



PHI 2010: Introduction to Philosophy

Department of Philosophy
College of Arts and Humanities, University of Central Florida

Instructor:	Dr. Jeffrey Nall	Term:	Fall 2018
Office:	TBA	Class Meeting Days:	M/W/F
E-Mail:	Jeffrey.Nall@ucf.edu	Class Meeting Hours:	10:30-11:20am
Office Hours:	By appointment	Class Location:	ENG2 203
		Course Number:	80465
		Section Number:	0004

About the Professor

Dr. Jeffrey Nall is a Visiting Lecturer in Philosophy. He earned a Ph.D. in Comparative Studies from Florida Atlantic University (FAU). He has a Master of Liberal Studies from Rollins College and a Graduate Certificate in Women's Studies from FAU. Dr. Nall has taught a range of courses in philosophy, humanities, and women, gender, and sexuality studies.

University Course Catalog Description

Inquiry into the meaning and justification of fundamental ideas and beliefs concerning reality, knowledge, and values; application to relevant topics in ethics, religion, and politics. (3 credits)

Course Overview

Introduction to Philosophy introduces students to significant philosophical problems including questions concerning the philosophy of religion, moral philosophy, political philosophy, and epistemology. This course fosters an exploration of fundamental concepts (such as "reality", "right and wrong," "God," "truth") and questions (such as, "If God all is good, why is there evil in the world?"). Introduction to Philosophy also seeks to demonstrate the relevance of philosophy to students' practical concerns in both personal and public life. Course assignments further provide students with the opportunity to develop their critical thinking and communication skills.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of "Introduction to Philosophy," students will have

1. Demonstrated knowledge of significant philosophical texts, concepts and theories
2. Analyzed and discussed the meanings of philosophical and ethical arguments.
3. Demonstrated clear, precise, and reasonable written communication examining distinguished primary sources and/or scholarly works in philosophy.
4. Authored several written critical reflections contemplating the merits and significance of varied philosophical ideas.
5. Demonstrated, through regular reflection and discussion, awareness of the role of culture in shaping the individual and society, as well as the potential for individuals to contribute to the shaping of culture through philosophical analysis and practice.

FINANCIAL AID ASSIGNMENT REQUIREMENT

All faculty members are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. In order to document that you began this course, please complete the short syllabus quiz available via the webcourse site. Failure to do so will result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.

Required Texts and Materials

Textbook

- Waller, Bruce N. *Consider Philosophy*. Prentice Hall: New York, 2011. (ISBN-10: 0205644228 ISBN-13: 9780205644223)

Webcourse-Site

- The Webcourse site contains links to readings, the most recent version of the syllabus and schedule, and additional announcements. Students should check the Webcourse site frequently to be well informed about any changes or additional material relevant to the course.

Basis for Final Grade

Final grades will be calculated on the basis of successful completion of the following assessments:

Assessment	Percent of Grade
Philosophy Journal	25%
Midterm Exam	25%
Applied Ethics Paper	25%
Final Exam	25%
	100%

Applied Ethics Paper (Embedded GEP Assessment)

Students will explain, apply, and critically examine two ethical theories as they relate to a contemporary social problem selected by the professor. This assignment will be used to measure the student's progress in achieving components of the course's listed learning outcomes.

Term Paper Rubric		
Area of Evaluation	Criteria	Value
Content: Critical Analysis (64%)	✓ Meaningfully and fairly acknowledges, articulates, and engages key, relevant course concepts and thinkers	8%
	✓ Provides original analysis (does not simply summarize lectures and readings, but engages them, opening new lines of inquiry or contributing new ideas to the discourse)	8%
	✓ Justifies claims: provides <i>reasoned</i> support for claims	8%
	✓ Clearly explains the relationship between claims and supporting premises or reasons; clearly explains how premise A and premise B produce conclusion C.	8%
	✓ Avoids dogmatic thinking; recognizes that one's views are not inherently or obviously true and that others' ideas are not inherently or obviously false	8%
	✓ Avoids egocentric thinking; recognizes that one's views or perspectives are not necessarily obvious or the same as others; Acknowledges, explains and engages alternative, contrasting, and/or opposing perspectives	8%
	✓ Avoids informal fallacies including unfounded appeals to cultural tradition, popular opinion, and power; avoids personal attacks, stereotyping, and hasty generalizations in analysis	8%
	✓ Showcases appropriate empathy and respect for others (This does not mean that you must agree with a viewpoint of an individual or group of people! Rather it simply means that you are expected to recognize and honor the dignity of others, including those you disagree with.)	8%
Form/ Organization (26%)	✓ Implements analytical writing: author does not simply tell a story or list facts but offers a critical analysis (though some narrative prose is acceptable the paper must emphasize analysis)	3%
	✓ Deploys appropriately formal tone; avoids inappropriately casual language, turns-of-phrase	2%

