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# PHIL 100

## Introduction to Philosophy

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Spring 2015

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### Overview

"Philosophy begins in wonder..." - Aristotle  
"Enlightenment is release from one's self-imposed tutelage...Dare to Know!"  
- Kant

In this introductory course in philosophy, we will read texts in the history of philosophy in order to critically examine the theoretical frameworks we use to understand the world and ourselves. We will use the readings to discuss the nature of the self, what sort of knowledge and truth there is, and what truly exists/what constitutes reality. While you are expected to learn prominent views in the history of philosophy, a key aspect of the class will be learning how to develop philosophical thinking within yourself and see the world through a philosophical lens.

### Goals

- 1) To understand key concepts/theories in the history of philosophical thinking. **(Knowledge)**
- 2) To understand how to lead and participate in a successful philosophical dialogue. **(Academic Leadership)**
- 3) To learn how to clearly articulate your own philosophical ideas in writing, speaking, and in conversation with others. **(Critical Thinking & Communication)**
- 4) To learn how to formulate and develop a thoughtful philosophical argument by reading a text closely and engaging secondary literature. **(Research & Scholarship)**

### Requirements

Discussion Starter	10%	Research paper	20%
Daily Assignments	5%	Midterm	30%
Participation	5%	Final Exam	30%

### 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

**Note: I never round final grades or curve grades on assignments.**

### Required Texts

The following texts are required for the course. Additionally, there are a couple pdfs on Blackboard that you will need to print.

Bertrand Russell, *The Problems of Philosophy*, 9780195115529

Plato, *Theaetetus*, 158510101X

William James, *Pragmatism and Other Writings*, 0140437355

W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, 9780199555833

Jean-Paul Sartre, *Existentialism is a Humanism*, 9780300115468

Mary Midgley, *Are You an Illusion?*, 9781844657926

### Important Dates

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Midterm Exam, March 2nd

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Research Paper, April 25th

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Final Exam  
01A Section: May 4th, 9am-12pm  
02A Section: Apr. 30th, 2-5pm

## Daily Assignments

These assignments will differ throughout the semester. Sometimes they will consist of reading quizzes and in-class work, and sometimes they will be assigned homework (i.e., reflection papers). Other than homework assignments, they will not be announced in advance. Their aim is to gauge your preparation for class and to develop your ability to clearly express philosophical ideas. Your lowest two scores will be dropped. **If you miss one of these assignments due to an unexcused absence, you will receive a zero. If you have an excused absence, you have one week to take a makeup quiz. YOU must set-up a time to take a makeup quiz by emailing me and scheduling a date/time. After a week has passed, you will receive a zero. 'Excused' and 'Unexcused' are defined below in Attendance and Participation.**

## Research Paper

You will be required to **develop, research, and write a 5-page paper**. We will spend a few days discussing how to write a successful philosophy paper. Additionally, you can consult the 'Assignments' folder in Blackboard for a document containing all of the details of this assignment. Briefly, **it must focus on ONE idea from ONE of the books read in our class, and it must make use of two academic secondary sources on your topic.**

## Exams

There will be two exams. Exams will consist of fill-in-the-blank, short answer and essay questions. Your final exam will be partially cumulative: essay questions will involve all authors read.

Note from Academic Services:

"Students must have the permission of the Dean of Academic Affairs to reschedule a final exam. Permission is normally granted for medical reasons or for participating in educational programs. Leaving early for rides or flights, vacations, relatives' or friends' weddings or graduation, jobs, or having more than one exam on one day, are not considered valid reasons to request an earlier or later exam."

## Attendance & Participation

Your active participation, critical engagement, and attendance are crucial for this class to be a success. Thus, you are expected to have done all of the reading prior to class and come prepared to discuss the material. **Your participation grade will be based on how frequently you attend class, whether you cause distractions, your level of preparation, and the degree to which you are attentive and engaged in all classroom activities and discussion.** You will receive one participation grade at midterm and one participation grade at the end of the semester. Your overall participation grade will be an average of these two grades. **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, or 3) have a note/e-mail from a dean excusing you from class. Missing classes without an excuse will always harm your participation grade. You can miss two classes unexcused prior to midterm and two between midterm and the end of the semester. In both cases, each additional absence lowers your participation grade by one letter grade.** For a rubric and detailed instructions, see our Blackboard homepage.

## Discussion Starter

You will form **groups of three** during the first week of class (of your own choosing). Your groups will sign-up for two days during the semester when you will be responsible for starting our class discussion (dates begin after we finish the first book). There will only be one discussion starter group per day, so dates will be first come, first serve. Groups will sign-up for their days on Signup Genius (there's a link to this website on our Blackboard homepage), and when you sign-up for a day you will indicate who is in your group.

