

PHI2010 - INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY

Summer B 2023

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<u>Office Hours:</u>	MW 12:45 PM – 2:15 PM, or by appointment. Philosophy Department Library. FLO #303
<u>Course Location:</u>	MAT 0117
<u>Course Time:</u>	M-F, Period 3 (11:00 AM – 12:15 PM)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Content. This course will introduce students to some of the central topics in Western Philosophy. Students will explore, discuss, and think critically about answers to the following questions: What makes life meaningful? What reasons are there for believing in the existence of God? Are the mind and body the same, or are they two different things? What makes an action morally right and what makes a person good? What makes an argument valid? How does capitalism work as a political and economic theory?

Method. Additionally, this Introduction to Philosophy course aims to provide students with the instruction and resources necessary to develop skills in critical thinking, collaborative discussion, writing, and building strong arguments.

COURSE OBJECTIVES, GOALS AND DISTRIBUTION CREDITS:

General Education Requirement and Objective:

PHI 2010 is a Humanities (H) subject area course in the UF General Education Program, a General Education Core Course in Humanities, and a UF Writing Requirement 4000 Course. 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.

<http://gened.aa.ufl.edu/program-area-objectives.aspx>

Humanities Gen Ed SLOs:

	Content	Critical Thinking	Communication
Humanities	Identify, describe, and explain the history, underlying theory and methodologies used.	Identify and analyze key elements, biases and influences that shape thought within the subject area. Approach issues and problems within the discipline from multiple perspectives.	Communicate knowledge, thoughts and reasoning clearly and effectively.

Writing Requirement and Objective:

This course confers 4000 words towards the Writing Requirement (WR), which ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. While helping students meet the broad learning outcomes of content, communication, and critical thinking, the instructor will

evaluate and provide feedback on students’ written assignments with respect to grammar, punctuation, clarity, coherence, and organization. To receive Writing Requirement credit, a student must receive an overall course grade of C or higher, a satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course.

Course Goals:

This course is designed to introduce students to the practice of philosophy through the study of central philosophical questions and arguments, as represented by a selection of historical and/or contemporary readings. Students will learn some of the basic principles of good reasoning, including how to understand arguments, represent them clearly and fairly, and evaluate them for cogency. Students will also learn to develop their own arguments and views regarding the philosophical questions studied in the course in a compelling fashion. In these ways the course aims to develop students’ own reasoning and communication skills in ways that will be useful in any further study of philosophy they undertake and beyond the bounds of philosophy itself.

Course Objectives:

Students will demonstrate their competencies in understanding and assessing the philosophical theories studied in the course primarily via a set of assigned papers, in which they will be assessed for their abilities to: (i) understand and apply basic concepts of good reasoning, (ii) accurately and fairly describe and explain philosophical views represented in works assigned for the course, (iii) formulate arguments of their own while anticipating possible lines of objections and responding in a conscientious fashion, and (iv) speak and write clearly and persuasively about abstract and challenging matters of the sort raised by the philosophical material in the course.

TEXTBOOK:

Torin Alter, Robert J. Howell. *The God Dialogues*. Oxford University Press 2011.
Plato, *Five Dialogues: Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Meno, Phaedo*. Second Edition. Hackett Publishing 2002.

Any other readings will be made available on canvas in the course files section.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:

There are four methods by which students will be evaluated and their grade determined.

Assignment	Total number	% of Course Grade
Attendance and Participation	27	5%
Short Writing Assignment	1	10%
Arguments and Logic Quiz	1	5%
Argumentative Essays	4	80% (20% each)

Attendance and Participation:

Students are required to attend each lecture, to have done the assigned readings in advance, and to participate in classroom discussion/activities. Students should be prepared to ask questions related to the material and to answer questions asked by the instructor. **Poor participation in classroom discussion and activities will result in a 1-5% deduction in a student’s grade. Students will receive two automatically excused absences.** All additional absences will be considered unexcused unless students provide the instructor with documentation that confirms the student was absent for an acceptable reason. What is considered an acceptable reason is determined by university guidelines which can be found below.