	<p>and the like (when appropriate the use of pronouns such as “I” is acceptable, but abbreviations and slang should not be included unless justifiable)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Features introduction, body paragraphs developing one’s ideas, and a conclusion ✓ Formatted according to MLA, Chicago, Harvard or other designated scholarly guidelines ✓ Provides original title ✓ Enticing introduction (engaging the reader, inspiring them to read on) ✓ Includes specific thesis statement indicating not only the topic or subject matter but the central claim being advanced in the paper ✓ Logically structured paragraphs that support the stated thesis: purposeful paragraphs feature clear topic sentences, indicating the main idea of the paragraph and developing the thesis presented in the introduction, and development ✓ Provides all appropriate in-text citations indicating source of others’ ideas ✓ Provides works-cited page ✓ Minimal direct quotes; summarizes others’ ideas in one’s own words rather than excessively relying on quoting 	<p>3%</p> <p>1%</p> <p>1%</p> <p>1%</p> <p>3%</p> <p>4%</p> <p>5%</p> <p>1%</p> <p>2%</p>
Grammar/ Mechanics (10%)	<p>Very few if any grammatical errors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Correct spelling ✓ Correct punctuation ✓ Correct word-choice ✓ Complete sentences; no sentence <u>fragments</u> ✓ No <u>run-on sentences</u> 	<p>2%</p> <p>2%</p> <p>2%</p> <p>2%</p> <p>2%</p> <p>Total: 100%</p>
Word-count penalty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Papers falling under 95% of the required word-count will be receive a penalty commensurate with the missing word-count percentage. ✓ For example, if the word-count requirement is 1,500 and the submitted paper is 1,000 words it will receive an automatic deduction of 33%, making a 67% the highest possible score. A 750 paper would receive an automatic deduction of 50% because 750 words is half of the required word-count. 	
Late penalty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Assignments will receive a deduction of 5% for each day the assignment is late ✓ An assignment that is 5 days late will receive an automatic deduction of 25% ✓ An assignment that is 20 days late will receive an automatic deduction of 100%, meaning that the paper will receive an automatic zero ✓ When a student has a reasonable excuse for submitting a late assignment they should consult with the professor, and after doing so, leave a comment with their submitted work 	
Fails to follow instructions penalty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Papers failing to address the assigned term paper prompt will receive an automatic zero. ✓ Papers failing to engage the concepts, thinkers, and material the term paper is purposed to evaluate will receive an automatic zero. ✓ Be sure to follow the assignment instructions 	

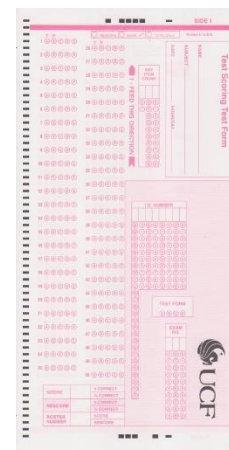
Midterm and Final Exams

The midterm exam will test students’ knowledge of all material covered through the first half of the semester. The final exam will test students’ knowledge of all material covered throughout the course from start to finish. It will be comprehensive.

*Note: Students must be present in class on the scheduled exam date; make-ups are rarely permitted, and are only allowed under the most severe, well-documented scenarios.

Vacations/planned trips and the like do not meet such qualifications.

- Question: Which scantron do I need?
- Answer: pink/raspberry scantron form with the Pegasus UCF logo. This is the only option for the exams. [The form may be filled out with a pencil or with blue or black ink]
- Question: What do I have to put on the form?
- Answer: In addition to your name, you must bubble in your correct UCF ID number (formerly called their PID) on the answer form in order for it to be graded.



Philosophy Journal

Throughout the semester students will be assigned at least several in and out of class writing assignments. These reflections will be integral to in-class discussions, developing understanding of key course concepts, improving critical and ethical thinking, and aiding students for the midterm and final essay exams. Unless otherwise noted students are expected to complete out-of-class journal writing prior to the class period it accompanies.

Students will sometimes be required to bring a copy of their out of class journal entry to the relevant class period (see “schedule of readings and assignments”). In such instances the submitted journal assignment will be used to verify the student’s attendance in place of signing the roster sheet. The objective of doing so is to 1) ensure timely completion of the reflections and 2) promote informed student participation in class discussion or small group discussion.

Attendance and Keeping Track of Entries

Out-of-class journal prompts are found in the “Schedule of Readings and Assignments.” In-class prompts are given during class periods. To complete in-class journal assignments students must be present the day of the class. Students are exclusively responsible for keeping track of the number of assigned journal entries. Only students who present evidence of an excusable absence within three days of that absence, excepting extenuating circumstances, will be permitted to make-up missed in-class assignments.

Self-evaluation cover page

Upon completion of the final entry, students are to read over all journal entries and write a single-spaced self-evaluation addressing the work they’ve completed for the journal project. The self-evaluation must be at least 300-words to receive full-credit. In addition to addressing the work they’ve completed for the journal students are welcome to contemplate and evaluate their broader experience in the class. Questions to consider include: Have you developed new insights about yourself? Has your thinking developed or changed in any way? Have you developed new understanding relevant to the course? Did you discover or perhaps simply clarified something about yourself or others? You might also consider the impact of the journal project on your writing skills and retention of key concepts: How did your journal entries change over the course of the semester? Did you develop greater intellectual independence in your written reflections? Did writing on a regular basis improve your ability to express yourself? Did writing about key ideas help you understand and retain them?