**The goal is for your group to formulate your own philosophical questions for the class to discuss that are directly related to the assigned reading. You WILL NOT be lecturing the class or doing a presentation/explaining what's in the reading. You will mainly be graded on your ability to initiate a DISCUSSION with your peers that examines the philosophical content of the assigned reading. You will need to meet outside of class in order to prepare.**

Lastly, these assignments are NOT designed as research projects; they are designed for you to work with others to create ideas, formulate questions, and think critically on your own. If you try to pass off views from outside sources as your own, it will be treated as a case of plagiarism (see plagiarism sanctions listed below and in the student handbook). **In other words, don't use websites or secondary sources when preparing for your discussion starter.** We will discuss the details of this assignment during the first few weeks of class, and a grading rubric with detailed instructions are posted in Blackboard under 'Assignments'.

## Additional Information & Classroom Policies

### Classroom Equity

I never give one student special accommodations (disabilities aside). Hence, whenever you want to ask me for something, first ask 'Is this something that he would/could reasonably do for everyone in the class.' If the answer is 'no,' then my answer will be no.

### Turning in Assignments

All assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class the day they are due. If you are not in class, you cannot turn in the assignment and receive credit, unless you have a doctor's note or you are on an official Emory trip (e.g., athletics). Along these lines, **I will not accept assignments that are e-mailed to me (unless you are asked to e-mail them).** Any assignment that is not turned in by you (in person) at the beginning of class is late and will be penalized. For daily assignments, late work is not accepted.

### Electronics

**You are not allowed to have laptops or cell phones out during class.** Although laptops are useful in many classrooms, they will not be needed for our purposes. The class will be heavily discussion-based and note taking can easily be done with paper and pen. On days when the reading comes from a pdf, **you are responsible for printing the document and having it with you in class.**

### Academic Dishonesty

Cheating/plagiarism is not tolerated. Any form of cheating or plagiarism (no matter 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, or visit someone in the writing center!

### Course Schedule:

Week	Topic	Required Reading
1	Basics of Philosophy	<b>January</b> 14 <sup>th</sup> Syllabus 16 <sup>th</sup> Antonio Gramsci "Preliminaries to a Study of Philosophy" (pdf)
2	Basics of Philosophy	21 <sup>st</sup> Russell, Ch. 1 23 <sup>rd</sup> Russell, Ch. 3
3	Basics of Philosophy	26 <sup>th</sup> Russell, Ch. 6 28 <sup>th</sup> Russell, Ch. 7 30 <sup>th</sup> Russell, Ch. 10

4 & 5	Basics of Philosophy	<b>February</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Russell, Ch. 12 4 <sup>th</sup> Russell, Ch. 15 6 <sup>th</sup> Plato, 13-33
	Greek Philosophy	9 <sup>th</sup> Plato, 33-53 11 <sup>th</sup> Plato, 53-73 13 <sup>th</sup> Plato, 73-93
6	Greek Philosophy	16 <sup>th</sup> Plato, 93-113 18 <sup>th</sup> Plato, 113-129 20 <sup>th</sup> Aristotle, from <i>Physics</i> (pdf)
7	Philosophical Writing	23 <sup>rd</sup> Philosophical Writing – Portmore pdf 25 <sup>th</sup> Philosophical Writing – Portmore pdf 27 <sup>th</sup> Review Day
8	Midterm and Pragmatism	<b>March</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Midterm 4 <sup>th</sup> James 24-32 6 <sup>th</sup> James 32-40
9	Pragmatism	16 <sup>th</sup> James 41-48 18 <sup>th</sup> James 48-57 20 <sup>th</sup> James, 199-209
10	Social Philosophy	23 <sup>rd</sup> James, 209-218 25 <sup>th</sup> Du Bois, Ch. 1 27 <sup>th</sup> Du Bois, Ch. 5
11	Social Philosophy	30 <sup>th</sup> Du Bois, Ch. 8 <b>April</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Du Bois, Ch. 9
12	Existentialism	6 <sup>th</sup> Sartre 8 <sup>th</sup> Sartre 10 <sup>th</sup> Sartre
13	Philosophy and Science	13 <sup>th</sup> Midgley, Ch. 1 15 <sup>th</sup> Midgley, Ch. 2 17 <sup>th</sup> Midgley, Ch. 4
14	Philosophy and Science	20 <sup>th</sup> Midgley, Ch. 6 22 <sup>nd</sup> Midgley, Ch. 8 24 <sup>th</sup> Midgley, Ch. 10
15	Philosophy and Science	27 <sup>th</sup> Midgley, Ch. 11 & Conclusion