

Introduction to Philosophy I Syllabus

PHI 2010, Summer 2021, May 31 - July 2

Course & Instructor Information

Instructor: TBA

Email: TBA

Office Hours: By Appointment

Contact Hours: 45

Credits: 3

Course Description

This course covers the study of fundamental philosophical problems and concepts. Speculation about limits of human understanding, value judgments, foundations of morality and speculation about the existence of God in order to present students with the tools for constructing their own philosophy.

Textbook Information

No Text: All readings can be found online, links and/or copies of the assigned text will be provided.

Measurable Course Objectives

Measurable Course Objectives are outcomes, students are expected to achieve by the end of the course.

- Discuss philosophical concepts and values relative to a specific philosopher.
- Show how a specific philosopher's theory is manifested in present society.
- Cite and interpret the masterworks from the tradition of philosophy focusing on a specific philosopher or topic.
- Compile papers with appropriate composition skills.
- Prepare a personal philosophical profile including psychology, epistemology, ethics and metaphysics, based on a specific philosopher. Demonstrate an understanding of critical and theoretical issues as contained in secondary scholarship.

Collegewide Student Learning Outcomes

The Collegewide Student Learning Outcomes assessed and reinforced in this course include the following:

- Communication
- Critical Thinking
- Information Literacy
- Global Sociocultural Responsibility

Course Requirements

- Required weekly textbook reading
- Required online discussion participation
- Required course assignments to be completed by or before the due date
- Required preparation for the class

Attendance/Makeup Policy

The College recognizes the correlation between attendance and both student retention and achievement. Per College Policy 3.060 **Students are expected to participate and keep track of assignments and their due dates of all courses for which they are registered.**

You will be allowed to make up work for full credit only under extreme circumstances (such as a documented, serious health-related emergency).

Cheating will not be tolerated. This includes giving or receiving aid on a quiz or exam and plagiarizing the work of others (including your classmates). There will likely be homework or in-class work that will allow for collaboration, but all work you turn in must be in your own words.

Grading Policy

Your final grade is based on the following:

Evaluation	Points
4 Weekly written reflection	15 points each x 4 (60 points)

5 Weekly discussions	4 points each x 5 (20 points)
1 Final Exam	20 points x 1 (20 points)
Total = 100 % /100points	

It is important to complete all course readings, to review all power points, and to participate in class discussions. Your unit assessments, written assignments, and final exam will cover all unit materials.

Grading Scale

A = 90-100%

B = 80-89%

C = 70-79%

D = 60-69%

F = Below 60%

“**A**” grades are given for outstanding work. You are doing extremely well. The student has exceeded expectation.

“**B**” grades are given for above average work. You are doing very well. Improvements will be toward higher refinements of concept.

“**C**” grades are given for average work. You are meeting an acceptable level or expectation. Improvements will be towards acceptable levels of project requirements.

“**D**” grades are given for below average work. You are under-achieving in quality and/or motivation. Improvements will be towards acceptable level of project requirements.

“**F**” grades are given for failure. You are not reaching the expected level for college work. Improvements are to review goals, seek assistance and increase efforts.

Course Outline

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to better suit the demands of the class.

Week 1: Introduction to Philosophical concepts and thinking / Theories of Epistemology and Metaphysics

Our lectures, assignments and discussions in this section will focus on theories of Epistemology and Metaphysics. This includes examining ideas related to acquiring knowledge, what counts as knowledge, and questioning notions of reality.

We will cover the following readings and theorist:

- **Bertrand Russel** “The Value of Philosophy” (Selected Excerpt)
- **Plato** “The Republic” (Selected Excerpts)
- **Rene’ Descartes** “Meditations I and II” (1641)
- **John Locke** “An Essay Concerning Human Understanding” (Selected Excerpts) (1689)
- **George Berkeley** “Principles of Human Knowledge” (Selected Excerpts)

Discussion 1 to be held no later than Saturday at 11:59pm

Weekly Writing Reflection 1 due no later than Saturday at 11:59pm

Week 2: Theories of Personhood, personal identity, and consciousness

Our lectures, assignments and discussions in this section will focus on theories of personhood and personal identity. This includes important questions such as determining the criteria for personhood, understanding the importance of personhood as it pertains to legality, and examining the role of consciousness in our notions of ‘self’ or existence.

