

PHI 2010: INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY  
Dr. Rusong Huang  
Fall 2023 COMPLETE SYLLABUS

Each student is responsible for reading the complete course syllabus and being familiar with the policies and procedures set out therein. You should be sure to review it prior to the end of the drop/add period.

## **1. Basic Information**

### 1.1 Instructor Information and Office Hours

- Instructor: Dr. Rusong Huang
- Email: [rusonghuang@ufl.edu](mailto:rusonghuang@ufl.edu)
- Office Hours: TBA

### 1.2 Course Times and Locations

- Times: MWF, 01:55 PM - 02:45 PM (Period 7)
- Location: Anderson Hall (AND) 0032

## **2. Course Overview**

### 2.1 Course Goals

The patient and thorough exploration of philosophical questions is an ideal way to develop skills in clear writing and critical thinking. This course introduces the discipline of philosophy with a focus on developing those skills. Most of the semester is devoted to three traditional issues: (a) What is knowledge? What can we know? (b) What is free will? Is there reason to think we don't have any free will? (c) What is morality all about? Are there facts about what is morally right and wrong? At the end of the semester, we will briefly explore some famous questions about happiness and the meaning of life. The emphasis throughout is on writing clearly about such elusive questions and presenting good reasons to endorse one answer over another.

PHI 2010 is required of all Philosophy majors and meets an area requirement for the Philosophy minor. This course is a Humanities (H) subject area course in the UF General Education Program, a General Education Core Courses in Humanities, a UF Writing Requirement (WR4) course. A minimum grade of C is required for credit toward the Philosophy major or minor and for general education credit.

### 2.2 Course Objectives

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to identify, describe, and explain a number of the major questions addressed, the range of answers offered, and the methods employed by major figures at the beginning of the western philosophical tradition. Students will be able to discern the structure of arguments, to represent them fairly and clearly, and to evaluate

them for cogency; to formulate their own arguments interpretations, anticipating objections and responding in a conscientious fashion; to read and discuss complex philosophical texts from both historical sources; and to speak and write clearly and persuasively about abstract and conceptually elusive matters.

### 2.3 General Education Objectives and Learning Outcomes

This course is a Humanities (H) subject area course in the UF General Education Program and a General Education Core Course in Humanities. Humanities courses provide instruction in the history, key themes, principles, terminology, and theory or methodologies used within a humanities discipline or the humanities in general. Students will learn to identify and to analyze the key elements, biases and influences that shape thought. These courses emphasize clear and effective analysis and approach issues and problems from multiple perspectives. A minimum grade of C is required for general education credit.

PHI 2010 accomplishes these goals by familiarizing students with the figures whose thought and activities first shaped philosophy as a discipline and a way of life. Philosophy as a field is perhaps more engaged with its own history than most other fields of inquiry. Since philosophers continue to address many of the same problems that concerned their predecessors and continue to draw upon the concepts and methods they employed, an understanding of the history of philosophy is essential to being a good philosopher. Students will come to understand how different philosophers of classical antiquity both defined and sought to answer problems in central areas of philosophy including epistemology, metaphysics, philosophy of science, ethics, and political philosophy.

The General Education Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's) divide into three areas: CONTENT – students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories and methodologies used within the discipline; COMMUNICATION – students communicate knowledge, ideas and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the discipline; and CRITICAL THINKING – students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline-specific methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems.

Students will satisfy these SLO's by: (i) taking the logic exercise designed to ensure basic comprehension of argumentative forms and reasoning; (ii) participating actively in the small-group Canvas discussions, in which students will consider the effectiveness of ideas and reasoning discussed in lectures and readings; (iii) completing three 300-500 word short writing assignments (SWAs) and three 1,000-1,500 word argumentative essays (AEs), on assigned topics designed to test students' critical thinking abilities, to be graded according to a rubric that specifies as criteria for assessment competent command of the relevant texts and material discussed in class, perspicuous identification of the issues raised by the assigned topics, and development of a response that cogently supports the students' claims with little or no irrelevance.