As part of the self-evaluation students are also required to briefly explain the reasoning for selecting their favored journal as such (see below for on favorite journal). In other words, you must explain to the reader why your favored journal is significant to you.

Formatting of Journal Project

The first page of the journal must include the self-evaluation, a tally of the total number of entries, and the word-count for the entire document. The self-evaluation does *not* count as a journal entry itself.

Students are to identify one entry they believe is the most important of the semester to be placed directly after the self-evaluation page. This entry, regardless of its chronological order, will be the “first” entry in the journal.

All entries must be numbered and given a relevant title. Word-counts must be provided for each out-of-class entry. All in-class journal entries must have a numbered and typed heading. You may scan, snip/screen shot, or photograph in-class entries and insert them in the journal if you do not want to type them up. Note, however, that all out-of-class entries must be typed. Word-counts do not need to be listed for in-class entries.

All entries must be provided together in a single word-document to be uploaded through the available submission link online. All entries must be numbered in a single numerical sequence. This means you will *not* have two sequences, one for in-class entries and another for out-of-class entries.

Final Journal Rubric		
Area of Evaluation	Criteria	Value
Self-evaluation (7%)	✓ Completion of grammatically sound and thoughtful self-evaluation, of at least 300 words, reflecting on experience in class and intrapersonal, interpersonal, and intellectual development(s).	5%
	✓ Comments on reason for choosing favored journal: answers the question, what is significant about the entry?	2%
Formatting (18%)	✓ Lists accurate total number of completed journal on first page along with self-evaluation; self-evaluation does not count as a journal entry	1%
	✓ Favored journal entry is selected and placed as the opening journal entry (#1), and has "Favored Journal" in parenthesis alongside the title of the entry	2%
	✓ Each journal entry features a typed heading and is numbered together in a single numerical sequence. This means in-class and out-of-class entries are all numbered together	4%
	✓ All in-class journal entries are labeled as such ("#4 In-class: Shoes")	1%
	✓ All out-of-class entries are typed and presented in single spacing	1%
	✓ Accurate word-count is given for each out-of-class entry	4%
	✓ Journal prompt is <u>not</u> included in the final collection of journal entries	2%
	✓ Journal does not include headings for entries that were not actually answered (include only entries you have actually done)	3%
Completion and content (75%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Completes and includes all assigned journal entries from start of semester, including in-class and out-of-class entries <p>To receive full credit for each entry (see explanation for determining value of each entry below) the following criteria must be met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Out-of-class entries meet minimum word-count requirement, which is 150-words unless otherwise noted ✓ Entries appropriately respond to relevant assigned questions/prompts ✓ Entries meaningfully and fair-mindedly engage relevant assigned readings and course concepts ✓ Entries offer articulation of original thought/perspective on reading/question/concept at hand whenever called for; <u>entries do not only</u> summarize relevant reading/concept <p><i>Explanation of grading for this area:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Divide 75 by number of total assigned entries. The resulting number, rounded down, becomes the maximum value that will be deducted for each incomplete or missing entry. (For example, if there were a total of 25 entries assigned we would divide 75 divided by 25. Consequently, each journal entry would be worth 3%. This means that a student who failed to complete 10 entries would receive a penalty of -30%). ✓ To reward students who completed nearly all the entries, the first missing entry receives a deduction of half the value of the entry. (This means if the maximum deduction value of each entry is 3, the penalty would be -1.5 for one missing entry.) ✓ The first two missing entries receive a deduction equal to the maximum deduction value of one entry. (This means that if the maximum deduction value of the entry is 3 the penalty would be -3 for the first two missing entries.) ✓ Each subsequent missing or incomplete entry—number three, four, five, and so on—receives deductions commensurate with its maximum deduction value. 	<p>75%*</p> <p>See note in "Criteria" box"</p> <p>Total: 100%</p>
	Late penalty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Assignments will receive a deduction of 5% for each day the assignment is late ✓ An assignment that is 5 days late will receive an automatic deduction of 25% ✓ An assignment that is 20 days late will receive an automatic deduction of 100%, meaning that the paper will receive an automatic zero ✓ When a student has a reasonable excuse for submitting a late assignment they should consult with the professor, and after doing so, leave a comment with their submitted work

Fails to follow instructions penalty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Submissions that are not compiled in a single word document, uploaded via the assigned online submission link will receive an automatic zero. ✓ Late submissions, following the initial mistaken submission, will be subject to late penalties described above. ✓ Be sure to follow the assignment instructions 	
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Grading Scale

Total	100-90	89-87	86-80	79-77	76-70	69-67	66-60	59-0
grade	A	B+	B	C+	C	D+	D	F

Attendance Policy:

Regular class attendance is essential to succeeding in, and benefiting from this course. Students are responsible for notifying faculty members of *legitimate* absences, providing appropriate documentation, and arranging to make up all missed work. Legitimate absences include illness, emergency, military or legal obligation, religious observations (see below), and participation in athletic or scholastic teams, musical or theatrical performances, and debate activities. Students who are unable to attend all or nearly all classes for reasons other than those identified above are encouraged to withdraw and take the course at a more appropriate time.

