

PHIL201: Introduction to Philosophy

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Course Dates: 11 March 2019 – 27 April 2019

Course Times: Online 10-15 Hours Per Week

Location: Moodle

Course Description

You will embark on an introductory survey of many of the main philosophical issues in contemporary Western thinking. You will discuss current and historical philosophers as you examine the following topics: logic, religion, knowledge, the mind, the self, free will, and ethics.

Course Objectives

1. Understand the value of thinking philosophically by reflecting on the meaning of one's own life, the conceptual foundations of human actions and beliefs, the nature of the self and of human responsibility.
2. Understand and discuss coherently the central philosophical issues, such as the problem of evil, the existence of God, freewill, the mind/body relation, human knowledge, and the question of being.
3. Demonstrate an ability to identify and articulate in writing the primary philosophical themes and issues found in the writings of the major philosophers.
4. Demonstrate an ability to evaluate philosophical arguments critically in writing, using philosophical methods that have been developed by either historical or contemporary philosophers.

Textbook Information

All Readings are Available On Moodle

Additional websites that can be beneficial are:

- Wikipedia (for general overview) (<https://wikipedia.com>)
- The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (<https://plato.stanford.edu/>)
- The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy (<https://www.iep.utm.edu/>)
- My philosophy Youtube channel (<https://tinyurl.com/phil201scholz>)

Email/Communication Policy

I am in a different time zone, which has advantages and disadvantages. I will do my best to respond to all E-mails within 24 hours, likewise if I respond to you, or contact you myself, I expect you to do the same. For best results please use the following conventions. Doing these four simple things will save both of us time, and increase the likelihood of your success.

1. Check Moodle and the Syllabus before contacting me with questions about the class or your performance/participation. Many questions can be answered there, such as what grade you got on an assignment, what your current grade is, or when work is due.
2. On the Subject line of any communication please put COURSE SECTION and your last name, first initial.
Ex: Subject: PHIL201smith.j
3. Please begin the communication with what you would like from me, then any explanation:
Ex: "I would like to be able to make-up the writing assignment from Friday 3/15/19, because I was away with the foosball team and there was no internet access."
Ex: "I would like you to check my participation grade for #5, I made 4 posts on time, however I see that I received a Zero on Moodle."
4. If you are providing or asking for an Excuse, include a photograph of any documentation in your e-mail. i.e. A pic of your doctor's note, a tow truck receipt, a *selfie* with you at the health center, etc.

Online Course

All online courses in the School of Professional Studies are fully online and require the use of Moodle. Weekly readings, activities, and assignments will be listed in Moodle. You should expect to spend on average 10-15 hours per week on an individual 3-credit course. This includes all the readings, posts and assignments as well as being actively engaged in the discussions on the message boards. You should expect to log into the course daily, or at least 4-5 times per week. If you have any problems accessing Moodle please contact Dr. Lori McClaren, Director of Online Learning at 919-508-2367.]

Late Assignments

Because of the fast-paced nature of this course, *late assignments will not be accepted*. Students with serious, mitigating circumstances that prevent them from completing assignments on time should contact the instructor as soon as possible *prior to the assignment deadline*. Students who find themselves in this situation should be prepared to provide documentation verifying the circumstances that prevent them from submitting work on time. In these cases, a contract will be established outlining the conditions for an extension.

Your assignment is considered complete when it is submitted on Moodle in a form I can access and evaluate. Work on your home computer, thumb drive, or on paper are not complete. It is advisable to check Moodle to ensure your work was accepted.

Proctoring Policy

All online courses at William Peace University require two (2) proctored exams or activities. Any student who fails BOTH proctored exams/activities will receive an automatic failing grade in the course, regardless of any other grades received. For more information on proctoring options, please see:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a0f45a8ab2ba75-spsproctoring>

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All forms of academic misconduct are violations of the University's Honor Code. These include, but are not limited to:

- Cheating: Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in academic work or in working with others on academic requirements (tests, assignments, etc.)
- Plagiarism: Representing the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic work, whether intentional or not
- Falsification: Falsifying or inventing any information or citation in academic work
- Facilitating academic dishonesty: Helping or attempting to help another student to commit an act of academic dishonesty
- Lying: Misrepresenting information that is relevant to the classroom or academic performance

If a faculty member suspects academic misconduct has taken place, s/he will complete an Honor Code Violation Report and meet with the student to discuss. A student may accept or decline to accept responsibility. If a student accepts responsibility, s/he will be subject to the penalty determined by the faculty member. If a student declines to admit responsibility, the case will be turned over the Honor Board for adjudication. A complete summary of the Honor Code and Honor Board policy can be found in the *2018-2019 Academic Catalog*.

