for any recycled version that shows up on the Midterm or Final exam—as the course not only allows but intends.

 The course has no “participation” or “extra credit” grades. Even so, as all instructors have found in their experience, “live” participation and extra effort show up in the quality of your written assignments.

## **Course Evaluation**

 Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT) is the student evaluation system for UNT and allows students the ability to provide confidential and constructive feedback to their instructor and department to improve the quality of student experiences in the course.

## Course Policies

### Assignment Policy

 Official due dates for each written assignment are included in the schedule of classes for this course (see “Course Structure,” above). Detailed instructions for each assignment (investigative report or essay exam) will be found on the appropriate handout posted in Canvas under Assignments, for submission via the Assignment drop-box. Students need to save copies of these as .DOC files. Late submissions will be accepted provided that they are submitted before the due date for the next written assignment, though they may be graded without grader’s comments.

 There are no extra-credit assignments.

 Each reading quiz is automatically assigned (on Canvas) on the same day on which that particular reading is found in the course schedule.

 UNT is committed to providing a reliable online course system to all users. However, in the event of any unexpected server outage or any unusual technical difficulty which prevents students from completing a time sensitive assessment activity, the instructor will extend the time windows and provide an appropriate accommodation based on the situation. Students should immediately report any problems to the instructor and contact the UNT Student Help Desk: helpdesk@unt.edu or 940-565-2324 and obtain a ticket number. The instructor and the UNT Student Help Desk will work with the student to resolve any issues at the earliest possible time.

### Exam Policy

 All exams are open-book. Late submissions will be accepted provided that they are submitted by the class-date before the due date for the next written assignment, but may be graded without grader’s comments. In case of late submission due to server outage or serious technical difficulty, please follow the procedures spelled out in the last paragraph of the “Assignment Policy” section (immediately above).

Instructor Responsibilities and Feedback Since this course emphasizes reading, writing and thinking, questions about these may occur to you as you find yourself engaged in these activities. The course’s frequent Q&A format (mentioned above), as well as its discussion and review days, are designed for you to consider such questions as they come up during in-class discussions of the details of the course (and to cross-examine such answers as occur in our back-and-forth interchanges).

 Also, posted on Canvas are extensive outlines for each of the course readings, along with related secondary readings, summaries, etc.—which are designed to be much more directly helpful to your success in this course than what is found elsewhere (as we’ll emphasize and explain in class).

 Finally, written assignments will be graded and returned promptly, usually within a day or two of being submitted—though longer assignments, including exams, may take a bit longer.

Late Work

 Late submissions will be accepted, provided that they are submitted by the class-date before the due date for the next written assignment, though they may be graded with reduced grader’s comments.

Attendance Policy

 Class attendance is required. There is a separate attendance grade, though attendance is monitored in effect by the date-limited grades recorded for your reading quizzes.

Class Participation

 Class participation is indispensable in preparing for written assignments, even if it is not graded as a separate course component. Give-and-take is formally encouraged and solicited, especially (though not only) during post-class responses, occasional debate sessions, and review sessions

Syllabus Change Policy

 In the case of any changes to the syllabus, course information, due dates, etc., you will be notified during class sessions and/or in course Announcements on Canvas.

## UNT Policies

### Academic Integrity Policy

Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences. According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University. [Insert specific sanction or academic penalty for specific academic integrity violation.]

### ODA Policy

UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one’s specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the [ODA website](https://disability.unt.edu/) (<https://disability.unt.edu/>).

### Emergency Notification & Procedures

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Blackboard for contingency plans for covering course materials.

### Retention of Student Records

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Blackboard online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. Students have the right to view their individual record; however, information about student’s records will not be divulged to other individuals without proper written consent. Students are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the University’s policy. See UNT Policy 10.10, Records Management and Retention for additional information.

### Acceptable Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor’s ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The University's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including University and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. Visit UNT’s [Code of Student Conduct](https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct) (https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct) to learn more.

### Access to Information - Eagle Connect

Students’ access point for business and academic services at UNT is located at: [my.unt.edu](https://my.unt.edu/). All official communication from the University will be delivered to a student’s Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward e-mail [Eagle Connect](https://it.unt.edu/eagleconnect) (<https://it.unt.edu/eagleconnect>).

### Student Evaluation Administration Dates

Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. The survey will be made available during weeks 13, 14 and 15 [insert administration dates] of the long semesters to provide students with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught. Students will receive an email from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via IASystem Notification" ([no-reply@iasystem.org](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cjdl0126%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CTemp%5COneNote%5C16.0%5CNT%5C0%5Cno-reply%40iasystem.org)) with the survey link. Students should look for the email in their UNT email inbox. Simply click on the link and complete the survey. Once students complete the survey they will receive a confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please visit the [SPOT website](http://spot.unt.edu/) (http://spot.unt.edu/) or email [spot@unt.edu](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cjdl0126%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CTemp%5COneNote%5C16.0%5CNT%5C0%5Cspot%40unt.edu).