Religious Observations

- A student shall be excused from class without penalty to observe a religious holy day in his or her own faith. A religious holy day is defined as a significant day of religious observance as recognized by the highest body of that particular faith.

What's due, what to read?

- Students who miss class and need to know about forthcoming coursework should consult the schedule of readings and assignments on the Webcourse site.

Excused Absence Notification

- In order for your absence to be counted as excused you will need to supply the professor with relevant explanation and documentation *via email* within one week of the absence.

Unexcused absences penalty

- Students who amass 7 or more unexcused absences from the equivalent of 50 minute classes will lose 5 points from their final grade score. Thus, if you have a 74% (C) in the class and have 5 unexcused absences, your grade will drop to 69% (D).

Outstanding Attendance and Participation Extra Credit

Students who miss no more than the stated allowances, and regularly *meaningfully* contribute to class discussion are eligible for the extra credit listed below. Meaningful participation includes not only verbal contribution but also attentiveness to both the lecture and fellow students.

Twice-a-week Classes (Fall/Spring Semester)

- No more than one absence: 2 points added to final grade
- No more than two absences: 1 points

Three-times-a-week Classes (Fall/Spring Semester)

- No more than two absences: 2 points added to final grade
- No more than three absences: 1 points

Participation Extra Credit

Students who contribute to class discussion during four separate class sessions during the summer or six class sessions during fall and spring will receive 1 point of extra credit added to the final grade. This means that if a

student has an 89% and has contributed to class discussions during four separate class sessions, this student's grade will be increased to a 90%.

Controversy, Cultural Competency and Classroom Etiquette

This course seeks to develop students' capacity to think critically as well as communicate effectively in a culturally heterogeneous (diverse) environment. Toward these ends, and the wider aims of the humanities as a discipline, this course will consciously consider and *interrogate* common and lesser known theories, values, beliefs, and assumptions. We will frequently consider controversial issues that may challenge students' beliefs and evoke strong feelings and vigorous debate. While it is understood that at times some students may feel discomfort, everyone is expected to address these issues and one another in a humane, respectful, and academic manner. Students are equally entitled to a classroom environment that is free from intentional hostility, ridicule, embarrassment, and condescension. If at some point a student feels that the video, discussion, lecture or general subject matter is too intense or troubling, they may step outside of the classroom *without* prior notification to the professor. (Students should communicate with the professor after the class.)



This does *not* mean that we will shy away from challenging issues and questions. Examining such matters—fundamental questions of what it is to be human and what and why we think, believe, and act as we do—has been and continues to be the unique and explicit domain of the humanities. Nor does insisting on a respectful environment mean that students are entitled to a classroom free of considerate *intellectual* tension and conflict. Instead we will approach the critical exploration of significant and often controversial questions, beliefs, values, and theories in a manner that will enhance students' critical thinking skills and cultural competency. We will achieve this by striving to respectfully include and consider diverse perspectives from within the classroom and among significant thinkers within the humanities as a field of study. *By remaining registered for this class, students consent to respectful participation in this intellectual endeavor.* For more information on UCF's efforts to support cultural competency through honoring diversity through inclusion go to [Office of Diversity and Inclusion](#)

Basic Classroom Etiquette: Your Presence

My experience teaching has taught me that aloofness among too many students in a given class undermines the conditions necessary to foster an energetic classroom environment. To contribute to making the classroom as productive and vibrant a space as possible it is essential that everyone come to class prepared to attentively listen and, ideally, contribute to classroom dialogue. No one is obligated to speak during larger classroom discussion, but everyone is expected to be focused on the lecture and/or classroom discussion to the best of their ability.

Laptops and Phones

Web-surfing, routine or non-urgent use of one's phone, and having headphones on during class are all inappropriate activities that indicate a lack of the required attentiveness to create a productive, vibrant space for the intellectual work we are doing. They also indicate a lack of seriousness on the part of the student. Those wishing to engage in such activities should excuse themselves from the classroom, and then return when prepared to contribute to fostering and sustaining a creative and productive classroom environment. Those wishing to use a laptop for purposes of writing down notes must consult with the professor ahead of time to discuss its usage.

Food in the Classroom

Meals, odorous foods, and noisy snacks (noisy packaging) should not be eaten in the classroom. My main concern here is that the smells can be too much for others near you, the noise of eating can be disruptive to the required level of serious, shared concentration on the subject matter. I aim to create a classroom that ensures everyone that their fundamental human dignity is honored, that they do not have to fear personal attacks or dehumanization of any kind. I want students to feel comfortable, however, a degree of formality is required in order to meaningfully participate in prepared lessons. If you have any questions about these matters be sure to contact me.

Incompletes and Withdrawals

Incompletes and Instructor Withdrawals are given solely at the instructor's discretion. Only on rare occasions will the professor give a student an "incomplete." Students who have not attended the majority of courses or not completed the vast majority of coursework will not be considered for an "incomplete." Instructor withdrawals are reserved for very unique circumstances. Under no circumstances will students be granted such withdrawals at or near the end of the semester because they do not like the final grade they are on course to earn.

Examination Make-up Policy

Students are encouraged to take exams when they are assigned. Exam make-ups are done at the discretion of the instructor. Exams not taken will be given a failing grade.