We will cover the following readings and theorist:

- **David Hume** “A Treatise of Human Nature” Book I, Part IV, Section VI (1739 - 1740)
- **John Locke** “An Essay Concerning Human Understanding” (Selected Excerpts)
- **Marya Schechtman** “Personal Identity and the Past” (Selected Excerpts)
- **Descartes** “Meditations” (Selected Excerpts)
- **Daniel Dennett** “Where Am I?”
- **Ifeanyi Menkiti** “African Personhood”

Discussion 2 to be held no later than Saturday at 11:59pm

Weekly Writing Reflection 2 due no later than Saturday at 11:59pm

Week 3: Theories of Ethics and God

Our lectures, assignments and discussions in this section will focus on various theories of ethics from the Western Canon that are considered essential works. We

will also discuss ideas related to God as it pertains to questions of ethics and notions of good and evil in our world.

We will cover the following readings and theorist:

- **Immanuel Kant** “Critique of Pure Reason” (Selected Excerpts or an overview) (1781)
- **Jeremy Bentham** “An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation”
- **John Stuart Mill** “Utilitarianism”
- **Aristotle** “Nicomachean Ethics”
- **Nietzsche** “Genealogy of Morals”
- **John Leslie (J.L) Mackie** “Problem of Evil”
- **Blaise Pascal** “The Wager”
- **James and Stuart Rachels** “Critique of Cultural Relativism”

Discussion 3 to be held no later than Saturday at 11:59pm

Weekly Writing Reflection 3 due no later than Saturday at 11:59pm

Week 4: Theories of Free Will and Socio-political philosophy

Our lectures, assignments and discussions in this section will focus on free will and socio-political philosophy. This includes topics of freedom beyond the philosophical notion of free will, government structures, notions of economic and distributive justice, and we will explore questions of civil disobedience and human rights.

We will cover the following readings and theorist:

- **Baron d’holbach** “Systems of Nature”
- **Walter Terence Stace** “The Problem of Free Will”
- **Thomas Hobbes** “Leviathan” (Selected Excerpts) (1651)
- **John Locke** “An Essay Concerning Human Understanding” (Selected Excerpts)
- **John Rawls** “A theory of Justice” (Selected Excerpts)
- **Garrett Hardin** “Lifeboat Ethics”
- **Richard Rorty** “Justice as Loyalty”
- **Martin Luther King, Jr.**, from "Letter from Birmingham Jail"
- **Malcolm X** Speech on civil rights/human rights

Discussion 4 to be held no later than Saturday at 11:59pm

Writing Reflection 4 due no later than Saturday at 11:59pm

Week 5: Applied Philosophy, Critical Thinking, and Thought Experiments

- **Note: Content for this week will be open early on the 13th, so that students have a jump start for final exam**

Our lectures, assignments and discussions in this section will focus on various issues of applied philosophy, which is loosely defined as philosophy as it relates directly to issues and questions in our daily lives. This week will also cover various questions and thought experiments to push critical thought related to applied philosophical theories but also to ideas we have covered earlier in this semester.

We will cover the following readings and theorist:

- **Judith Jarvis** on Abortion and **David Benetar** on Anti-natalism (Personhood, ethics, existence, rights)
- **Thought experiment** on theft of unclaimed items (ethics, ownership, socio-political)
- **Wertheimer** on Societies without police and **Beccaria** on Criminal Justice and Capital Punishment
- **Michael Sandel** on Human Enhancements

Discussion 5 to be held no later than Tuesday at 11:59pm – This final discussion will also be an opportunity to review for final or ask any questions.

Final Exam should be complete no later than Wednesday at 11:59pm so that professor can have sufficient time to grade and submit final grades.

Academic Integrity

As members of the Seminole State College of Florida community, students are expected to be honest in all of their academic coursework and activities.

Academic dishonesty, such as cheating of any kind on examinations, course assignments or projects, plagiarism, misrepresentation and the unauthorized possession of examinations or other course-related materials, is prohibited.

Plagiarism is unacceptable to the college community. Academic work that is submitted by students is assumed to be the result of their own thought, research or self-expression. When students borrow ideas, wording or organization from another source, they are expected to acknowledge that fact in an appropriate manner. Plagiarism is the deliberate use and appropriation of another's work without identifying the source and trying to pass-off such work as the student's own. Any student who fails to give full credit for ideas or materials taken from another has plagiarized.

Students who share their work for the purpose of cheating on class assignments or tests are subject to the same penalties as the student who commits the act of cheating.

When cheating or plagiarism has occurred, instructors may take academic action that ranges from denial of credit for the assignment or a grade of "F" on a specific assignment,



examination or project, to the assignment of a grade of "F" for the course. Students may also be subject to further sanctions imposed by the judicial officer, such as disciplinary probation, suspension or dismissal from the College.