[Attendance Policies < University of Florida \(ufl.edu\)](#)

Short Writing Assignment:

Students are required to write one short paper, between 300-400 words in length. This paper must present a thesis and defend it. The goal of this assignment is to familiarize students with philosophical writing. To that end, to successfully complete this assignment, students must provide strong reasons in support of the view they choose to

defend. The Short Writing Assignment will be due at the end of the first week, July 7th at 11:59 PM.

A detailed rubric for writing assignments can be found at the end of the syllabus. For the Short Writing Assignment, please omit the row entitled “objection and reply”. This row of the rubric is only relevant to the Argumentative Essays.

Arguments and Logic Quiz:

This quiz is designed to assess students’ comprehension of basic argument structures in formal logic and common logical fallacies in reasoning and argumentation. The quiz will be due August 10th at 11:59 PM.

Argumentative Essays:

Students are required to write 4 argumentative essays, between 1000-1200 words each. These essays are designed to assess students’ philosophical writing skills. To that end, the argumentative essays must present and defend an original argument in response to one of the prompts provided. The argumentative essays must include an introduction with a clear and concise thesis statement, exposition, original argument that presents strong reasons in support of the thesis, and finally the essay must present an objection and offer a response to this objection.

A detailed rubric for writing assignments can be found at the end of the syllabus.

Students will also find a number of resources for improving their writing at the university’s Writing Studio page (<http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>), including a link to an electronic version of Strunk and White’s *The Elements of Style* (<http://www.bartleby.com/141/>), the recommended style manual for this course.

GRADING SCALE:

The following grade scale will be used to assign final letter grades for the course. See UF grading policies for assigning grade points at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>.

Grade Scale	Grade Value
100-93=A	A=4.0
92-90=A-	A-=3.67
89-86=B+	B+=3.33
85-82=B	B=3.00
81-79=B-	B-=2.67
78-76=C+	C+=2.33

75-72=C	C=2.00
71-69=C-	C-=1.67
68-66=D+	D+=1.33
65-62=D	D=1.00
61-60=D-	D-=0.67
59-0=E	E=0.00

Please note: A minimum grade of C is required for general education credit.

Please note: 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.

For information on how UF assigns grade points, visit: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

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 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:

1. Your final paper must be your original work, and not a repetition of someone else’s ideas or essay.
2. 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 merely stating or even implying them. But your essays need to “show your work”—if the argument is not explicitly on the page, you haven’t made the argument.
3. 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.

FAIRNESS AND EQUALITY

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

ACADEMIC HONESTY. UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge, which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the

highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the 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 (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class. Plagiarism on any assignment will automatically result in a grade of "E" for the course. Plagiarism is defined in the University of Florida's Student Honor Code as follows: "A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes (but is not limited to): a. Quoting oral or written materials, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution. b. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student." Students found guilty of academic misconduct will be prosecuted in accordance with the procedures specified in the UF honesty policy.

ATTENDANCE AND LATE WORK POLICIES. As previously stated, students are expected to attend class and to have done all assigned reading in advance. Failure to do so will adversely affect students' ability to perform well in this course.

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/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

CANVAS E-LEARNING ENVIRONMENT. This course is supplemented by online content in the e-Learning environment known as "Canvas." To login to the e-Learning site for this course, go to <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/>, click the **e-Learning in Canvas** button, and on the next page enter your Gatorlink username and password. You can then access the course e-Learning environment by selecting PHI 2010 from the **Courses** pull-down menu at the top of the page. If you encounter any difficulties logging in or accessing any of the course content, contact the UF Computing Help Desk at (352) 392-4537. Do not contact the course instructor regarding computer issues.

Students Requiring Accommodation

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. 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.

