

## PHI 1000 – Introduction to Philosophy

Spring 2020, AC02 TR002, Monday and Wednesday 8:30 AM – 10:00 AM

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### About This Course: Topic and Goals

In this course, you will be introduced to academic philosophy through an investigation of a few of the key issues that philosophers have investigated over the years.

Below are the **goals** for this course. For more detail see the course goals and learning outcomes handout.

- Learn a bit about what philosophy, as a field of academia, has studied
- Form some initial thoughts about some of the key questions and topics in philosophy
- Investigate the philosophy of personal identity in some depth
- Get practice with reading, writing, talking about, and thinking about philosophy in an academic setting

### Course Content

We will begin with some short articles on topics like moral relativism and permission to cheat. The rest of the topics we study will be chosen by your votes. All readings are available on the course web site at <https://canvas.instructure.com/courses/1795671>. Do the assigned reading for each class before coming to class that day. **Please bring the readings to class each day**, either printed out or in *easily accessible* electronic form.

### Assignments and Grading

There are four kinds of assignments in this class: **reading quizzes**, **four sentence papers**, **500 word papers**, and **paper outlines**. Late reading quizzes will not be accepted. Other late assignments will lose points for each day (or portion thereof) that they are late.

**Reading Quizzes** (10% of your grade) are to help you focus on the important parts of the reading and to get instant feedback on whether you have understood the reading. Quizzes are due 11:59 PM the night before we discuss the relevant reading in class. There is 1 quiz per class session, for a total of 26 quizzes. The 6 lowest scoring quizzes will be ignored.

**Four Sentence Papers** (15% of your grade) are the first way you will practice writing philosophy. They will introduce you to summaries and arguments. There are 4 due. The lowest scoring paper will be ignored.

**500 Word Papers** (45% of your grade) are your opportunity to get more practice writing concisely about philosophy. They should summarize a point from one of the readings, and then offer a **question**, an **extension of the idea or argument**, or a **critique of the idea or argument**. There are 4 due. The lowest scoring assignment will be ignored.

**Peer-Graded Paper Outlines and Reflections** (15% of your grade) are outlines of papers which will help you get used to reconstructing the structure of an author's argument, plus feedback which you write on your classmate's outlines, plus reflection on the feedback you gave and received.

**Class and Section Participation** (15% of your grade) is required. This includes attendance, listening respectfully to me, to your TF, and to your fellow students, and offering thoughtful questions and contributions

to the discussion. Using mobile phones or computers for non-academic purposes, browsing the Internet, coming in late, not showing up, or otherwise ignoring people is not respectful and will reduce your participation grade. You have 3 excused absences from discussion section. After those, any absences will reduce your participation score by 10% each. You have six excused absences from class. After those, any absences will reduce your participation grade by 5% each.

#### **Grade Breakdown:**

- 10% - Reading Quizzes (26)**
- 15% - Four Sentence Papers**  
(4, lowest 1 ignored)
- 45% - 500 Word Papers**  
(4, lowest 1 ignored)
- 15% - Peer-Graded Paper Outlines and Reflections (3)**
- 15% - Class and Section Participation**

#### **Class Grade Rubric:**

100-97% = A+	<80-77% = C+
<97-94% = A	<77-74% = C
<94-90% = A-	<74-70% = C-
<90-87% = B+	<70-67% = D+
<87-84% = B	<67-64% = D
<84-80% = B-	<64-60% = D-
	<60-0% = F

### **Disabilities**

If you have disabilities which require some form of accommodation, contact me ahead of time.

### **Plagiarism and Academic Integrity**

Any time you use **words, phrases, ideas, or anything else** in your writing that you did not think up on your own, you must **cite** your source the best of your ability. Words and phrases from others must be enclosed in quotation marks to show that you did not write them yourself. Failure to cite a source is **plagiarism** and it's not okay. Plagiarism may result in a zero on the assignment or in other point reductions. You should not need to use (or cite) outside sources for this class, but if you do use them, you must cite them. It is perfectly okay to use points made by your classmates in class or discussion section, *as long as you cite them to the best of your ability*. The one exception is that you do not need to cite my lectures for your writing assignments in this class.

### **Office Hours, Email Communication, and Due Date Extensions**

If you have questions or comments about the course it is best to come in and talk during office hours (Tuesdays 10 AM to noon in my office, AC02 320). You do not need an appointment to visit during office hours. If you cannot attend office hours you can email me to set up another time to meet, or just drop by to see if I am in my office. If you contact me via email, please include "PHI 1000" in the subject line so that I know you are emailing about this course. I will not offer extensions on assignment due dates. All of the assignment due dates are available in advance, so if you anticipate not having enough time to do the assignment right before it is due, you should do the assignment earlier.

### **Resources**

My website has resources on reading, writing, and researching at <http://danielweltman.com/resources.html>. These resources include a glossary for unfamiliar words or phrases. I encourage you to examine these resources.

