

## Marian University

### Philosophy 132: The Examined Life Winterim 2020, Online 01 (AGS)

#### Instructor Information

Instructor: Susan R. Boettcher, Ph.D.

E-mail: [srboettcher92@marianuniversity.edu](mailto:srboettcher92@marianuniversity.edu)

[refgeek@gmail.com](mailto:refgeek@gmail.com) (faster response)

Telephone: 920 757 5791 (home, between hours of 9 a.m. and 8 p.m.)

Office: I will not be in my Marian office during Winterim.

#### Contacting the Professor

My preferred method of contact is the messaging function in the upper right corner of the M02 screen. My second choice is email. You may expect a response to an M02 message or an email within 24 hours. When e-mailing me, be sure to include your name. It is best to contact me from your Marian University e-mail address. You may also call me at home using the number above during the hours specified. Be aware that you may end up speaking to my elderly father and he will require some consideration. I will not be in Fond du Lac during Winterim, but I am happy to meet you in person (with a minimum 24 hour notice) at a coffee shop or public library in the Fox Cities or Oshkosh.

**DO NOT SUBMIT HOMEWORK IN EMAIL. I DO NOT ACCEPT EMAILED ASSIGNMENTS.**

#### Catalog Course Description

This introductory philosophy course builds on the critical reading and thinking outcomes students will have achieved in the *First Year Seminar*, and prepares students for their future studies and for life by leading them to develop their abilities in three outcomes areas: *Interpretive Reasoning*, *Critical Reasoning*, and *Global Citizenship*. Through engagement with historical, multicultural, and contemporary texts, students will learn how to interpret texts, move from evidence to conclusions, and use their interpretations and conclusions to live a more examined life.

#### Topics covered

This course offers a whirlwind introduction to some central topics in philosophy: logic, argumentational validity, and errors in reasoning; the existence of G-d and the relationship of faith to reason; human existence and consciousness; epistemology; ethics, notions of the good and social justice; and political philosophy.

## Required Text

The required text is Louis P. Pojman and Lewis Vaughn (eds.), *Philosophy: The Quest for Truth*, 9<sup>th</sup> edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014); ISBN 978-0-19-998108-3. We will also use open source readings and resources from Cardinal Meyer library, linked online at M02.

## Other Resources

The M02 page includes links to the most important scholarly resources in the Marian Library on philosophy that are appropriate for students. It is important that you use these for reference – do not “google for knowledge.”

## General Education Learning Outcomes

- *Interpretive Reasoning*: students will demonstrate proficiency in interpreting texts from multiple perspectives. (KA 3 and 6)
- *Critical Reasoning*: students will demonstrate proficiency in identifying evidence and deriving appropriate conclusions from that evidence. (CT 1 and 4)
- *Global Citizenship*: Students will demonstrate proficiency in conceiving issues from diverse perspectives and develop ethically responsible strategies for dealing with these issues. (SRA 1 and 2)

## Course-Specific Learning Objectives

- For students to develop an understanding of the practice of philosophy and an appreciation for philosophical inquiry
- For students to strengthen their analytic and critical thinking skills
- For students to gain a willingness to critically examine their own pre-philosophical beliefs
- For students to be better able to articulate their own beliefs and respond meaningfully to divergent beliefs concerning the topics covered in the course
- For students to engage in meaningful philosophical dialogue at a level appropriate for students without prior exposure to philosophy
- For students to write more clearly and thoughtfully
- For students to gain an appreciation for the value of philosophy as it relates to their understandings of themselves and their understanding of the world

## Technology Requirements

Students will need a desktop or laptop computer, a reliable Internet connection, and a word processor that can create .pdf, .doc, or docx. files for upload. I will only accept uploaded files in M02 as homework – no files in email or links to cloud files – so if you’re having any issues, contact Marian’s tech hub early.

## Reading

Most students find the readings in this course difficult. I will make some notes on assigned readings that may help, but it is your job to make sure that you complete and understand the assignments. Re-reading and use of reference works will probably be necessary. In cases where I am aware of useful aids, I will link them, but beware of popular aids such as Sparknotes, etc. – they often do not treat the topics as a philosopher would, or in enough detail to be useful in this class.