### 2.4 UF Writing Requirement (WR)

Students who successfully complete the major writing assignments in this course will earn 4000

words toward the UF Writing Requirement. The Writing Requirement (WR) ensures student both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. Course grades have two components. To receive writing requirement credit, a student must receive a grade of C or higher and a satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course.

In this class, whether you get the WR credit will depend on certain aspects of your grades for the Short Writing Assignments and the Argumentative Essays. Those assignments are assessed on several different factors; the two that are plainly relevant for the WR credit are Clarity and Mechanics. To get WR credit for this class, you need to earn at least a C average in the Clarity and Mechanics categories on the assignment rubrics. This average, call it the ‘Clarity and Mechanics Average’, will be determined by your scores in those categories for all three Argumentative Essays and your two overall highest scoring Short Writing Assignments. The overall rule for getting the Writing Requirement credit is, then, as follows:

In order to get the WR credit, you need both to earn at least a C for the course and to earn at least a C on your Clarity and Mechanics Average—that is, the average of all of the Clarity and Mechanics scores for your two highest scoring Short Writing Assignments and all three Argumentative Essays.

In order to help you keep an eye on whether you are in any danger of not earning the Writing Requirement credit because of a low Clarity and Mechanics Average, we have built into the assignments an ‘Informational Item’ category with a specific ‘assignment’ called ‘Clarity and Mechanics.’ This is not really an assignment, but it is a convenient way to make this information available to you at a glance. The score for this ‘assignment’ at any given point in the class will be your Clarity and Mechanics Average at that point. We will update it manually after grading each Short Writing Assignment or Argumentative Essay.

## 2.5 Required Materials

No book purchases are required, as all readings are made available as PDF files online through the Canvas system. The complete set of readings, with links to each, can be found on the [Readings List](#) page online.

## 2.6 Course Structure

This course is broken up into five units as follows:

- Introduction to Philosophy and Argumentation (2 sections)
- Knowledge and Skepticism (3 sections)
- Free Will (3 sections)
- Meta-Ethics (3 sections)
- Happiness and Meaning (3 sections)

## **3. Grading Information**

### 3.1 Course Expectations

As a student in this class, you are of course expected to read the assigned papers, complete assignments, and participate in discussions. In addition, however, you are also expected to

- be familiar with all policies and requirements as set out in the Complete Course Syllabus
- be aware of all deadlines throughout the semester
- stay informed by keeping up with all announcements made on the Canvas site
- maintain academic integrity in all of your work - or risk failing the entire course
- be respectful of your classmates, even when engaged in lively critical dialogue with them
- inform the instructor promptly of any emergencies or problems that will affect your ability to do what is needed in the course
- ask questions and seek help when you need it

If you do these things and make a serious effort, you should be able to do well in the course, especially if you are willing to seek help when you need it. It is important to understand, though, that a grade is meant to record how well you have in fact demonstrated the skills and knowledge the class is supposed to instill; it is not in itself a reward for effort.

### 3.2 Grade Breakdown

|   |      |
|---|------|
| Attendance and Participation Grade.....               | 10%  |
| Logic Exercise.....                                   | 5%   |
| 3 Short Writing Assignments (300-500 words each)..... | 30%  |
| 3 Argumentative Essays (1000-1200 words each).....    | 55%  |
| Total.....  | 100% |

### 3.3 Grading Scale

| Letter | Grade Points | Percent |
|--------|--------------|---------|
| A      | 4.0          | 94-100  |
| A-     | 3.67         | 90-93   |
| B+     | 3.33         | 87-89   |
| B      | 3.0          | 84-86   |
| B-     | 2.67         | 80-83   |
| C+     | 2.33         | 77-79   |

| Letter | Grade Points | Percent |
|--------|--------------|---------|
| C      | 2.0          | 74-76   |
| C-     | 1.67         | 70-73   |
| D+     | 1.33         | 67-69   |
| D      | 1.0          | 64-66   |
| D-     | 0.67         | 60-63   |
| E      | 0.0          | 0-59    |

If your final percentage grade for the course falls between two grades, in the end, I will round to the nearest mark. X.5 rounds up; for example, 93.5 percent of all points will earn you an A. Any 93 below 93.5 is an A-. UF policy on assigning grade points can be found at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>.