University Writing Center:

The University Writing Center (UWC) is a free resource for UCF undergraduates and graduates. At the UWC, a trained writing consultant will work individually with you on anything you're writing (in or out of class), at any point in the writing process from brainstorming to editing. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information or to make an appointment, visit the UWC website at <http://www.uwc.ucf.edu>, stop by MOD 608, or call 407.823.2197.

Academic Paper Format

Students' grade will be substantially based on academic writing assignments. These papers must be written in MLA format ([Purdue's MLA formatting and style guide](#)) or Chicago Style Author-Date (Parenthetical) System (<http://www.lib.umd.edu/ues/guides/citing-chicago-ad>). This means that papers must be double-spaced and must include citations among other features. Students are urged to take their papers to the University Writing Center (see below) prior to submission.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated. If you are uncertain as to what constitutes academic dishonesty, please consult The Golden Rule, the University of Central Florida's Student Handbook (<http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/>) for further details. As in all University courses, The Golden Rule Rules of Conduct will be applied. Violations of these rules will result in a record of the infraction being placed in your file and receiving a zero on the work in question AT A MINIMUM. At the instructor's discretion, you may also receive a failing grade for the course. Confirmation of such incidents can also result in expulsion from the University.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty wherein one presents another individual's words, images, music, and more generally, ideas as one's own without acknowledging their source. Students are required to cite (give credit to) all "sources" utilized for the work they submit as their own. Sources include books, articles, websites, interviews, illustrations and images, art, conversations and email, class lectures, class notes, student papers, student assignments, and one's own work done for previous classes. In-text citations and attributions function to acknowledge others' contribution in shaping your work, allowing the reader to distinguish between your original

contribution and any other individuals' contributions. Citations also provide the reader with the necessary information to review the sources upon which your work is based.

Your Responsibility

Students are deemed responsible for all instances of plagiarism and are subject to academic discipline for each clear instance. Examples of plagiarism include: "borrowing" a friend's paper, citing without quotation marks, cutting and pasting from the internet or other sources (email, other papers), paraphrasing without attribution, reusing papers or assignments without significant alteration of the work and acknowledgment of the paper's origin. Students have the responsibility to fully understand what plagiarism is and to ensure they do not commit it. Consequently, the following forms of "accidental" plagiarism are not excusable:

- Copying another work into your document but accidentally incorporating large swaths of work into your paper without using quotation marks around direct quotations and without including any relevant in-text citation or works cited information.
- "Forgetting" or "not knowing" that you must provide in-text citations indicating the source of a work you consulted and are paraphrasing or summing up ideas in your paper
- "Forgetting" or "not knowing" that you have to place "quotation marks" around the ideas of another when you are quoting their exact wording and provide relevant citation information about the work from which you are quoting.

Students who make plausibly explained formatting errors, as they seek to accurately and honestly distinguish between their work and the work of others, will *not* be deemed to have committed plagiarism. When significant portions of your work originate in an uncited and unacknowledged author you have committed a serious act of plagiarism, whatever your explanation. All serious or egregious acts of plagiarism receive a minimum of a 0 on the plagiarized assignment with no opportunity to resubmit a new attempt. Plagiarism is considered an act of misconduct for which students are subject to discipline. All clear cases of plagiarism will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct as a form of "[Academic Misconduct](#)."

Laptops, Electronics, and Cell-Phones

Laptops, cellphones and other electronic devices may not be used in class, unless prior approval is given by professor. Those who use these devices during class will be asked to leave. Students who have emergency situations arise and need to utilize their phones must leave the classroom to conduct their business; students are also advised to let the instructor know ahead of time if they are expecting an important call.

Recording Devices

In order to ensure an open and free discussion environment no recording of our classes is permitted. When recording devices are present some students may have reservations about engaging in the sometimes cumbersome process of freely and openly speaking in the classroom setting. Since class discussion is so crucial to this course, it is imperative students feel comfortable expressing their thoughts without fear of being recorded and potentially having their words taken out of context.

Student Accessibility Services (Disability Services)

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Accessibility Services, Ferrell Commons Room 185, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, before requesting accommodations from the professor. Students who would like more information on these services are encouraged to visit the [Student Accessibility Services](#) page.

UCF Support Services

Students in need of assistance with issues such as safety and wellbeing, sexual violence, and mental health are encouraged to contact [UCF Cares](#)

“UCF Cares is an umbrella of care-related programs and resources dedicated to fostering a caring community of Knights. However, it takes all of us from students to staff, from faculty to friends, to show that we care about one another. The goal of the UCF CARES initiative is to build a culture of care one KNIGHT at a time. We are all UCF and need to do our part in connecting any fellow knights in distress to appropriate resources.”

Students who have knowledge of sexual misconduct should contact [UCF Shield](#):

“Together, we can work toward eliminating sexual misconduct in the UCF community. We’ve provided this comprehensive source for information about identifying, preventing, and responding to sexual misconduct including sexual assault and sexual harassment affecting members of the UCF community. We are committed to providing a safe educational, working, and living environment.”

