



广东金融学院
Guangdong University of Finance

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Guangdong University of Finance

2018 Summer Program

PHI 101 Introduction to Philosophy

Course Syllabus

Course Code: PHI 101

Instructor: Dr. Faraz Sheikh

Home Institution: College of William & Mary

Office Hours: TBA

Email: fmsheikh@wm.edu

Credit: 4

Class hours

This course will have 72 total class hours, including 40 lecture hours, 12 instructor office hours, 12-hours of TA-led discussion sessions (four sessions of 3 hour each), 8 hours of review sessions (four review sessions, 2 hours each).

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to familiarize students with concerns and debates about reality, the possibility of knowledge, the agent of knowing, and the relationships between knowledge and action that permeate western philosophy. What are the basic constituents of reality? How may we gain knowledge of reality? Who or what is the agent and possessor of knowledge? How does “good action” relate with knowledge and reality? These are the kinds of questions that we shall raise and address through selected primary sources throughout our five weeks together. The course begins by raising formal questions about methods and processes of reasoning and then examines the aforementioned questions by broadly and non-exhaustively surveying major western philosophic tendencies and approaches to those questions. One of the elemental aims of this course is to expose students to primary sources and to help them navigate the forms of reasoning they employ in addressing questions about reality, knowledge, selfhood, and the good life.



Required Texts

There are two text-books for this class:

1) *A Rulebook for Arguments*, 4th edition
Anthony Weston
Hackett, 2008

2) *Introduction to Philosophy: Classical and Contemporary Readings*, 7th edition
John Perry, Michael Bratman
Oxford University Press, 2015

Additional readings will be provided in the form of pdfs on the course website

Course Requirements:

Class Participation 20%

Two Response Papers 20% (10% each)

Midterm: 30%

Final: 30%

Detailed Course Requirements

Participation and Attendance: 20%

This course is designed to stimulate discussion and conversation about the issues and philosophers we shall take up during class. The success of the course depends largely on your careful preparation and substantive participation in our conversations. Consequently, attendance is mandatory. Your participation or discussion grade, which will constitute 15% of your final grade, will be based on your active contribution of thoughts, questions, and answers during class time. You must come to class having already read and reflected upon the reading assigned for that day. Here is my grading scale for participation:

A: participates with original ideas and insights that show in-depth reflection on the reading material

B: participates, but only by answering specific questions or repeating others' ideas

C: present without substantial participation

D: present with no participation

F: absent, asleep, reading, disturbing others, etc.

Response Papers: 20%

For two reading assignments throughout the semester, you shall compose a 4-5 page (double-spaced, 12 pt. Times New Roman font) textual analysis papers. You shall submit it at the



beginning of the classes for which the readings have been assigned. Your basic task for these response papers shall be clarifying and examining the conceptions of i) reality ii) knowledge, and iii) the self that informs the reading.

Midterm and Final: 25% and 30%

During these exams you will have the opportunity to demonstrate what you have learned during the course of our semester-long conversation. The exams will be a combination of short-essay questions and one lengthier essay.

A note on reading for this course

This course requires students to engage with the assigned readings with both attention and care. For each of the sessions, I shall send out questions that you should focus on as you do the assigned reading. An important part of the purpose of the course is to enable you to read texts that may appear daunting at first glance. We will only be able to acquire the ability to fruitfully engage with and develop in relation to the material of the course if you come to class after carefully reading the assigned material.

Detailed Weekly Course Schedule

Week One:

Monday:

Introduction to the course

“The Value of Philosophy,” Bertrand Russell in *Introduction to Philosophy*

Tuesday:

“Short Arguments,” and “Generalizations,” in *A Rulebook for Arguments*

Wednesday:

“Arguments about Causes,” and “Deductive Arguments,” in *A Rulebook for Arguments*

Thursday:

“Introduction,” and “Questions and Perspectives,” Pierre Hadot in *What is Ancient Philosophy?* (available on course website)

Friday:

TA-led session (3 hours)

Week Two:

Monday:

“Euthyphro,” Plato in *Philosophic Classics: From Plato to Derrida* (available on course website)

Tuesday:

“Apology,” Plato in *Introduction to Philosophy*

Wednesday



“Metaphysics,” Aristotle in *Philosophic Classics: From Plato to Derrida* (available on course website)

Thursday

“On the Soul,” Aristotle in *Philosophic Classics: From Plato to Derrida* (available on course website)

Review Session # 1

Friday:

TA-led session (3 hours)

Week Three:

Monday:

“Meditations on First Philosophy,” Descartes in *Introduction to Philosophy*

Tuesday:

“Bad Dreams, Evil Demons, and the Experience Machine: Philosophy and *The Matrix*,”

Christopher Grau in *Introduction to Philosophy*

Wednesday:

“The Senses as the Basis of Knowledge: John Locke, *Essay concerning Human Understanding*,”

John Locke in *Western Philosophy: An Anthology* (available on course website)

Thursday:

“Nothing Outside the Mind: George Berkeley, *Principles of Human Knowledge*,” Berkeley in *Western Philosophy: An Anthology* (available on course website)

Review Session # 2

Friday:

Midterm Exam

Week Four:

Monday

“An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding,” Hume in *Introduction to Philosophy*

Tuesday

“The Problem of Induction,” W.C. Salmon in *Introduction to Philosophy*

Wednesday

“Introduction,” Kant, *The Critique of Pure Reason* (excerpted selections on course website)

Thursday

“A Pragmatic Conception of the A-Priori,” C. I. Lewis in *Pragmatism Old and New* (available on course website)

Review Session # 3

Friday:

TA-led session (3 hours)

Week Five:



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Monday:

“Nicomachean Ethics,” Aristotle in *Introduction to Philosophy*

Tuesday:

“Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals,” Kant in *Introduction to Philosophy*

Wednesday:

“Utilitarianism,” J. S. Mill in *Introduction to Philosophy*

TA led session (3 hours)

Thursday:

“A Theory of Justice,” Rawls in *Introduction to Philosophy*

Nussbaum, Martha C. “Beyond the social contract: capabilities and global justice. An Olaf Palme lecture, delivered in Oxford on 19 June 2003.” *Oxford Development Studies* 32, no. 1 (2004): 3-18. (available on course website)

Review Session # 4

Friday:

Final Exam