### 3.4 Attendance and Participation Grade

This portion of your grade will depend on your attendance, engagement, and contribution (quality, not quantity). Quality participation depends upon being prepared and making a substantial effort to engage the material in class. Students who attend class but who are not

prepared and participating should expect to receive a discussion grade that matches their contribution.

Attendance is mandatory and will be recorded at the beginning of each class using the iClicker system. For information on this system, please see <https://classrooms.at.ufl.edu/classroom-technology/iclicker-response-system/>.

For this class, you will use the iClicker Student Mobile application (or its web version). You must create an iClicker account and download the app as soon as possible. You will be given two grace absences. Each further unexcused absence will result in a one-letter grade reduction in your participation grade, e.g., from a B to a C. More than six unexcused absences will result in a ceiling on your final course grade: no matter how well you do, your best possible grade for the course will be a C.

Proper documentation will be required to excuse absences (e.g., a doctor's note). You must provide this documentation to your instructor within one week of the missed class. Arriving at the discussion section more than ten minutes late without prior instructor approval counts as an absence. If you are absent from class for an excused reason, you will not lose any points, and the absence will not exhaust one of your free absences. In most cases, you need documentation of the excuse (see below). Excused absences are limited to the following cases:

- Health. If your physical or mental health causes you to miss class, a note from your doctor or from the Dean of Students within one week of the absence will count as documentation for this.
- Personal Reasons. The Dean of Students will send me a note of excuse if you have personal reasons for needing one, such as a death in the family or an ongoing medical issue. I need your note from the DOS within one week of the absence. Note: I do not get involved in adjudicating good personal reasons from bad ones. I let the DOS handle that.
- Some UF Activities can be excused absences. You must provide a note for activities absences prior to the day of absence. Notes may come from the activity supervisor, such as a coach. Excused absences will lead to make-up assignments.
- Religious observances. See your instructor at the beginning of the semester about this.

All other absences are typically unexcused, including some very good reasons to miss a class, like a career or family event. I support your interest in these things and understand why you might prioritize them over class, but that does not make them excused absences. Please note that you are responsible for the information presented in class even if you miss class, whether for excused or unexcused reasons.

### 3.4 Logic Exercise

There is a special logic exercise assignment; it requires you to identify valid forms of argument and demonstrate through an example how an argument might fail to be valid, explaining how your example does this. Your grade on this assignment is worth just 5% of the course grade.

### 3.5 Papers (SWAs and AEs)

Papers will be evaluated on five factors: comprehension of the material, clarity of the writing, mechanics, the power of the argument you yourself present, and your skill in defending your own argument against objections. Papers will depend only upon the texts for the course, the conversations we have in the lecture, and some careful thinking, writing, and revising. No outside sources, including other books, articles, web sources, and so on, are permitted to appear in your assignments.

Papers must be typed, double-spaced with one-inch margins, page numbers, and in 12-point Times New Roman font. You must include a word count at the top of page one. Please also include your name. To turn in your written work, you must upload your paper onto UF's e-learning site, Canvas. I will post all readings, a schedule of those readings, a copy of the syllabus, and other supplementary material on Canvas. If you are having trouble (for whatever reason) finding a reading or notes on Canvas, ask me.

### 3.6 Late Written Work

In general, you should assume that late work will not be accepted without penalty. If there is a foreseeable conflict with a due date for any reason, including activities, religious observances, and so on, you should make alternative arrangements with your instructor well in advance so that we can set an early deadline.

Computer errors (including disk, printer, or e-mail problems) are not acceptable excuses for late work. Extensions on written work without penalty will only be considered if you have a documented reason for your request.