[Victim Services](#) is another key resource for UCF students

“We offer support, crisis intervention, options, information, referrals, practical assistance, and educational programs. We inform our clients of their options and potential outcomes and empower them to make the best decision for themselves. Although reporting to law enforcement or university administrative offices is presented as an option, we will never force a client to report.”

“Advocates are available 24 hours a day to assist clients by phone or respond to the scene of a crime. To contact an advocate anytime day or night, call (407) 823-1200. We provide crisis counseling and emotional support in the aftermath of victimization.”

This [web-page](#) features a variety of UCF resources for students.



Schedule of Readings and Assignments

Note: This schedule is tentative and subject to change as per instructor. Items may be added, removed, or rearranged.

Key Dates

11:59pm, Friday, August 24

Monday, September 24

11:59pm, Friday, October 19

11:59pm, Friday, November 30

10-12:50pm, Monday, December 3

12pm, Wednesday, December 12

Academic Calendar

Final Exam schedule

Assignments and Grades

Complete Syllabus Quiz to release financial aid \$

Midterm Exam (in class)

Term paper due (via webcourses)

Philosophy Journal due (via webcourses)

Final Exam (in class)

Grades due

<https://calendar.ucf.edu/2018/fall>

<https://exams.sdes.ucf.edu/2018/fall>

First Week of Class

Course Overview

- Read syllabus
- Take financial aid quiz (no impact on your grade, but must be completed to ensure release of your financial aid)
- Obtain assigned textbook

Monday, August 20, Wednesday, August 22, & Friday, August 24

What is Critical Thinking?

- Kant, "[What is Enlightenment?](#)" (Alternative links here and [here](#) (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.)
- Woodhouse, "[Thinking Critically](#)" pp.41-47
- The Critical Thinking Community, "[Defining Critical Thinking](#) (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site."
- Anthony Weston, *A Practical Companion to Ethics, Getting Started*, 1-15

Journal: What is Critical Thinking

- Engage at least one of the assigned readings to reflect on the meaning, application, and significance of critical thinking. You might also consider whether or not, or how, the term "critical thinking" is loosely used and inadequately defined.

Monday, August 27, Wednesday, August 29 & Friday, August 31

What is Philosophy?

- Consider Philosophy (CP) Chapter 1: "Thinking Critically and Cordially about Philosophy," 1-18
- Robert Solomon, "[Doing Philosophy](#)," pp.3-14 (the main section to have read is "Concepts and Conceptual Frameworks," 8-13)
- Elliot D. Cohen, "[Caution: Faulty Thinking Can be Harmful to Your Happiness, Logic for Everyday Living](#)" PDF: Chapter 1: pp.3-5, 9-13

Journal: What is Philosophy

- Drawing on the readings, articulate a straight-forward definition of what philosophy is. Then consider whether or not you think philosophy seems, at this stage, to be worth studying. Identify one of the questions or areas of philosophical study that most interest you and come to class prepared to discuss your reflection.

Wednesday, September 5

Basics of Reasoning


- Nils Rauhut, "[Philosophical Tools](#)," pp.16-30
- Elliot D. Cohen, "[Caution: Faulty Thinking Can be Harmful to Your Happiness, Logic for Everyday Living](#)" Chapter 2: pp.22-29
- Solomon, "[A Little Logic](#)," pp. 15-23, 391-396

Journal: Food for Thought 1

- Logical consistency/compatibility: Do numbers 1, 3, 4-7 of "Food for Thought" in Rauhut (pg.17)
- Logical possibility/impossible: 1-10 of "Food for Thought" in Rauhut (pg. 20)
- Arguments in standard form: 1-3, 5, 6, 8 of "Food for Thought" in Rauhut (pg. 28-29)
- *Note: 150-word minimum does not apply to food for thought assignments*

Friday, September 7

Basics of Reasoning

- Elliot D. Cohen, [Caution: Faulty Thinking Can be Harmful to Your Happiness, Logic for Everyday Living](#) : Chapter 3: pp.40-44

Journal: Others' Fallacies

- Identify a fallacy from the reading that you or someone you know has committed, and write a paragraph of analysis convincingly illustrating why the person in question's thinking exemplifies that fallacy.

Monday, September 10

Deductive and Inductive Reasoning

- Nils Rauhut, "[Philosophical Tools](#)"   pp.21-42

Journal: Food for Thought 2

- Deductive/inductive, standard form: 1-2, 4, 5, 7 of "Food for Thought" in Rauhut (pg. 31-32)
- *Note: 150-word minimum does not apply to food for thought assignments*

Wednesday, September 12

Concepts and Philosophical Experimentation

- Nils Rauhut, "[Philosophical Tools](#)"   pp.21-26

Journal: Food for Thought 3

- Necessary/sufficient conditions: 1-7, 9 of "Food for Thought" in Rauhut (pg.23)
- *Note: 150-word minimum does not apply to food for thought assignments*

Friday, September 14

Informal Fallacies

- Elliot D. Cohen, [Caution: Faulty Thinking Can be Harmful to Your Happiness, Logic for Everyday Living](#)  

Chapter 4: pp.51-53

Chapter 5: pp.60-66

Chapter 6: pp.79-83

Chapter 7: "Rational Thinking and Emotion," pp. 93-97

Journal: My Fallacies

- For this journal you are to identify two to four fallacies that you have or regularly commit. After briefly explaining the fallacies in your own words, drawing on Cohen's text for guidance, explain when you commit these fallacies and why such thinking is irrational. Consider whether or not Cohen's claim that fallacies derail our aim of interpersonal happiness

Monday, September 17

Why Philosophize?