Tutorial Services

The Office of Tutorial Services is located on the 2nd floor of Finch Library, open Monday-Thursday from 9am-7pm, and Friday 9am-4pm. Tutoring is free of charge, and students are encouraged to make individual appointments in the sign-up binder located on the bookshelf next to the elevator. Tutoring is offered in most all subjects, including anthropology, biology, business, chemistry, criminal justice, history, math, political science, psychology, simulation and game design, and writing. Free workshops are also offered each semester, as well as free resources on studying, citation, grammar, and other academic topics. For more information, contact Margaret Herder-Hill, Coordinator of Tutorial Services at (919) 508-2080 or maherder-hill@peace.edu.

Disability or Learning Services

Disability Services are available to all WPU students who require reasonable accommodations due to any cognitive, physical, or psychological disability, in order to provide equal access to the educational environment. Students will need to be certified with the Disability Services Office and provide appropriate documentation to receive an Academic Accommodation Plan. For more information or to become certified, please contact a counselor in the Disability Services Office, which is located on the 1st Floor of Joyner House. You may also reach Disability Services by sending an email to Disability@peace.edu.

Class Participation

An important part of the work in this class is via the online discussion forum (altogether worth as much as the final exam). Students are required to post One (1) response to each assigned prompt, and Two (2) unique thoughtful replies to other students' posts. The prompts will give specific instructions for the form of the initial posts. Replies should take one of the following basic forms:

1. **Agree** with original post (or previous reply) and expand. Reiterate the point in your own words, offer additional argument, evidence, explanation or analogies.
2. Respectfully **disagree** with the post (or reply), and offer a counter-argument, contrary evidence, alternative explanations, or the like.
3. **Ask** a follow up question, for clarification. If possible anticipate the range of reasonable answers and respond to those (use 1 or 2 (above)).
4. Be **Inspired** by the original post (or reply) and address further issues, relevant tangents, or new questions that follow from the post.

Replies that are **not acceptable**.

1. Ad hominem (personal attacks). Do not demean or attack posters or their ability/knowledge/background or other features.
2. Unqualified praise or criticism. (Ex. "This is a great post!", "I agree!", or my least favorite "Everyone is entitled to believe what they want but..." Stick to scholarly arguments.
3. Lengthy quotations.

Incompletes

An Incomplete is appropriate for a student that has been making steady, successful progress in a course and has an unexpected, verifiable mitigating circumstance at the end of the semester which precludes them from completing the last assignment or exam. Poor time management is not an appropriate reason to request an Incomplete. All incomplete grade requests must be approved first by the Instructor, and then by the Director of Online Programs. If the Incomplete is approved the student will have up to six additional weeks to complete the work, as determined by the Instructor. If the student does not complete the final work, the Instructor will assign the appropriate letter grade for work completed or the grade will revert to an "F."

Assignments and Grading

Participation on Online Class Forum (30%)

Each week you will be given one discussion prompt for each reading. You will write one paragraph (6-8 complete sentences) response for each. In addition, you will reply to two other students' posts (either reply to the original posts, or to replies). These should also be at least one long paragraph (6-8 complete sentences). Responses will be evaluated according to the rubric found on Moodle, primarily on how the further our intellectual conversation. It is easy to get behind on these so please keep up-to-date. I will not give points for forum posts AFTER the next prompt is due, though you are free to continue your discussions (without credit) .

Quizzes (20%)

Each week, except the last, there will be a short quiz comparing some aspects of the readings, and applying them to contemporary issues. These are open book and open notes quizzes and you are expected to demonstrate familiarity with the readings.

Midterm Examination (20%)

At the end of week four you will get a proctored midterm examination. This will consist of several long answer questions from which you will select two to write on. The exam will test your understanding of the materials, the philosophical issues, and the approaches of the authors.

Final Exam (30%)

At the end of the course you will get a proctored final examination. This will consist of several long answer questions from which you will select three to write on. The exam will test your understanding of the materials, the philosophical issues, and the approaches of the authors, as well as your ability to criticize them, and construct your own views.

Exams are open book and open note. Be careful to ensure your answers are your own, and properly cite ANY sources (including the original texts and/or outside materials or websites you visit). I will not evaluate you on any quoted materials (or unoriginal work) but only on your explanations, and responses to those works. Quotations and references exist to give context to your replies.

Grade scale for all graded materials:

A: 100-90 B: 89-80 C: 79-70 D: 69-60 F: 59-0¹

Participation	Percentage
Online Forum	30%
Assignments	Percentage
Quizzes	20%
Exams	Percentage
Midterm	20%
Final	30%
TOTAL	100%

¹ Be aware that Moodle's algorithms for determining your current grade may be misleading until all work has been submitted and all exams graded. The best way to determine how you are doing is to add up the points you've received and divide them by the points possible at that time.

