

PHIL 100

Introduction to Philosophy

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Overview

In this introductory course, we will read philosophical texts from various traditions (old and new), and we will critically examine the theoretical frameworks we use to understand the world and ourselves. We will focus on three important themes in Philosophy: knowledge, reality, and the self. While you are expected to learn prominent views in the history of philosophy, other key aspects of the course include the development of your own philosophical thinking and the ability to view any topic through a philosophical lens.

Goals

- 1) To understand key concepts/theories in the history of philosophical thinking.
- 2) To develop your ability to clearly articulate your own philosophical ideas in writing, speaking, and in conversation with others.
- 3) To develop your ability to have a productive and focused dialogue with your peers.
- 4) To develop your ability to read a text closely and formulate your own written philosophical argument about that text.
- 5) To understand how the study of philosophy is relevant to everyone's life, interests, and ability to live an ethical and reflective life with others.

Requirements

Participation	5%	First Exam	20%
Daily activities/quizzes	10%	Second Exam	25%
Argument Papers	15%	Final Exam	25%

Grading Scale

94 – 100 = A	77-79 = C+
90 – 93 = A-	74-76 = C
87 – 89 = B+	70-73 = C-
84 – 86 = B	60 – 69 = D
80 – 83 = B-	< 60 = F

Required Texts

The following texts are required for the course. Additionally, there are multiple pdfs that you will need to print.

Western Philosophy: An Anthology (2nd Edition), edited by John Cottingham
9781405124782

The Philosopher's Toolkit (2nd Edition),
Baggini and Fosl, 9781405190183

The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy (3rd Edition), Simon Blackburn,
9780198735304

Important Dates

Argument papers:

Paper 1: October 3rd, 5pm

Paper 2: December 1st, 5pm

First Exam: September 20th

Second Exam: October 23rd

Final Exam: Dec. 13th, 9am-12pm (in our classroom)

Office Hours

All by appointment via Canvas signup.
Instructions on Canvas homepage.

Mondays and Wednesdays: 3:00-5:00pm

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Daily Assignments

These assignments differ throughout the semester. They often consist of reading quizzes and in-class work, and sometimes they will be assigned homework. Other than homework assignments, they are not announced in advance. Their aim is to gauge your preparation for class and to develop your ability to clearly express philosophical ideas. Your lowest score will be dropped. If you come to class late or leave early, you will not receive credit for any daily assignment completed in class that day. Also, there are no makeup assignments unless you have an excused absence (see policies below). If you have an excused absence, you have one week to take a makeup quiz, which you are responsible for scheduling with me. Otherwise, you'll keep your zero on that assignment.

Argument Papers

I always encourage students to critically engage the texts we read and develop their own philosophical views. To facilitate your critical engagement with texts, you will write two two-page argument papers during the semester. In both papers, you will develop one clear argument of your own that supports, critiques, or makes a nuanced claim about a philosopher's argument presented in one of the assigned readings. The first paper must be about an assigned reading in Unit 1, and the second paper must be about an assigned reading in Unit 2. The reading you base your argument on is your choice, but it cannot be a *TPT* reading or a reading from a Key Principles day. You will submit your papers anonymously and electronically (Canvas). We will discuss the details of this assignment during class.

Due dates: Paper 1, Oct. 3rd @ 5pm Paper 2, December 1st @ 5pm

Exams

There will be three exams. Exams will consist of fill-in-the-blank, short answer and essay questions. The second and third exam will be partially cumulative – that is, you will always be tested on all key concepts and theories discussed this semester from the Baggin and Fosl book and generic philosophical terminology we discuss.

Participation

Great discussions happen when everyone has a chance to participate in our conversations. Accordingly, we will actively involve everyone in our conversations and create a classroom culture that welcomes everyone. I expect you to be prepared and demonstrate serious engagement with our readings and discussions, but I also ask you to participate in a respectful, relevant, and charitable manner. You will be graded on how often you contribute to our classroom discussion, your level of attentiveness and engagement, and your participation during in-class group assignments. You will receive three participation grades, one after each exam. Your overall participation grade will be an average of these three grades. For a detailed rubric, see the "Files" section in Canvas.

Additional Information & Classroom Policies

Unexcused Absence

An absence is excused only if you are 1) involved in an official Oxford event (sports, for example), 2) have a note from health services, 3) observing a religious holiday, or 4) have a note/e-mail from a dean excusing you from class. Any note must be for the day/time of our class.

Turning in Assignments

I will not accept assignments that are e-mailed to me. Any assignment that is not turned in by you at the beginning of class is late and will be penalized. If you leave class after turning in an assignment, you will receive a zero on the assignment. For daily assignments, late work is not accepted. For *all* assignments: each day late = one letter grade off (-10pts).