UF Evaluations Process

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations 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/>

Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575

University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit U Matter, We Care website to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE (subject to change)

	Date	Reading/Lecture topic	Assignments/ Due Dates
Week 1	July 3 rd	Introduction lecture/syllabus review	
	July 4 th (Holiday)	NO CLASS	
	July 5 th	Ancient Greek Philosophy: Plato, Apology	
	July 6 th	Ancient Greek Philosophy: Plato, Crito	
	July 7 th	Philosophy of Religion: God Dialogues, Ch.1, Ch. 2 Workshop for Short Writing Assignment	Short Writing Assignment due 11:59 PM
Week 2	July 10 th	Philosophy of Religion: God Dialogues, Ch. 3	
	July 11 th	Philosophy of Religion: God Dialogues, Ch. 4	
	July 12 th	Philosophy of Religion: God Dialogues, Ch. 6	

	July 13 th	Philosophy of Religion: God Dialogues, Ch. 7	
	July 14 th	Discussion, writing workshop (no new readings)	Essay 1 due 11:59 PM
Week 3	July 17 th	Philosophy of Mind: Dualism (Reading on Canvas)	
	July 18 th	Philosophy of Mind: Physicalism (Reading on Canvas)	
	July 19 th	Philosophy of Mind: Idealism (Reading on Canvas)	
	July 20 th	Moral Philosophy: Utilitarianism- John Stuart Mill (Reading on Canvas)	
	July 21 st	Moral Philosophy: Utilitarianism (no new reading)	Essay 2 due 11:59 PM
Week 4	July 24 th	Moral Philosophy: Deontology- Immanuel Kant (Reading on Canvas)	
	July 25 th	Moral Philosophy: Deontology (no new reading)	
	July 26 th	Moral Philosophy: Virtue Ethics (Reading on Canvas)	
	July 27 th	Moral Philosophy: Virtue Ethics (no new reading)	
	July 28 th	Applied Ethics Class Discussion (no new reading)	Essay 3 due 11:59 PM

Week 5	July 31 st	Political Philosophy: Mill's Principle of Liberty (Reading on Canvas)	
	August 1 st	Political Philosophy: Hobbes' State of Nature, Social Contract Theory (Reading on Canvas)	
	August 2 nd	Political Philosophy: Rawls' Veil of Ignorance (Reading on Canvas)	
	August 3 rd	Political and Economic Philosophy: Adam Smith (Reading on Canvas)	
	August 4 th	Political and Economic Philosophy: Marx and Engels (Reading on Canvas)	
Week 6	August 7 th	What Makes Life Meaningful?: Susan Wolf (Reading on Canvas)	
	August 8 th	Catch up day, discussion, paper workshop. Introduction to Arguments, Logic (no new readings)	Essay 4 due 11:59 PM
	August 9 th	Arguments, Logic (no new readings)	
	August 10 th	Arguments, Logic (Reading on Canvas)	Arguments and Logic quiz on Canvas due 11:59 PM