You may, however, without prior permission or documentation, grant yourself an extension with a penalty on any assignment except the last one. The penalty for taking extra time is 1/3 of a letter grade deducted immediately at the deadline and again at each 24-hour mark beyond the deadline until the work is submitted (including weekend days).

For the first five assignments, no assignments will be accepted which are more than one week late; for the final essay, no late assignments will be accepted. Exceptions require instructor approval.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>.

## **4. Course Policies**

### 4.1 COVID-19 Recommendations

In response to COVID-19, the following recommendations are in place to maintain your learning environment, enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions, and further the health and safety of ourselves, our neighbors, and our loved ones.

- If you are not vaccinated, get vaccinated. Vaccines are readily available and have been demonstrated to be safe and effective against the COVID-19 virus. Visit [one.uf](http://one.uf) for screening testing and vaccination opportunities.
- If you are sick, stay home. Please call your primary care provider if you are ill and need immediate care or the UF Student Health Care Center at 352-392-1161 to be evaluated.
- Course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work.

## 4.2 Electronic Devices

If you have electronic devices with you—including phones, computers, tablets, and recording devices—these should be silenced, and you will need to suspend interaction with them during class (except to start or stop recording as appropriate). This means you will need to bring a hard copy of your reading and a way to take notes, as you won't be able to use your devices to facilitate in-class activities.

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal, educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor. A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session. Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

## 4.3 Working Together

You are encouraged to talk to one another outside of class about philosophy and about this course as much as possible. This includes a discussion of paper topics, and it includes reading drafts of one another's work. If you do work together, please be mindful of the following:

- Your final product must be your own original work and not a repetition of someone else's

ideas or essay.

- Each essay must be a piece of written thinking in itself. Sometimes conversation in advance of writing can make you feel like the conclusions of that conversation are now established, such that you can now talk about them by stating them (or assuming or implying). But your essays need to “show your work”—if the argument is not explicitly on the page, you haven’t made the argument. We need to see the important pieces of reasoning.
- You must be willing to endorse what ends up in your paper. Beware of letting others persuade you to go in the wrong direction. You are ultimately responsible for both the understandings and misunderstandings in the papers you turn in.

#### 4.4 Classroom Conduct

Philosophy is sometimes mistakenly understood to be a combative exercise. That style does not impress me at all. I encourage you to direct your first effort toward trying to understand and develop both the contributions of the authors we read and the contributions of others in the class. Where those are limited, of course, good philosophy also happens when you (respectfully) disagree, note tensions, make distinctions, reshape the question, and so on. Students who repeatedly act aggressively in ways that attempt to incite unnecessary conflict or to dominate the discussion and/or other people will receive a zero for participation.

#### 4.5 Academic Honesty

As stated in the UF Student Honor Code [<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-studentconduct-code/>], all UF students are bound by the following “Honor Pledge”

- The Honor Pledge: We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity by abiding by the Student Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by Students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”

The honor code specifies a number of activities that constitute academic dishonesty as well as the sanctions (that is, penalties) that may result, including suspension and expulsion. The policy in my classes for academic dishonesty is simple:



## ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY FOR ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

All incidents are reported to Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution.

**CLEAR EVIDENCE OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY MEANS AN AUTOMATIC FAILING GRADE FOR THE ENTIRE COURSE.**

In submitting a report of academic dishonesty, I recommend *at minimum* a failing grade for the course and cite this warning in the syllabus.

If you are at all unsure whether something might violate the code, it is your responsibility to find out. Please consult the code and/or ask the instructor.  
Do not be afraid to ask.

In humanities classes, the most common kind of academic dishonesty is plagiarism. In academic writing (including any writing exercise, essay, or paper you write in this class), if you use an idea you got from someone else - whether it's one of the assigned readings, another student, something you saw online, or the like - you are obliged to inform the reader of the source of that idea. Failure to do so is plagiarism.