Weekly Activities/Assignments

Week 1 – [3/11 – 3/17]: [Overview to Philosophy]	
Learning Outside the Classroom	Date Due
Watch Cookie Monster’s Simply Delicious Shower Thoughts	3/11
Watch Plato’s Apology on YouTube (Optional)	3/11
Listen to Bertrand Russell’s Value of Philosophy (Optional)	3/11
Reading (All readings will be posted in Moodle classroom)	Date Due
Read: (a) syllabus, (b) discussion board grading rubric, and (c) discussion board etiquette	3/12
Plato – <i>The Apology</i>	3/14
Bertrand Russell – <i>The Value of Philosophy</i>	3/15
Assignments	Date Due
Discussion Board Assignment 1	3/14
Discussion Board Assignment 2	3/16
Quiz 1	3/17

Week 2 – [3/18– 3/24]: [The Meaning of Life]	
Learning Outside the Classroom	Date Due
Meaningfulness Rank/Score Card	3/20
Watch Pale Blue Dot	3/20
Watch Ozymandias Animation	3/20
Watch When Nietzsche Wept (Optional)	
Watch Susan Wolf: The Value of Meaningfulness (Optional)	
Watch Aristotle: Ethics, Happiness and Virtue (Optional)	
Reading (All readings will be posted in Moodle classroom)	Date Due
Friedrich Nietzsche – <i>The Gay Science</i>	3/19
Susan Wolf – <i>Meaningfulness</i>	3/21
Aristotle – <i>Nicomachean Ethics (Book 1)</i>	3/23
Assignments	Date Due
Discussion Board Assignment 3	3/19
Discussion Board Assignment 4	3/21
Discussion Board Assignment 5	3/23
Quiz 2	3/24

Week 3 – [3/25 – 3/31]: [Ethics]	
Learning Outside the Classroom	Date Due
Watch Kant & Categorical Imperatives – Crash Course Philosophy (Optional)	
Watch Utilitarianism – Crash Course Philosophy (Optional)	
Reading (All readings will be posted in Moodle classroom)	Date Due
Mill - <i>Utilitarianism</i>	3/26
Kant – Grounding of the Metaphysics of Morals	3/28
Assignments	Date Due
Discussion Board Assignment 6	3/26
Discussion Board Assignment 7	3/28
Quiz 3	3/31

Week 4 – [4/1– 4/7]: [Epistemology]	
Learning Outside the Classroom	Date Due
Watch Plato’s Allegory of the Cave (Optional) Watch The Matrix – Tumbling down the Rabbit hole (Optional) Watch Neo, Meet René – Crash Course Philosophy (Optional)	
Reading <i>(All readings will be posted in Moodle classroom)</i>	Date Due
Plato – Allegory of the Cave	4/2
Descartes – Meditations 1 and 2	4/4
Assignments	Date Due
Discussion Board Assignment 9	4/2
Discussion Board Assignment 10	4/4
Mid-Term	4/7

Week 5 – [4/9 – 4/15]: [Philosophy of Mind]	
Learning Outside the Classroom	Date Due
Watch: Philosophy of Mind a Brief Introduction (Optional) Watch: Where Does Your Mind Reside? – Crash Course Philosophy (Optional) Watch: Where am I? (Parts 1 and2) (Optional) Watch: They’re made of Meat (Optional)	
Reading <i>(All readings will be posted in Moodle classroom)</i>	Date Due
Descartes - Meditation 6	4/09
Dennett – Where am I?	4/11
Bisson – They’re made of Meat	4/13
Assignments	Date Due
Discussion Board Assignment 11	4/09
Discussion Board Assignment 12	4/11
Discussion Board Assignment 13	4/13
Quiz 4	4/14

Week 6– [4/16– 4/22]: [Philosophy of Religion]	
Learning Outside the Classroom	Date Due
Watch: Essential Properties of God (Optional) Watch: Religions of the World (Optional)	
Reading <i>(All readings will be posted in Moodle classroom)</i>	Date Due
Scholz – Puzzles about Religion	4/16
Assignments	Date Due
Discussion Board Assignment 14	4/16
Discussion Board Assignment 15	4/17
Discussion Board Assignment 16	4/18
Quiz 5	4/21

Week 7 – [4/23 – 4/28]: [The Value of Philosophy]	
Watch Plato’s Apology on YouTube (Optional)	Date Due
Listen to Bertrand Russell’s Value of Philosophy (Optional)	
Reading (<i>All readings will be posted in Moodle classroom</i>)	Date Due
Plato – <i>The Apology</i>	4/23
Bertrand Russell – <i>The Value of Philosophy</i>	4/25
Assignments	Date Due
Discussion Response 17	4/23
Discussion Response 18	4/25
Final Exam	4/27