## Assignments

Discussion forums (33.33 %): For twelve days of the course, each topic will have a discussion forum with a prompt for discussion (located on M02). Each topic will have a prompt for discussion and be open for 52 hours. Typically, you will be required to post at least three times per discussion. Guidelines for discussion participation and grading are posted on M02. I will drop the lowest grade, so each discussion is worth roughly 3% of your grade. Participation in these discussions also constitutes the attendance requirement, as we do not meet face-to-face. Complete non-participation in a discussion (grade of zero) constitutes an absence as defined under “Adult Program Attendance Policy” below.

Quizzes, exercises, short responses (33.33%): Each day, there will be at least one short assignment (on some days, a quiz and an assignment) to be completed after doing the reading / other homework. Some of these will include preparatory steps to the final project, and some may be more heavily weighted (I will let you know which when I make the assignments). There will be at least fifteen. I will drop the lowest 2-3 scores.

Final project (33.34%): A written project based on a topic of interest to you in the course, asking you to analyze a recent film by exploiting the approaches to knowledge and analysis introduced in this course. It will require you to do some scholarly research in the Cardinal Meyer Library online collections and use a scholarly documentation style. You should identify the one most commonly used in your major and use that one. Instructions will be posted on M02.

**SUBMIT RESPONSES, PAPERS AND THE FINAL PROJECT AS FILES UPLOADED TO M02. THIS IS THE ONLY MEDIUM IN WHICH I WILL ACCEPT YOUR WORK.**

## Late Work

Due to the short format of the course, late work will quickly become a debt the student cannot pay back. Assignments are given a due date to move students through the course at the correct pace. However, I do not count any work late unless it is not submitted by the time I sit down to grade it (which will be very quickly during this three-week term). At that point, I will begin applying penalties at the rate of 10 percent per day late with a maximum deduction of 41 points. (This means it's worth it to hand in a very late assignment anyway, as you will still get 59 points for it, but 0 points for skipped work.)

## Late Final Paper

The paper is due by 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, January 19, 2020. I cannot be flexible on this date due to contractual obligations. If you have completed all of the coursework up to that point, but do not submit a paper on time, you may contact me for an extension, but you risk a grade of "I" with any associated consequences. If you do not submit a final paper and do not contact me to explain the circumstances by Monday morning, January 20, 2020, you will receive an "F" for the course.

## Extra Credit

Due to the short course format, no extra credit will be offered.

## Grading Scale

A:	93-100%	B:	83-86%	C:	73-76%	D:	63-66%
A-:	90-92%	B-:	80-82%	C-:	70-72%	D-:	60-62%
B+:	87-89%	C+:	77-79%	D+:	67-69%	F:	59% or less

Decimals in individual grades will stand as recorded; decimals in calculations of the final grade only will be rounded according to the customary rules (x.5% or higher= rounded up to the next whole number; x.49 or lower = not rounded up).

## Academic Honesty

Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses and will be dealt with accordingly. Any student caught cheating or committing plagiarism will receive 0 points on the assignment in question. *Plagiarism on the final project is grounds for failure of the course.* Students with questions concerning what constitutes plagiarism should consult official University policy or the instructor. Serious plagiarism includes presenting someone's ideas as your own. When you write your papers and final exams, be sure to not make use of anyone else's ideas without attribution.

Marian University's academic honesty policy reads in part as follows: "A policy of academic honesty speaks to the Mission Statement of Marian University by ensuring academic integrity and thereby furthering the personal, moral, and intellectual development of the learning community. The intent of this policy is to establish consistency and to heighten the moral responsibility of the entire University community (faculty, staff, and students) by identifying areas that would violate the concept of academic honesty." The complete official policy can be found in the Academic Bulletin and in the Student Handbook.

## Disability Statement

Marian University provides reasonable accommodations to qualified students with disabilities. If you believe that you need accommodations to succeed in this course, contact Lisa Olig, Coordinator of Disability Services, at (920) 923-8951 or [lmolig65@marianuniversity.edu](mailto:lmolig65@marianuniversity.edu).

## Adult Program Attendance Policy

The following material in quotation marks is official University policy that I am required to include in the syllabus. Participation in discussion constitutes your fulfillment of the attendance requirement.

“Due to the accelerated format, class attendance is mandatory. Students are expected to attend each class session in its entirety (*definition of “class session” differs between face to face and online classes*). However, balancing professional and personal obligations with school may result in a situation where a student is unable to attend a class session.”