If you are ever tempted to cheat, please keep in mind that it would be better to get a failing grade for a particular assignment than to get both a failing grade for the entire course and a record of academic dishonesty on file with the UF.

### 4.6 Accommodations

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center [<https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>]. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

### 4.7 Diversity and Inclusion

The instructors of this course are committed to supporting all our students—to making class administration fair for everyone, to ensuring class space is welcoming for all, and to assignments and discussions as productive opportunities for all. We invite conversation with you about how we may better accomplish this at any time.

### 4.8 Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on ten criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at: <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to

students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

## 5. Resources

### 5.1 Philosophy at UF

The Department of Philosophy at the University of Florida includes a great community of faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate students. If you visit the department's web page [<http://web.phil.ufl.edu>], you can find many items of interest, including announcements of upcoming philosophy-related events, Philosophy in the News, and information on the major, minor, and the undergraduate curriculum generally.

In particular, I want to draw your attention to the Undergraduate Philosophy Society [see <https://phil.ufl.edu/philsoc/>]. The group normally meets once a week during fall and spring semesters; they organize reading groups, visiting speakers, and have for the last several years now organized an annual undergraduate philosophy conference bringing philosophy students from both UF and elsewhere together to present their work, get feedback, and enjoy good philosophical discussion. Getting involved in the Undergraduate Philosophy Society—often called “Phil Soc”—is a great way to get to know your fellow philosophy students, get advice on courses, find out how other philosophy students think about post-graduation plans, and so on. I recommend getting involved.

### 5.2 Basic writing assistance

You may find it helpful to use the influential guide by Strunk & White, *The Elements of Style*, available free online at [www.bartleby.com/141/](http://www.bartleby.com/141/).

Another very useful resource is Purdue University's Online Writing Lab, also known as the “OWL.” It is especially good for getting detailed information on how to cite sources properly. You can find it at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>.

UF has a dedicated writing program with a “writing studio” that is intended to provide students with several resources for improving their writing. The site includes several resources, including links to the OWL site just mentioned and other items. See <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>.

The writing program provides assistance with writing for UF students, including distance students who are pursuing online-only courses. You can log in to <http://tutortrac.clas.ufl.edu/> to make arrangements to meet with a tutor. I must warn you, however, that what makes for a good argumentative essay is not always understood the same way in different disciplines. In this class, anyway, what matters most in your argumentative essays are clarity, comprehension, and argumentative skill. Being eloquent or pretty is of much less importance. A clear and persuasive essay that lacks any fun metaphors or beautiful sentences is much better than one that has the latter factors but is unclear or unpersuasive. Similarly, you may have been taught not to use “I” in your essays, but you should not follow that rule in any of the essays in this class: using “I” is very much appropriate, especially when you explain that you are arguing for such-and-such a claim in contrast to what these other people say.

Citation. Any time you quote someone or some text, you must provide a reference for that quotation, including page numbers. There are several different, equally acceptable ways of providing reference information. (See <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/> for information on major style guides.) If you are only citing material provided in class, I am not going to be picky about how you cite them, so long as you make it clear what you are citing and what page the material is on. If you refer to outside materials at all, however, I need to insist on two things. First, you must refer to that source wherever you use it in your own essay; second, you must include a “works cited” list at the end that provides information on the author(s), title, publisher, and date of publication. If you use an online source (other than the webpage for this class), you must also provide the complete URL and the date accessed.

### 5.3 Technical support

If you have questions regarding Canvas or related technology used in connection with this course, you should contact the UF Computing Help Desk through one of the following:

- Email: [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu)
- Web: <https://helpdesk.ufl.edu/>
- Phone: (352) 392-HELP (4357)

One thing in particular that might cause some issues for you is seeing the marginal or “in-text” feedback on writing assignments. See Canvas’s instructions [<https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Student-Guide/How-do-I-view-annotation-feedback-comments-from-my-instructor/ta-p/523>] for seeing that feedback. If you have trouble, I can always individually prepare for you a PDF version of your work with comments easily visible, so let me know if you need me to do that.

