

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO at COLORADO SPRINGS
COURSE SYLLABUS

Course ID: PHIL 1000

Term: Spring 2019; T/TR 10:50-12:05

Course Title: Introduction to Philosophy

Room: Columbine 115

Faculty Information:

Name: Joseph Kuzma, Ph.D.

Email Address: jkuzma@uccs.edu

Office: Columbine Hall, room 4055

Office Hours: T/TR 12:15-1:15 PM, or by appointment

Course Description: In this introduction to philosophy, we will examine classic, western philosophical texts spanning from Ancient Greece to the present, with a special emphasis on coming to understanding the meanings, methods, and aims of philosophy. Some of the philosophical topics examined in this course may include discussions of the human condition, the nature of reality, knowledge, freedom, ethics, justice, and the existence of God. Focusing upon the historical context for the emergence of philosophical ideas, as well as the thematic and stylistic resonances between philosophies of various eras (ancient, modern, and contemporary), our readings and class-discussions will help foster and intensify an appreciation for philosophy's perennial relevance to our society, and its potentially transformative significance within our lives.

Course Text:

- Lewis Vaughn. *Philosophy Here and Now*, 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.

Student Objectives:

1. Identify and distinguish the major questions in philosophy.
2. Identify and distinguish some of the major schools of philosophy.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the methods of philosophical thinking.
4. Develop critical reasoning, writing, and analytical skills by engaging and evaluating primary philosophical texts.
5. Verbally communicate philosophical questions and positions to others.
6. Successfully research and write two papers on philosophical themes or ideas covered in class.
7. Challenge previously held assumptions about the world, and practice the art of critical thinking.

Important Dates to remember:

- January 22 – First Day of Class
- February 21 – Quiz #1
- March 25-29 – Spring Break - No Classes
- May 13-16 – Finals Week - Quiz #2

Course Requirements:

1. *Class Participation and Attendance (50 points)*: You are **expected** to attend class (attendance will be taken each class) and participate in all discussions, group exercises, and lectures by attentively listening and/or respectfully contributing. In order to participate effectively, you should read all the assigned reading material for each class before attending, bring your assigned text to class, ask and answer pertinent questions, and actively participate in class discussions.

Each student may miss up to three classes over the course of the semester without penalty (there is no difference between excused/unexcused absences). Once you miss your fourth class of the semester, your final grade will drop one full letter grade (e.g. B+ → C+).

2. *In-Class Assignments (100 points)*: Periodically, I will give you worksheets, group-activities, short-answer prompts, and other in-class assignments to complete. These assignments may be worth anywhere from 5 to 10 points. They cannot be made-up at a later date.

3. *1+1 Assignments (25 points each/150 points total)*: You must submit a total of six 1+1 assignments (on Canvas) over the course of the semester. You get to choose what you write about! These 1+1 assignments should be at least two, substantive paragraphs in length. The first paragraph should offer a summary, in your own words, of a concept or theory covered either in an assigned reading, or in class. In the second paragraph, you should do any ONE of the following: (a) discuss the weaknesses or flaws of the concept or theory, by using counter-examples, or pointing out why you disagree with it; (b) describe in detail where you see this concept or theory in a certain movie, book, song, play, artwork, TV, or video-game, and explain how it functions there; (c) tell me how you can apply this concept or theory to your real-life – i.e. how an understanding of this concept or theory can be applied in your work or home life, your relationships with others, or your quest to fulfill personal goals.

4. *Quizzes (50 points each/100 points total)*: Instead of formal exams, you will have two quizzes. They will consist of true/false, multiple choice, and short essay questions. The quizzes are not cumulative.

Grading:

Class Participation/Attendance	50 pts.
In-Class Assignments	100 pts.
1+1s	150 pts.
Quizzes	100 pts.

Total	400 pts.
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Introduction to Philosophy: Assigned Reading Schedule

(Subject to Change)

JANUARY 22	Introduction / Course Overview
JANUARY 24	The Cosmos and Us Assigned Reading: pp. 2-13
JANUARY 29	The Quest for Understanding: From Socrates to Plato Assigned Reading: pp. 2-13
JANUARY 31	Common Fallacies – Group Activity Assigned Reading: pp. 13-36
FEBRUARY 5	Skepticism and Rationalism Assigned Reading: pp. 263-280
FEBRUARY 7	The Empiricist Turn Assigned Reading: pp. 281-298
FEBRUARY 12	The Kantian Compromise Assigned Reading: pp. 299-307
FEBRUARY 14	Nietzsche, Relativism, Postmodernism Assigned Reading: See Handout on Canvas
FEBRUARY 19	Review <i>First 1+1 Due</i>
FEBRUARY 21	Quiz #1

FEBRUARY 26

The Mind-Body Problem

Assigned Reading: pp. 196-207

FEBRUARY 28

Identity Theory

Assigned Reading: pp. 208-212 & Required Reading (on Canvas): "Second Person, Present Tense"

MARCH 5

Free-Will, Determinism, Existentialism

Assigned Reading: pp. 228-253

Second 1+1 Due

MARCH 7

The Mind as Software & Artificial Intelligence

Assigned Reading: pp. 212-221

MARCH 12

Are You In a Computer Simulation?

Assigned Reading: Handouts (in Canvas Modules)

"Are You In a Computer Simulation?" – Bostrom (pp.42-45)

"Transcendent Engineering" -- Prisco

MARCH 14

Group Activity

Robots, Cyborgs, and Decision-Making

MARCH 19

Short-Films

Third 1+1 Due

MARCH 25-29

SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES

APRIL 2

Ethics and Morality

Assigned Reading: pp. 130-149

APRIL 4	Moral Relativism In-Class Group Work
APRIL 9	Utilitarianism Assigned Reading: pp. 150-159
APRIL 11	Utilitarianism in Practice In-Class Group Work
APRIL 16	Duty Ethics Assigned Reading: pp. 163-168
APRIL 18	Ethical Dilemmas In-Class Group Work
APRIL 23	Virtue Ethics Assigned Reading: pp. 168-174
APRIL 25	Ethical Dilemmas In-Class Group Work <i>Fourth 1+1 Due</i>
APRIL 30	Political Philosophy – The Liberal Tradition Assigned Reading: pp. 338-344; 353-361
MAY 2	Political Philosophy - Socialist Theories Assigned Reading: pp. 362-369

MAY 7

Modelling a Just Society

Build Your Own Country – Group Work

MAY 9

Review Day

MAY 13-16

FINALS WEEK

QUIZ #2