- Plato, "[The Allegory of the Cave](#),"  from *The Republic*
- Audio of above: [The Republic by Plato \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](#), (Begins at 3:05:20)

Journal: Allegory of the Cave

- Briefly explain the allegory of the cave in your own words, and then answer one of the questions below:
- 1) What does Plato's cave tell us about what we see with our eyes? What is truth according to Plato in this allegory?
- 2) Have your senses ever misled you?
- 3) How is it possible that people can believe in illusion and accept it as reality?
- 4) What sometimes happens to people when the illusion is shattered and reality is revealed?
- 5) Describe other "caves" in modern life in which people might be "imprisoned" or feel "imprisoned".
- 6) What could be the elements that prevent people from seeing the truth, or regarding "shadow" as the "truth"?
- 7) What are some things the allegory suggests about the process of enlightenment or education?
- 8) In society today or in your own life, what sorts of things shackle the mind?
- 9) According to the allegory, how do cave prisoners get free? What does this suggest about intellectual freedom?

Wednesday, September 19

Why Philosophize?

- Mark Twain, "[All right, then, I'll go to hell](#)  
- "[On Slaveholders' Sexual Abuse of Slaves" Selections from 19th & 20th-century Slave Narratives \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](#)"




Journal: Twain

Answer one of these questions:

- What does Huck's experience teach us about the power of "common sense" or popular beliefs in society, and thinking independently?
- How does Twain's work relate to Gramsci and/or Plato's?

Friday, September 21

Why Philosophize?

- Cultural Studies UNC "[What Is Cultural Studies?](#)" [\(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](#)
- Antonio Gramsci, "[Philosophy and Culture](#)"  
- Howard Gardner, "[Levers of Mind Change](#)" 
- Optional: Barry Burke, "[Antonio Gramsci, schooling and education \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](#)," *The Encyclopedia of Informal Education* (1999, 2005)

Journal: Gramsci and Plato's Cave

- Explain the meaning of Gramsci's idea of "cultural hegemony" and then explain how it relates to Plato's allegory of the cave. Gramsci contends that common sense often functions to undermine the interests of the groups of people who embrace such beliefs. Do you agree or disagree? Can you think of contemporary examples that support the theory?

Monday, September 24

Midterm Exam

- bring pink scantron with UCF logo and pencil

Wednesday, September 26 & Friday, September 28

Ethics: What is Moral Philosophy?

- Anthony [Weston](#) , "Getting Started," pp.1-15, "Thinking for Yourself," pp.17-32, "Ethics with a Heart" pp.69-82

Journal: Key Aspects of Ethics

- Which aspect of Weston's discussion of ethics do you find most significant or interesting? Can you relate his explanation of ethics in human life to your personal experiences?

Monday, October 1

Ethics: The Banality of Evil

- Democracy Now, "[Hannah Arendt Revisits Fiery Debate over German-Jewish Theorist's Coverage of Eichmann Trial \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](#)," November 26, 2013 (Watch opening 13-minutes)
- Chris Hedges, "[The Greatest Crimes Against Humanity are Perpetrated by People Just Doing their Jobs \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](#)," *Truth Out*, July 23, 2012
- (Optional) Roc Morin, "[\(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.Nazi-Era Snapshots and the Banality of Evil \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](#)," *Vice*, May 13, 2014
- For dramatized exemplification of the banality of evil see Amazon TV series, [The Man in the High Castle \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](#)

Journal: Banality of Evil

Reflect on one or more of the topics listed below:

- Critically examine Chris Hedges work: what are his main points, and what are your thoughts on those points?
- Engage Chris Hedges and other assigned works to explain and reflect on the idea of the "banality of evil." You might consider questions such as, how does Hannah Arendt's view on evil (which is quoted in Hedges' article) challenge "common sense" views on evil?
- In what way does The Man in the High Castle tv series exemplify the idea of "the banality of evil"? How does it relate to Hedges' key points?

Wednesday, October 3

Ethics: Moral Status

- Jeffrey Nall, "[Why Should We All Be Considered "Equal"?](#) (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.,

Journal: Thoughts on Moral Equality

Answer one or more of these questions about the schedule reading:

- Does this essay challenge your understanding of the concept, "equality"? If so, how so?
- Do you agree that all people should be considered morally equally? Why? Why not?
- How could you change your behavior in order to honor or more fully acknowledge the concept of *moral equality*?
- Do you believe that people generally honor the dignity of others, in day to day life? Identify examples of how they do, or do not

Friday, October 5

Ethics: Kantian Ethics

- *Consider Philosophy* Chapter 11:
 - "Ethics: Reason and Emotion," pp.326-332
 - Immanuel Kant, "Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals," pp.341-345

Journal: Kantian Ethics

- Begin by explaining what you understand to be the essence or core of Kantian ethics.
- Then relate the moral theory to a recent event or concern from your personal life, or a situation from current events or even a scenario from a film or TV series you've recently seen.
- Among the questions you might choose to answer are: How does Kantian ethics relate to the decision making made? How would a Kantian have acted differently? What was the difference between what was done and what a Kantian would have done?