### 5.4 Other support services

- U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu), 352-392-1575, or visit the U Matter, We Care website [<https://umatter.ufl.edu/>] to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website [<https://counseling.ufl.edu>] or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
- Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the Student Health Care Center website [<https://shcc.ufl.edu/>].
- University Police Department: Visit the UF Police Department website [<https://police.ufl.edu/>] or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- UF Health Shands Emergency Room/Trauma Center: For immediate medical care, call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608. Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website [<https://ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-center>].
- Library Support [<https://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>] provides various ways to receive

assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

## Appendix: Writing Assessment Rubric

The following rubric describes the relevant factors used in determining a grade for argumentative essays in this class. It does not provide an exact formula to determine the grade. Instead, think of it this way. A paper which fits all the descriptions under "Excellent" is going to be an A, while if it's only many of them, it may be a B; a paper which fits all the descriptions under "Middling" is going to be a C, while if it's only most and there are some in the "Excellent" column, it may be a B- or C+. And so on: the table describes the kinds of factors used to arrive at a letter grade.

| Factor        | Excellent   | Middling  | Poor  |
|---------------|---|---|---|
| CLARITY       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are no points at which it is hard to follow what is being said or why.</li> <li>• The paper is focused on the main thesis and organized around the argument for it.</li> <li>• The paper is efficient and does not meander.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are as many as two points at which it is hard to follow what is being said or why.</li> <li>• The paper has some discernible organization in that most of it can be related to the main thesis.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are several points at which it is very difficult to follow what is being said and why.</li> <li>• The paper has nearly no focus; it is hard even to tell just what thesis the author is trying to defend.</li> </ul> |
| COMPREHENSION | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The paper shows a superior grasp of the issues and readings.</li> <li>• There are no significant errors of comprehension.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The paper shows a fair grasp of the issues and readings.</li> <li>• There is at most one significant error of comprehension.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The paper shows no grasp of the issues and readings beyond a trivial level.</li> <li>• There are multiple significant errors of comprehension.</li> </ul>  |
| MECHANICS     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are no egregious mechanical errors.</li> <li>• There are only a few moderate mechanical errors, if any.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are as many as two egregious mechanical errors.</li> <li>• There are some moderate mechanical errors but not so many as to be a distraction to the reader.</li> </ul>                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are multiple egregious mechanical errors.</li> <li>• A majority of the text is afflicted with moderate mechanical errors.</li> </ul>   |

|                 |   |   |   |
|-----------------|---|---|---|
| <p>ARGUMENT</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The main thesis is supported by a readily identified argument.</li> <li>• The argument is relevant to the thesis and has some merit.</li> <li>• The argument shows original thinking.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The main thesis is supported by a readily identified argument.</li> <li>• The argument is relevant to the thesis and may have some merit if further developed.</li> <li>• The argument is not a mere rehash of arguments presented in class or in readings.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The main thesis is not supported by any identifiable argument or only by an extremely poor argument.</li> </ul>  |
| <p>DEFENSE</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The paper considers objections to the main thesis and argument.</li> <li>• The paper responds to those anticipated objections in a way that is pertinent and possibly effective.</li> </ul>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The paper considers objections to the main thesis and argument.</li> <li>• The paper makes a genuine attempt to respond to those objections.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The paper fails to consider any objections to the main thesis and argument or considers only those that are too weak to be worth considering.</li> </ul> |

PHI 2010: Introduction to Philosophy (Dr. Rusong Huang)  
Schedule of Readings and Assignments

This is the version of the schedule at the start of the term. The most up-to-date schedule will be found on the Canvas site.

The reading listed for a given date is the subject of the lecture on that date. You should read the assigned material before coming into class to hear the lecture.