### Sexual Assault Prevention

UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Federal laws (Title IX and the Violence Against Women Act) and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, and therefore prohibit sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know is experiencing sexual harassment, relationship violence, stalking, and/or sexual assault, there are campus resources available to provide support and assistance. UNT’s Survivor Advocates can assist a student who has been impacted by violence by filing protective orders, completing crime victim’s compensation applications, contacting professors for absences related to an assault, working with housing to facilitate a room change where appropriate, and connecting students to other resources available both on and off campus. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at [SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cjdl0126%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CTemp%5COneNote%5C16.0%5CNT%5C0%5CSurvivorAdvocate%40unt.edu) or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 940-565- 2648. Additionally, alleged sexual misconduct can be non-confidentially reported to the Title IX Coordinator at [oeo@unt.edu](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cjdl0126%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CTemp%5COneNote%5C16.0%5CNT%5C0%5Coeo%40unt.edu) or at (940) 565 2759.

### Important Notice for F-1 Students taking Distance Education Courses

Federal Regulation

To read detailed Immigration and Customs Enforcement regulations for F-1 students taking online courses, please go to the [Electronic Code of Federal Regulations website](http://www.ecfr.gov/) (http://www.ecfr.gov/). The specific portion concerning distance education courses is located at Title 8 CFR 214.2 Paragraph (f)(6)(i)(G).

The paragraph reads:

(G) For F-1 students enrolled in classes for credit or classroom hours, no more than the equivalent of one class or three credits per session, term, semester, trimester, or quarter may be counted toward the full course of study requirement if the class is taken on-line or through distance education and does not require the student's physical attendance for classes, exam or other purposes integral to completion of the class. An on-line or distance education course is a course that is offered principally through the use of television, audio, or computer transmission including open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, or satellite, audio conferencing, or computer conferencing. If the F-1 student's course of study is in a language study program, no on-line or distance education classes may be considered to count toward a student's full course of study requirement.

University of North Texas Compliance

To comply with immigration regulations, an F-1 visa holder within the United States may need to engage in an on-campus experiential component for this course. This component (which must be approved in advance by the instructor) can include activities such as taking an on-campus exam, participating in an on-campus lecture or lab activity, or other on-campus experience integral to the completion of this course.

If such an on-campus activity is required, it is the student’s responsibility to do the following:

(1) Submit a written request to the instructor for an on-campus experiential component within one week of the start of the course.

(2) Ensure that the activity on campus takes place and the instructor documents it in writing with a notice sent to the International Student and Scholar Services Office. ISSS has a form available that you may use for this purpose.

Because the decision may have serious immigration consequences, if an F-1 student is unsure about his or her need to participate in an on-campus experiential component for this course, s/he should contact the UNT International Student and Scholar Services Office (telephone 940-565-2195 or email internationaladvising@unt.edu) to get clarification before the one-week deadline.

### Student Verification

UNT takes measures to protect the integrity of educational credentials awarded to students enrolled in distance education courses by verifying student identity, protecting student privacy, and notifying students of any special meeting times/locations or additional charges associated with student identity verification in distance education courses.

See [UNT Policy 07-002 Student Identity Verification, Privacy, and Notification and Distance Education Courses](https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-002) (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-002>).

### Use of Student Work

A student owns the copyright for all work (e.g. software, photographs, reports, presentations, and email postings) he or she creates within a class and the University is not entitled to use any student work without the student’s permission unless all of the following criteria are met:

* The work is used only once.
* The work is not used in its entirety.
* Use of the work does not affect any potential profits from the work.
* The student is not identified.
* The work is identified as student work.

If the use of the work does not meet all of the above criteria, then the University office or department using the work must obtain the student’s written permission.

Download the UNT System Permission, Waiver and Release Form

Transmission and Recording of Student Images in Electronically-Delivered Courses

1. No permission is needed from a student for his or her image or voice to be transmitted live via videoconference or streaming media, but all students should be informed when courses are to be conducted using either method of delivery.
2. In the event an instructor records student presentations, he or she must obtain permission from the student using a signed release in order to use the recording for future classes in accordance with the Use of Student-Created Work guidelines above.
3. Instructors who video-record their class lectures with the intention of re-using some or all of recordings for future class offerings must notify students on the course syllabus if students' images may appear on video. Instructors are also advised to provide accommodation for students who do not wish to appear in class recordings.

Example: This course employs lecture capture technology to record class sessions. Students may occasionally appear on video. The lecture recordings will be available to you for study purposes and may also be reused in future course offerings.

No notification is needed if only audio and slide capture is used or if the video only records the instructor's image. However, the instructor is encouraged to let students know the recordings will be available to them for study purposes.

