

Syllabus
for
PHILOS 1100H
Honors Introduction to Philosophy
Spring Semester, 2019

Instructor

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University Hall, Room 322
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Contents

1 Lecture-Recitations, with Q&A

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:20 p.m.–3:45 a.m. in Bolz Hall 120

2 Aims and Topics

In this introductory course we rigorously examine concepts and problems of fundamental significance. These include the Existence of God; Naturalism; Skepticism and our Knowledge of the External World; the Problem of Induction; the Mind-Body Problem; and the Paradoxes. (Students interested in matters of ethics, morality, and value might wish to consider also our other introductory course PHIL1300, which is devoted to them.)

Philosophy's historical roots extend to the ancients. But it is a constantly evolving discipline. It examines the very foundations of scientific disciplines. Contemporary Philosophy also incorporates scientific developments into its own 'big picture' of humankind and our place in the cosmos.

This course will introduce some of the main ideas of great philosophers of the past, from Aristotle and Plato through Descartes, Hume and Kant to the founders of modern analytic philosophy—Frege, Russell and Wittgenstein.

Students will learn about methods of philosophical analysis; the clarification of important concepts; the careful appraisal of arguments and theories; and the sheer breadth and variety of philosophical concerns. The course aims to enable you to write more clearly, think more deeply, and pursue your intellectual interests both with more attention to detail and with an eye to the big picture.

3 Textbook

Neil Tennant, *Introducing Philosophy: God, Mind, World and Logic*, Routledge, New York, 2015.

4 Timetable, with readings from textbook

(This timetable is provisional. It might change as the course progresses.)

Week 1.

Chapter 1: The Main Features of Philosophy

Chapter 2: Philosophy's History and Legacy

Week 2.

Chapter 3: The Philosophical Temperament

Chapter 4: Important Concepts and Distinctions

Week 3.

Chapter 5: Kant's Two Distinctions

Chapter 6: Important Opposing '-Isms'

Week 4.

Chapter 15: *A Priori* Arguments for the Existence of God

—First essay due at end of Week 4—

Week 5.

Chapter 16: The Argument from Design, for the Existence of God

Week 6.

Chapter 18: Pascal's Wager

Chapter 17: The Argument from Contemporary Creationism

Week 7.

Chapter 19: The Problem of Evil

—Midsemester Exam at end of Week 7—

Week 8.

Chapter 20: The Pivotal Figure of Descartes: Dualism and Skepticism

Chapter 21: Problems about Mind

Week 9.

Chapter 22: Cartesian Dualism vs. Logical Behaviorism

Chapter 23: Materialism and Supervenience

—**Second essay due at end of Week 9**—

Week 10.

Chapter 24: Functionalism

Chapter 14: The Methodological Issue of Reductionism

Week 11.

Chapter 7: What is Logic?

Chapter 8: Inductive Reasoning

Week 12.

Chapter 13: Deduction in Mathematics and Science

Chapter 28: Paradoxes

Week 13.

Chapter 9: The Method of Conceptual Analysis

Chapter 10: The Method of Conceptual Explication

Week 14.

Review session

—**Final Exam at end of Week 14**—

5 Online resources

A very useful online resource is the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, at <http://plato.stanford.edu/>.

6 Important deadlines

Thursday, January 31, 2019

Thursday, February 21, 2019

Thursday, March 7, 2019

Thursday, April 18, 2019 (last class)

First essay due at lecture class

Midsemester Exam in usual lecture venue

Second essay due at lecture class

Final Exam in usual lecture venue

7 Assessment

First essay of 500-750 words	10%
Midsemester Exam	30%
Second essay of 500-750 words	10%
Final Exam	50%
Attendance	An adjustment factor (see §??)

Topics for the essays will be posted in due course.

8 Office hours

Thursdays 2:00–3:00 p.m., University Hall 322.

Please *knock on the door* to let me know you are there!

9 College of Arts and Humanities GEC Goals and Expected Learning Outcomes

Philosophy 1100 satisfies the Cultures & Ideas subcategory of the Arts & Humanities GEC requirements (2.C.3.). The general goals and expected learning objectives of the Arts & Humanities category of the GEC are as follows (quote taken from an official document).