**Unit I: Introduction to Philosophy and Argumentation (2 Sections)**

Week 1

01. Wed. 08/23 Course Introduction
02. Fri. 08/25 Plato, [Laches](#)

Week 2

03. Mon. 08/28 Beardsley & Beardsley, ["What is Philosophy?"](#)
04. Wed. 08/30 Cornman, Lehrer, and Pappas, ["The Tools of the Trade"](#)
05. Fri. 09/01 Cornman, Lehrer, and Pappas

**Unit II: Knowledge and Skepticism (3 Sections)**

Week 3

*Logic Exercise due 09/06 by the start of class 01:55 PM*

06. Mon. *Holiday*
07. Wed. 09/06 Susan Haack, ["Epistemology: Who Needs It?"](#)
08. Fri. 09/08 Haack

Week 4

09. Mon. 09/11 Rene Descartes, ["Meditation 1."](#)
10. Wed. 09/13 Descartes
11. Fri. 09/15 John Pollock, ["A Brain in a Vat"](#)

Week 5

*1<sup>st</sup> SWA due 09/22 by 11:59 PM*

12. Mon. 09/18 G. E. Moore, ["Certainty" \(excerpt\)](#)
13. Wed. 09/20 Moore
14. Fri. 09/22 Renee Smith, ["Moore and Descartes Meet in a Bar"](#)

**Unit III: Free Will (3 Sections)**

Week 6

15. Mon. 09/25 Baron D'Holbach, ["Of the System of Man's Free Agency"](#)
16. Wed. 09/27 D'Holbach
17. Fri. 09/29 D'Holbach

Week 7

*1<sup>st</sup> AE due 10/06 by 11:59 PM*

18. Mon. 10/02 R. E. Hobart, ["Free Will as Involving Determination and Inconceivable"](#)

Without It"

- 19. Wed. 10/04 Hobart
- 20. Fri. 10/06 *Homecoming Holiday*

Week 8

- 21. Mon. 10/09 Philippa Foot, ["Free Will as Involving Determinism"](#)
- 22. Wed. 10/11 Foot
- 23. Fri. 10/13 Foot

**Unit IV: Meta-Ethics (3 Sections)**

Week 9

*2<sup>nd</sup> SWA due 10/20 by 11:59 PM*

- 24. Mon. 10/16 John Corvino, ["The Fact/Opinion Distinction"](#)
- 25. Wed. 10/18 Stephen Satris, ["Student Relativism"](#)
- 26. Fri. 10/20 Corvino & Satris

Week 10

- 27. Mon. 10/23 Gilbert Harman, ["Ethics and Observation"](#)
- 28. Wed. 10/25 Harman
- 29. Fri. 10/27 Harman

Week 11

*2<sup>nd</sup> AE due 11/03 by 11:59 PM*

- 30. Mon. 10/30 Jonathan Bennett, ["The Conscience of Huckleberry Finn"](#)
- 31. Wed. 11/01 Bennett
- 32. Fri. 11/03 Bennett

Week 12

- 33. Mon. 11/06 Alison Hills, ["Faultless Moral Disagreement"](#)
- 34. Wed. 11/08 Hills
- 35. Fri. 11/10 *Holiday*

**Unit V: Happiness and Meaning (3 Sections)**

Week 13

*3<sup>rd</sup> SWA due 11/17 by 11:59 PM*

- 36. Mon. 11/13 Derek Parfit, ["What Makes Someone's Life Go Best?"](#)
- 37. Wed. 11/15 Parfit
- 38. Fri. 11/17 Parfit

Week 14

- 39. Mon. 11/20 Robert Nozick, ["The Experience Machine"](#)
- 40. Wed. 11/22 *Holiday*
- 41. Fri. 11/24 *Holiday*

Week 15

*3<sup>rd</sup> AE due 12/01 by 11:59 PM*

- 42. Mon. 11/27 Aristotle, ["Nichomachean Ethics"](#)
- 43. Wed. 11/29 Aristotle



44. Fri. 12/01 Aristotle

Week 16

45. Mon. 12/04 Susan Wolf, ["The Meanings of Lives"](#)

46. Wed. 12/06 Wolf

NO FINAL EXAM