### **Colloquia**

Periodically the Philosophy department hosts colloquium talks by visiting philosophers (sometimes in conjunction with the Politics, Philosophy, and Economics program). In a colloquium talk, a philosopher presents some of their research and then the audience asks questions. Going to colloquium talks is a great way to introduce yourself to all sorts of topics in philosophy. You will receive announcements about upcoming

colloquia in your email, and I encourage you to come to some of the talks this semester, and for the rest of your time here at Ashoka.

## **Initial Schedule and Readings**

20 January: Carroll, “What the Tortoise Said to Achilles” **Quiz Due 19 Jan, 11:59 PM**

22 January: Sorensen, “Permission to Cheat” **Quiz Due 21 Jan, 11:59 PM**

**Colloquium talk today! Check your email**

27 January: Nagel, “Brain Bisection and the Unity of Consciousness” **Quiz Due 26 Jan, 11:59 PM**

29 January: Midgley, “On Trying Out One’s New Sword” **Quiz Due 28 Jan, 11:59 PM**

**Colloquium talk today! Check your email**

3 February: Intemann, “Science and Values: Are Value Judgments Always Irrelevant to the Justification of Scientific Claims?” **Quiz Due 2 Feb, 11:59 PM**

5 February: Churchland, “The Hornswaggle Problem” **Quiz Due 4 Feb, 11:59 PM**

10 February: Driver, “Caesar’s Wife: On the Moral Significance of Appearing Good” **Quiz Due 9 Feb, 11:59 PM**

**Colloquium talk tomorrow! Check your email**

12 February: Lenard, “Democratic Citizenship and Denationalization” **Quiz Due 11 Feb, 11:59 PM**

## **Possible Topics**

The readings listed below for each topic may vary to some degree once we pick our final topics, so as to accommodate a sensible reading and assignment schedule.

**AI Consciousness:** Searle, “Minds, Brains, and Programs”; Boden, “Escaping from the Chinese Room”; Churchland and Churchland, “Could a Machine Think?”

**Ancient Greek Philosophy:** Plato, *Euthyphro*, *Apology*, *Crito*, *Symposium*

**Classical Chinese Philosophy:** Selections from Kǒngzǐ and Mòzǐ

**Classical Islamic Philosophy:** Ibn Rushd, *The Incoherence of the Incoherence*

**Communism:** Marx, “Theses on Feuerbach,” *Critique of the Gotha Program* Part I and Parts II-IV and Appendix, “The British Rule in India,” “Future Results of the British Rule in India”; Engels, “The Principles of Communism”

**Early Modern European Philosophy:** Hume, “The Standard of Taste” and “Suicide”; Descartes, “Meditations”; selections from Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia’s correspondence with Descartes

**Ethiopian Philosophy:** *The Treatise of Zera Yacob*

**Existentialism:** Sartre, “Existentialism is a Humanism”; Beauvoir, “Introduction to an Ethics of Ambiguity” and “What is Existentialism?”

**Free Will:** Frankfurt, “Alternate Possibilities and Moral Responsibility”; Ginet, “In Defense of the Principle of Alternative Possibilities”; Frankfurt, “Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person”; Ekstrom, “Toward a plausible event-causal indeterminist account of free will”; Strawson, “The Impossibility of Moral Responsibility”

**Gender:** Barnes, “The Metaphysics of Gender”; Haslanger, “The Sex/Gender Distinction and the Social Construction of Reality”; Mikkola, “Gender Essentialism and Anti-Essentialism”; Mikkola, “Elizabeth Spelman, Gender Realism, and Women”; Stoljar, “Different Women, Gender, and the Realism-Nominalism Debate”

**Hellenistic Greek Philosophy:** Epicurus, “Letter to Menoecus” and “The Principal Doctrines”; Selections of Stoic writings; Selections of Skeptic writings

**Indian and Buddhist Philosophy:** Selections from *Questions of King Milinda*; Selections from Śāṅkara’s *Vaiśeṣika-sūtra-upaskāra*; Selections from Vasubandhu’s *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*

**Multiculturalism and Sexism:** Okin, “Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?”; Selected replies

**Personal Identity:** Parfit, “Personal Identity”; Williams, “The Self and the Future”; Schechtman, “The Narrative Self”; Swinburne, “Personal Identity: the Dualist Theory”

**Patriotism and Nationalism:** Nathanson, “In Defense of Moderate Patriotism”; Gomberg, “Patriotism is Like Racism”; Hurka, “The Justification of National Partiality”; Lichtenberg, “Nationalism, For and (Mainly) Against”

**Terrorism:** Wellman, “On Terrorism Itself”; Held, “Legitimate Authority in Non-state Groups Using Violence”; Jaggard, “What Is Terrorism, Why Is It Wrong, and Could It Ever Be Morally Permissible?”; Medina, “Unconditional vs. Conditional Critics of Terrorist Violence”; McPherson, “Is Terrorism Distinctively Wrong?”; Glasgow, “A Straightforward Analysis of Terrorism”

**The Annihilation of Caste:** Ambedkar, “The Annihilation of Caste”; Gandhi, “A Vindication of Caste”; Ambedkar, “A Reply to the Mahatma”