## Technical Requirements & Skills

### Minimum Technology Requirements:

### UNT has provided the following list of the minimum technology requirements for online courses:

* Computer
* Reliable internet access
* Speakers
* Microphone
* Plug-ins (desirable but not absolutely necessary)
* Microsoft Office Suite (desirable)
* [Canvas Technical Requirements](https://clear.unt.edu/supported-technologies/canvas/requirements) (<https://clear.unt.edu/supported-technologies/canvas/requirements>)

### Computer Skills & Digital Literacy:

UNT has suggested the following list of course-specific technical skills for learners to succeed in online courses:

* Using Canvas
* Using email with attachments
* Downloading and installing software (not required for this course, though)
* Using spreadsheet programs (not required for this course, though)
* Using presentation and graphics programs (not required for this course, though)

### Rules of Engagement:

Rules of engagement refer to the way students are expected to interact with each other and with their instructors online. Here are the general guidelines endorsed by UNT:

* Treat your instructor and classmates with respect in email or any other communication.
* Always use your professors’ proper title: Dr. or Prof., or if in doubt use Mr. or Ms.
* Unless specifically invited, don’t refer to your instructor by first name.
* Use clear and concise language.
* Remember that all college level communication should have correct spelling and grammar (this includes discussion boards).
* Avoid slang terms such as “wassup?” and texting abbreviations such as “u” instead of “you.”
* Use standard fonts such as Ariel, Calibri or Times new Roman and use a size 10 or 12 point font
* Avoid using the caps lock feature AS IT CAN BE INTERPRETTED AS YELLING.
* Limit and possibly avoid the use of emoticons like :) or ☺.
* Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm as tone is sometimes lost in an email or discussion post and your message might be taken seriously or sound offensive.
* Be careful with personal information (both yours and other’s).
* Do not send confidential information via e-mail.

See these [Engagement Guidelines](https://clear.unt.edu/online-communication-tips) (https://clear.unt.edu/online-communication-tips) for more information.

### Success in an Online Course

While the online classroom shares many similarities with the face-to-face classroom, success in online learning often requires unsuspected skills and expectations. For tips concerning these, UNT recommends this webpage: “How to Succeed as an Online Student” (<https://clear.unt.edu/teaching-resources/online-teaching/succeed-online>).

## Getting Help

### Technical Assistance:

Part of working in the online environment involves dealing with the inconveniences and frustration that can arise when technology breaks down or does not perform as expected. Here at UNT we have a Student Help Desk that you can contact for help with Canvas or other technology issues.

**UNT Help Desk**: [UIT Student Help Desk site](http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm) (http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm)

**Email**: helpdesk@unt.edu

**Phone**: 940-565-2324

**In Person**: Sage Hall, Room 130

**Walk-In Availability**: 8am-9pm

**Telephone Availability**:

* Sunday: noon-midnight
* Monday-Thursday: 8am-midnight
* Friday: 8am-8pm
* Saturday: 9am-5pm

**Laptop Checkout**: 8am-7pm

For additional support, visit [Canvas Technical Help](https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328) (https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328)

### Student Support Services

UNT provides mental health resources to students to help ensure there are numerous outlets to turn to that wholeheartedly care for and are there for students in need, regardless of the nature of an issue or its severity. Listed below are several resources on campus that can support your academic success and mental well-being:

* [Student Health and Wellness Center](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center)
* [Counseling and Testing Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services)
* [UNT Care Team](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care)
* [UNT Psychiatric Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry)
* [Individual Counseling](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling)

Other student support services offered by UNT include

* [Registrar](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cjdl0126%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CTemp%5COneNote%5C16.0%5CNT%5C0%5CRegistrar) (https://registrar.unt.edu/registration)
* [Financial Aid](https://financialaid.unt.edu/) (https://financialaid.unt.edu/)
* [Student Legal Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services)
* [Career Center](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center)
* [Multicultural Center](https://edo.unt.edu/multicultural-center) (https://edo.unt.edu/multicultural-center)
* [Counseling and Testing Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services)
* [Pride Alliance](https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance) (https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance)
* [UNT Food Pantry](https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry) (https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry)

### Academic Support Services

* [Academic Resource Center](https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources) (https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources)
* [Academic Success Center](https://success.unt.edu/asc) (https://success.unt.edu/asc)
* [UNT Libraries](https://library.unt.edu/) (https://library.unt.edu/)
* [Writing Lab](http://writingcenter.unt.edu/) (http://writingcenter.unt.edu/)
* [MathLab](https://math.unt.edu/mathlab) (<https://math.unt.edu/mathlab>)
1. Page references are to *Judaism and Environmental Ethics: A Reader*, edited and introduced by Martin D. Yaffe (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2001). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. References to Spinoza in the following are to Benedict Spinoza, *Theologico-Political Treatise*, translated by Martin D. Yaffe (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2014). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. We’ll be doing a dramatic reading of the instructor’s co-translation-in-progress (with Hannes Kerber of Boston College and the von Siemens Stiftung of Munich, Germany) from the original German of Gotthold Ephraim Lessing’s *Nathan der Weise* (1779), a five-act poetic drama that probes the question of religious tolerance among Muslims, Christians and Jews. Although Lessing’s drama is set in medieval Jerusalem during the Wars of the Crusades, its title character is modeled (anachronistically) on Spinoza. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. An unpublished copy of the instructor’s co-translation in progress of G. E. Lessing’s *Nathan the Wise* is available on Canvas for course use. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)