“When absences are anticipated, students are encouraged to notify the instructor, as far in advance as possible. This allows discussion as to how the student will make up the material covered during the absence: for example, completion of an additional written assignment, paper, or presentation.”

“In the event of an emergency or other unforeseen circumstance, students are expected to contact the instructor as soon as it becomes obvious that class content will be missed.”

“Absence(s) from class will result in the following actions:

1. *One Absence*—Students are expected to complete additional assignments to make up for the material covered in the missed class. Instructors have the discretion to determine content and format of assignments and any effect the absence may have on the final grade received.
2. *Two Absences*—Reduction of one full grade: for example, downgrade from an ‘A’ to a ‘B’ as the final grade.
3. *Three Absences*—Failure in course; grade of “F” will be recorded on the official transcript, and student is required to repeat the course. No refund of tuition.”

Note: The term “absences” here refers to absences that are unexcused.

“An absence in the first session of a course without prior approval of the instructor may result in a student being administratively dropped from the course. Students who are administratively dropped from a course that meets less than 14 weeks will be assessed a 10% tuition penalty and have a WD grade recorded on their transcript.”

## Out of Classroom Workload Expectations

The following material in quotation marks is an official statement of workload expectations.

“This course is a 3-credit course. For every hour of in course/instructional time, a **minimum** of two hours of out-of-class work is expected. Additional hours are expected of graduate course work depending on the degree outcomes. According to Federal Guidelines from the US Department of Education, a 3-credit course assumes a **minimum of 135 hours** of course-related activities. The outside-of-classroom workload expectations of the students are as follow, for various modalities of courses:

- A course that meets for three hours each week across a 15-week semester (meets three times for one hour, meets two time for 75 minute session, or meets once for a three hour block) will have a minimum of six hours of outside class-work per week.
- A 7-week course that meets once a week for approximately 4 hours will have a minimum of 15 hours of outside class-work per week.
- An 8-week course that meets once a week for approximately 4 hours will have a minimum of 13 hours of outside class-work per week.
- **Online and hybrid courses will have a minimum of 135 hours of combined synchronous or asynchronous course activities across the length of the course.**

Academic activities include, but are not limited to reading, writing, studying, research, completing various assignments, and small group work.

At least an equivalent amount of class-related work is required for laboratory, field trip, practicum, workshop, group studio, individual studio, independent study, dissertation, clinical placements, student teaching, and practica. Courses that are more or less than 3 credits use the same calculation of in course/instructional time, a minimum of 45 hours of course-related activities per unit of credit over the duration of the course.”

Note: Workload expectations are approximate and do not reflect the amount of work that any particular student will need to do to receive a particular grade for this or any other course.

## Course Schedule

Readings and videos for each topic / class period of the course are linked on M02 and should be completed as a prerequisite to homeworks / quizzes and discussions. Many of these readings are short but they will take a lot of time.

A schedule for the opening and closing time for each day’s discussion is posted on M02. Note that you have 52 hours to complete each discussion.

## Schedule of topics covered

Exact readings, videos, discussions and assignments are listed on M02 and will be tweaked as we go. This is an approximate schedule; any announcements made on M02 supersede the schedule below.

- 1/3 The purpose of philosophy; Socrates; Plato's "Allegory of the Cave"; philosophical vocabulary; basic ideas of semantic logic; informal fallacies in everyday life
- 1/4 Truth vs. validity; deduction and induction; evaluating inductive and deductive arguments; making inferences; syllogisms; elementary formal logic / Boolean operators
- 1/5 Faith vs. reason; proofs and arguments for the existence of G-d
- 1/6 Human personhood and identity
- 1/7 Consciousness; the status of artificial intelligence
- 1/8 Epistemology: *Meno*
- 1/9 Skepticism; Re-evaluating induction
- 1/10 Knowing "the good"; *Euthyphro*
- 1/11 Virtue ethics and the Greek philosophical tradition; *Nichomachean Ethics*; MacIntyre; modern applications
- 1/12 Kantian ethics; modern applications
- 1/13 Moral relativism and utilitarianism; modern applications
- 1/14 How should we live? Stoicism
- 1/15 Political philosophy I: Plato vs. Aristotle; Augustine to Hobbes
- 1/16 Political philosophy II: Varieties of and responses to liberalism since Locke
- 1/17 Social justice in light of ethics and political philosophy
- 1/19 FINAL PAPER DUE ON M02, 11:59 P.M.