

PHI 100 Syllabus

Section 011 and 012

Location CB 341 (011) and CB 245 (012)

Instructor Dan Sheffler

E-mail dansheffler@uky.edu

Office Hours MWF 1:00–2:00 PM POT 1406

I – Required Texts

- Plato, *Five Dialogues*, (Hackett, 2002), ISBN: 0872206335.
- Anselm, *Proslogion*, Tr. Thomas Williams, (Hackett 2001), ISBN: 0872205657.
- Rene Descartes, *Meditations*, Tr. Roger Ariew and Donald Cress, (Hackett 1993), ISBN: 0872201929.
- George Berkeley, *Three Dialogues*, Ed. Robert Merrihew Adams, (Hackett 1979), ISBN: 0915144611.

II – Course Description and Learning Outcomes

What does it mean to say that something is “real”? What is “reality”? What does the universe contain? Can we know any of this? If so, how? What does it mean to say that a statement is “true”? Does this mean that there is something called “the truth”? Can we know the truth? How? When we say that something is “red” what does this mean? What would make this claim true?

All these questions concern the nature of reality and our knowledge of it. In this course we will learn to evaluate such questions by using general philosophical principles and theories. You will first learn the relevant theoretical principles by studying primary

source texts from ancient Greek and modern philosophy. You will then learn how to bring these historical theories into dialog with contemporary thought. Finally, you will be able to articulate your own position by written argument and in-class discussion.

III – Grading

Reading Quizzes	30%
Final Paper	30%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%

The first portion of your grade will come from regular (short) reading quizzes. These will be completed on Blackboard and will typically consist of a few multiple-choice questions on the reading for the day. These quizzes are due before class on the day when the corresponding reading assignment is due. There is a time limit on these quizzes and they can only be taken once, so it is advisable that you complete them just as soon as you complete your reading. You will not have enough time to search the reading for the answers, but you may keep the reading assignment open to aid in the completion of the quiz. I do not accept “my internet broke” excuses for resetting these quizzes (mysteriously there is always one student who can’t figure out how to use the internet for the whole semester and they are also mysteriously the same student that has the lowest quiz grades). In compensation, I drop the lowest quiz grade (because I understand that sometimes your internet really does break). I recommend that you read and follow the guidelines from UK IT. These solve most problems.

At the end of the semester, you will submit a short (1500–2000 words) paper on Blackboard reflecting on any topic we have covered in class. I will provide further guid-

ance on this paper as the due date approaches. The midterm and the final will both comprise 20% of your grade and will mainly consist of factually oriented multiple choice questions concerning the reading (hint: it is a good idea to review past reading quizzes), but there will also be a handful of reflective short-answer questions.

Grading Scale:

(I round all values to the nearest whole percent.)

A	100–90%
B	89–80%
C	79–70%
D	69–60%
E	59–0%

IV – Attendance

Although attendance does not compose its own segment of the grade, it is mandatory and failure to attend class will adversely impact your grade. Role will be taken at the beginning of every class period. Perfect attendance will result in an extra credit of +2 percentage points. The first 2 unexcused absences will not count against you, but beginning with the 3rd absence, each absence will subtract 2 percentage points from your final grade. This goes to a **limit of 7 unexcused absences** at which point you can no longer pass the class. For your reference:

Number of Absences	Percentage Change to Final Grade
0	+2
1	0
2	0

Number of Absences	Percentage Change to Final Grade
3	−2
4	−4
5	−6
6	−8
7	−50

I keep track of absences by calling roll at the beginning of each class. If you do not respond when I call your name (perhaps because you are not there) you will be marked as absent. This means that if you walk in late it is your responsibility to check in with me each and every time. Lateness, especially if egregious or repeated, may be counted as an absence for the day. You are always welcome to look at your card and I encourage you to do so because it is your responsibility to keep track of how many absences I have recorded. This is especially important for students who are in danger of failing the class because of absences. I probably will not notice when you have six absences so I am unlikely to notify you when you are in danger of failing. Students missing class or an exam due to an excused absence bear the responsibility of informing me about their absence within one week following the period of the absence (except where prior notification is required) and providing appropriate documentation for the absence. Excused absences are not taken into account in the above adjustment to the final grade. It is entirely the student's responsibility to make up missed work. Make up work (including exams) must be submitted within one week of return to class. If you miss an exam due to an unexcused absence, you will receive a grade of zero for that exam. In general, I do not excuse on-line assignments.

V – E-mail and Internet

You are expected to have an active e-mail account that you check regularly. Section related announcements will be made via e-mail (e.g. if I am sick, pointers for home work, change in due dates). Also, e-mail is the best way for contacting me outside of class.

You are expected to have access to a stable internet connection as reading quizzes are carried out on Discovery. I will not reset quizzes because of internet trouble (doing so is simply too easy to abuse and has been in the past). Instead, I will be dropping the lowest two reading quiz scores for everyone.

VI – Respectful Behavior

Mature, respectful behavior is expected in class. The primary concern is that all students are able to enjoy a focused, helpful classroom. This means that I expect you will among other things: arrive to class on time, stay awake, refrain from taking cell phone calls, playing games, or doing work for other classes. I will warn you once during a semester if a particular behavior is disruptive. If this behavior happens again, I may ask you to leave resulting in an absence for the day.

VII – Disability Accommodation

If you have a documented disability that requires academic accommodations, please see me as soon as possible during scheduled office hours. In order to receive accommodations in this course, you must provide me with a Letter of Accommodation from the Disability Resource Center (Room 2, Alumni Gym, 257-2754, email address: jkarnes@email.uky.edu) for coordination of campus disability services available to students with disabilities. Ac-

commodations cannot be made retroactively, so please provide me with a letter as early in the semester as possible.

VIII – Academic Integrity

Cheating robs other students of a fair grade. If it is determined that a student has cheated, all students involved will receive a grade of zero for the assignment. If the case is egregious, I will direct the case to the appropriate University Dean for official sanction.

IX – Schedule

(See separate document for our projected schedule of topics and readings.)