	August 11 th	Extra credit in class activity (no new readings)	Extra Credit Assignment (in class)
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ADDENDUM: WRITING ASSESSMENT RUBRIC					
	A	B	C	D	E
RESPONSE TO PAPER TOPIC, FOCUSED USE OF TEXTS AND COURSE MATERIAL	• Overall, the paper does an excellent job of responding to the topic question and reflects a more than competent command of the relevant texts and material discussed in class.	• Overall, the paper responds well to the topic question and reflects a competent command of the relevant texts and material discussed in class.	• Overall, the paper provides a merely sufficient response to the topic question and reflects a less than competent command of the relevant texts and material discussed in class.	• Overall, the paper only partially responds to the topic and reflects an incompetent command of the relevant texts and materials discussed in class.	• Overall, the paper does not respond to the topic and fails to draw upon relevant texts and materials discussed in class.
INTRO & THESIS	• The introduction & thesis do an excellent job of identifying the issues raised by the topic to be discussed in the rest of the paper. The thesis makes a significant and debatable claim.	• The introduction & thesis do a good enough job of identifying the issues raised by the topic to be discussed in the rest of the paper. The thesis is clear and fairly interesting.	• The introduction & thesis do not adequately identify the issues raised by the topic to be discussed in the rest of the paper. The thesis is somewhat unclear, fairly obvious, or a bit misguided.	• The introduction & thesis do not identify the issues raised by the topic to be discussed in the rest of the paper. The thesis is confused, obvious, or obviously wrong.	• The introduction & thesis do not identify the issues raised by the topic to be discussed in the rest of the paper. The thesis is missing or incoherent.
PARAGRAPH	• Paragraphs are excellently written. Paragraphs make a point, with clear topic sentences to govern them, contain no irrelevant sentences or gaps, and each paragraph advances the thesis one step further.	• Paragraphs do a good enough job of making a point, and have clear enough topic sentences to govern them. They contain no irrelevant sentences or gaps, and each paragraph for the most part advances the thesis one step further.	• Only some of the paragraphs do their job well enough. Topic sentences are partly clear or only partially govern; point of the paragraphs is only somewhat intact; the paragraphs don't explicitly relate to the thesis or to nearby paragraphs.	• An unsatisfactory use of paragraphs. Topic sentences are missing or unclear. Paragraphs have multiple or underdeveloped ideas. Paragraphs are islands and have no relation to thesis or nearby paragraphs.	• It is unclear how the paragraphs are individual units of meaning toward an overall end.
STRUCTURE OF ARGUMENT	• The argumentative line of the paper is fully intact—all the content of the paper supports its main ideas with no irrelevant material and no gaps in argument. The argument advances in a manner that is easy to follow.	• The argumentative line of the paper is almost intact—almost all the content of the paper supports its main ideas with no irrelevant material and very few gaps in argument. The argument advances in a manner that is for the most part easy to follow.	• The argumentative line of the paper is generally intact—content of the paper generally supports its main ideas, though there is some irrelevant material and perhaps some gaps in argument. The argument is difficult to follow in places.	• The argumentative line is not intact—the content of the paper tends not to support its main ideas, and there is a good deal of irrelevant material and/or major gaps in the argument. The argument is difficult to follow or incomplete.	• The argumentative line is either missing or incoherent—how the content of the paper is supposed to support its main ideas is unclear, there is far too much irrelevant material, and there is a failure to link pieces of the idea to one another. The argument is very difficult to follow.
STRENGTH OF ARGUMENT	• The main ideas of the paper are clear and convincing.	• The main ideas of the paper are for the most part clear and convincing.	• The main ideas of the paper are only partially clear and convincing.	• The main ideas of the paper are only marginally clear and convincing.	• It is unclear what the paper's main ideas are supposed to be.
USE OF EVIDENCE	• The paper's claims are all well-grounded in cogent interpretations of the relevant textual evidence.	• The paper's claims are generally well-grounded in cogent interpretations of the relevant textual evidence.	• Only some of the paper's claims are well-grounded in cogent interpretations of the relevant textual evidence.	• None of the interpretations on which the paper's claims are based are cogent.	• None of the paper's claims are based on interpretations of the relevant textual evidence.
OBJECTION AND REPLY	• The paper considers a genuine and serious objection to the argument they are defending. The	• The paper considers an objection to the argument, though the objection is	• There is an objection and reply present, but they do not demonstrate critical thinking.	• There may be something mentioned in the paper that could be taken as an objection and reply, but it is hard to	No objection nor reply presented.

	<p>objection provides reasons to reject the paper's thesis. The paper then provides an excellent and thoughtful response to this objection, successfully defending the thesis of the paper against this objection.</p> <p>• Objection and reply demonstrate critical thinking.</p>	<p>superficial and not thorough.</p> <p>• The reply to the objection provides reasons in defense of the thesis, but these reasons are not particularly strong.</p> <p>• Objection and reply demonstrate critical thinking</p>		<p>follow, seriously underdeveloped, and does not demonstrate critical thinking.</p>	
WRITING, MECHANICS AND GRAMMAR	<p>• There are no serious grammatical or mechanical errors, and very few minor grammatical or mechanical errors.</p>	<p>• There are very few serious grammatical or mechanical errors, if any. There are some minor grammatical or mechanical errors. The errors do not take away from the flow, coherence, and clarity of the paper.</p>	<p>• There are some grammatical or mechanical errors, and there are a considerable amount (over 5) of minor grammatical or mechanical errors. The errors may slightly take away from the flow, coherence and clarity of the paper.</p>	<p>• There are many grammatical and mechanical errors. The errors take away from the flow, coherence and clarity of the paper.</p>	<p>• There are so many grammatical and mechanical errors that the paper is very difficult to read.</p>

NOTE: Criteria are adjusted to the assignment.