2. C. Arts & Humanities GEC Goals and Expected Learning Outcomes

Goals: Students evaluate significant writing and works of art. Such studies develop capacities for aesthetic and historical response and judgment; interpretation and evaluation; critical listening, reading, seeing, thinking, and writing; and experiencing the arts and reflecting on that experience.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

1. Students develop abilities to be informed observers of, or active participants in, the visual, spatial, performing, spoken, or literary arts.

2. Students develop an understanding of the foundations of human beliefs, the nature of reality, and the norms that guide human behavior.
3. Students examine and interpret how the human condition and human values are explored through works of art and humanistic writings

The expected learning objectives for the Cultures & Ideas subsection are as follows (quote taken from an official document).

2. C. 3. Cultures and Ideas Expected Learning Outcomes:

1. Students develop abilities to analyze, appreciate, and interpret major forms of human thought and expression.
2. Students develop abilities to understand how ideas influence the character of human beliefs, the perception of reality, and the norms which guide human behavior.

In Philosophy 1100, students evaluate significant writings by major philosophers. Such studies develop capacities for logical, critical and historically informed analysis of texts and arguments; interpretation and evaluation; critical listening, reading, thinking, and writing. Students have the opportunity to integrate what they learn in both the sciences and the humanities, in order to reach a well-informed, carefully thought-out reflective equilibrium on the big questions and fundamental issues that philosophy addresses.

10 Policy on attendance at classes

Attendance is expected, and will be recorded. You must sign the attendance sheet yourself.

Every unexcused absence will result in a drop of one percentage point in your final percentage grade. (One letter grade consists of ten percentage points.)

The commonest excuse for an absence is that one has been ill or that there has been a family emergency. In the case of a medical excuse, please be prepared to give me, if requested, a copy of the standard visitation form signed by the medical practitioner. Please email your medical excuse to me. Likewise, in the case of a family emergency, please just email me to let me know.

Please note the importance of emailing your excuses *from both lectures and recitations* to your TA . Make sure you use a subject header of the form PHIL 1100: Week [Number], [Day-of-week]. Example:

PHIL 1100: John Doe: Week 5, Wednesday

We shall count Week 1 as the week that begins on Monday, January 7, 2019.

You will be trusted not to abuse this honor system, which is designed to minimize stress on students genuinely experiencing it. These excuses will be retroactive, but each excuse must be recorded at the first class after the absence, and certainly before the beginning of exam week.

11 Plagiarism

Plagiarism is intellectual theft: purloining another person's ideas or mode of expression without proper attribution, and passing off the written material in question as one's own work. Plagiarism is serious *academic misconduct*, and the University has strict rules that penalize it. You will be assumed to be acquainted with these rules. Please be mindful of the need for careful note-taking, so that you do not inadvertently make the mistake, when completing an assignment, of including material that you forget you had copied earlier from another source. The risk of inadvertent copying is especially marked if you download material from the web. But then so is the risk of being caught, since one can search the web for the very material that the student has failed to attribute to its original source.

Any instructor who has reason to believe that a student is guilty of academic misconduct in their course is *obliged* by University rules to report the matter to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. COAM's penalties can be very severe.

12 Advice on writing essays

Two useful sources are:

1. Joel Feinberg and Russ Shafer-Landau, *Doing Philosophy: A Guide to the Writing of Philosophy Papers*, 3rd edn., Wadsworth 2005
2. Jay F. Rosenberg, *The Practice of Philosophy: A Handbook for Beginners*, 3rd edn., Prentice Hall 1996

13 Accommodations for Disabilities

Any student who feels a need for an accommodation because of a disability should ask Disability Services to contact me confidentially about the accommodation needed:

Student Life Disability Services
098 Baker Hall
113 W. 12th Ave
Columbus, OH 43210
614-292-3307
General business email: slds@osu.edu
Exam accommodations email: slds-exam@osu.edu

This Office coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.