Electronics

You are not allowed to have laptops or cell phones out during class.

On days when the reading is a pdf, you either need to print the article or have an e-reader (no laptops or phones).

You do not have my permission to record our class, neither audio nor video.

Academic Dishonesty

Cheating/plagiarism is not tolerated. Any form of cheating or plagiarism (regardless the assignment) will forfeit any possible credit for that assignment, and following school policy you will be reported to the Honor Council. (Please consult the Academic Honor Code in the Student Handbook.) If you have *any* questions concerning what constitutes plagiarism, don't hesitate to contact me.

Disability Accommodations

Any student who thinks s/he may need an accommodation should contact the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS):

oas_oxford@emory.edu ; 770.784.4690. Unless you have official documentation from the OAS office, I cannot grant accommodations. If you do not schedule testing in advance, you will have to take our tests during the regular class time without extended time or accommodations. Scheduling for an exam accommodation is your responsibility, and often you cannot schedule times on short notice.

Course Schedule:

All dates are subject to change

WP = Cottingham's *Western Philosophy: An Anthology*

TPT = Baggini and Fosl's *The Philosopher's Toolkit*

All pdfs are posted in Canvas in "Files"

Week	Topic	Required Reading
1	Introduction: The basics of Philosophy	August 23 rd Syllabus/Branches of Philosophical Inquiry 25 th Basics of Philosophy, Day 1: What's an argument? Antonio Gramsci (pdf) and <i>TPT</i> 1.1 and 3.18
2	Unit 1: What is real? What is true?	28 th Introduction: Bertrand Russell #1 (pdf) 30 th Zhuangzi (pdf) and <i>TPT</i> , 4.2 September 1 st Plato (<i>WP</i> , pgs. 3-12) and <i>TPT</i> , 4.1
3		4 th No class, Labor Day 6 th Plato (<i>WP</i> , pgs. 12-18) and <i>TPT</i> , 4. 14 and 4.15 8 th Basics of Philosophy, Day 2: What's an Argument, cont. <i>TPT</i> , 1.2-1.6
4		11 th Plato (<i>WP</i> , pgs. 69-75) and <i>TPT</i> , 2.3 and 4.9 13 th Aristotle (pdf) and <i>TPT</i> 4.13 15 th Review Day
5		18 th Augustine (pdf) and <i>TPT</i> 4.10 20 th First Exam 22 nd Basics of Philosophy, Day 3: Philosophical Writing Portmore (pdf) and <i>TPT</i> 1.8, 1.10, and 3.2
6		25 th Writing workshop 27 th Rene Descartes (<i>WP</i> , pgs. 21-25) and <i>TPT</i> 1.11 and 7.8 29 th Rene Descartes (<i>WP</i> , pgs. 352-356) and <i>TPT</i> 1.9
7		October 2 nd David Hume (<i>WP</i> , pgs. 102-107) and <i>TPT</i> 6.3 4 th Hannah Arendt (pdf) 6 th Mary Midgely (pdf)

8	9 th No Class, Fall Break
	11 th Patricia Hill Collins (pdf)
	13 th Basics of Philosophy, Day 4: Informal Fallacies, Part I (pdf) and <i>TPT</i> 1.7
9	16 th Charles Mills (pdf)
	18 th Review Day
	20 th Basics of Philosophy, Day 5: Informal Fallacies, Part II (pdf)
10	23 rd Second Exam
	25 th Introduction: Buddha (pdf)
	27 th No class
	Unit 2: What are you? Philosophy of the Self
11	30 th Rene Descartes (<i>WP</i> , pgs. 221-227)
	November
	1 st David Hume (<i>WP</i> , 285-290)
	3 rd Radhakrishnan (pdf)
12	6 th Jean-Paul Sartre (pdf), pgs. 17-34 and <i>TPT</i> , 6.11
	8 th Jean-Paul Sartre (pdf), pgs. 34-end
	10 th Charles Taylor (<i>WP</i> , 302-307)
13	13 th Patricia Churchland (pdf)
	15 th Evan Thompson (pdf), pgs. 1-10
	17 th Evan Thompson (pdf), pgs. 10-20
14	20 th Evan Thompson(pdf), pgs. 20-end
	22 nd & 24 th – No class, Thanksgiving break
15	27 th Writing Workshop
	29 th Gloria Anzaldúa (pdf)
	December
Conclusion: The Value of Philosophy	1 st Bertrand Russell #2 (pdf)
	4 th Review Day