Monday, October 8

Ethics: Utilitarianism

- *Consider Philosophy* Chapter 11:
 - "Ethics: Reason and Emotion," pp. 332-338
 - John Stuart Mill, "Utilitarianism," pp.351-354
 - "Ethics: Reason and Emotion," pp. 332-338
 - John Stuart Mill, "Utilitarianism," pp.351-354

Journal: Utilitarianism and Warfare

- Apply utilitarianism to examine the morality of the actions taken by U.S. soldiers presented in the following video. Before writing your analysis, watch this [entire program \(Links to an external site.\)](#)[Links to an external site.](#)
- Specifically, answer the question: how would a utilitarian view the actions taken by these soldiers?
- Be sure to 1) define utilitarianism, 2) explain what utilitarianism would indicate about the rightness/wrongness of the actions chosen, and then 3) explain why utilitarianism would come to this conclusion.
- Finally, discuss whether or not you agree with the above utilitarian perspective: why/why not?

Wednesday, October 10

Ethics: Care Ethics

- *Consider Philosophy* Chapter 12:
 - “Care Ethics,” pp.373-377
 - Virginia Held, “[Taking Care: Care as Practice and Value,](#)” in *The Feminist Philosophy Reader*, ed. Alison Bailey and Chris Cuomo (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2008), pp.497-506

Journal: Care Ethics

- Briefly explain what care ethics is, and then reflect on the role caring has played in your life and moral decision making in particular. Should caring be an important component of moral decision making?

Friday, October 12

Paper Workshop and Concept Review

- Come in to class ready to ask questions and discuss applied ethics paper assignment

Monday, October 15

Ethics: Virtue

- *Consider Philosophy* Chapter 13: “Virtue Ethics,” pp.412-414
- Jeffrey Nall, “[Emphasizing Virtue over Victory. Why We Should Adopt a Virtue Ethics Approach to Social Change](#).” *Zeteo*.

Wednesday, October 17 & Friday, October 19

Philosophy of Religion: Who Am I to Examine God’s Existence?

- *Consider Philosophy* Chapter 2: “Philosophical Questions about Religion,” pp.24-27

Journal: My Religious Beliefs

- Author a reflection on your religious beliefs and how you came to them. Questions to consider might include but are not limited to: What are your religious beliefs? How did you come to those beliefs? What influence did your family, society, and general environment play in shaping those beliefs? Was there a pivotal moment in your life that turned you in a new direction?

Monday, October 22 & Friday, October 26

Philosophy of Religion: Arguments for the Existence of God

- *Consider Philosophy* Chapter 2: “Philosophical Questions about Religion,” pp.27-33

Journal: Assessing Arguments for God

- Which of the arguments for the existence do you find the most convincing and why?

Wednesday, October 24

Philosophy of Religion: Design Argument Questioned

- Mark Twain, “[Passages on God and the Bible](#)”
- Optional: “[Letters from Earth, Mark Twain](#)”

Journal: Twain and God

- Picture your ideal of a good person, someone from history or perhaps someone from your own life. Can you imagine this person, if they were given unlimited powers and knowledge, designing the natural order in this way?
- Now picture your personal ideal of an awful, despicable person, perhaps someone who has harmed you or others. Can you imagine this person designing the natural order in this way? Supposing there is in fact a divine creator, what do your two responses tell you about the character of the designer? Be sure to engage Mark Twain’s perspective in your response.

Monday, October 29 & Wednesday, October 31

Philosophy of Religion: The Problem of Evil

- *Consider Philosophy* Chapter 2: “Philosophical Questions about Religion,” pp.33-37
- John Hick, “[The Problem of Evil](#)” pp.463-469
- [US Nun Tortured in Central America Recalls the Nightmare \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](#)

Journal: Ortiz and Hick

- Read the above article, and then imagine that Sister Ortiz asks for council from John Hick. How would Hick explain her ordeal from his philosophical perspective? Suppose Sister Ortiz asks Hick to answer the question: How is it this evil was allowed to be visited upon me given that God is all good, all powerful and all knowing? Does Sister Ortiz’s experience inspire understandable doubt in God’s goodness or omnipotence, why or why not?

Friday, November 2 & Monday, November 5

Philosophy of Religion: Atheist Existentialism

- *Consider Philosophy* Chapter 2: “Philosophical Questions about Religion,” pp.37-45
- Nietzsche, [Zarathustra's Prologue](#), 9-25
- Nietzsche, [Zarathustra's Prologue](#), 30-33
- Nietzsche, [“Eternal Recurrence”](#), 48-49

Journal: My Life in the Light of Eternal Recurrence

- Take 15 minutes out to reflect upon your life. Specifically, examine our life in light of Nietzsche’s concept of “eternal recurrence.” Viewing your life in this way, would you say that you are on the path to consummating your life or that you are living a truly meaningful life?

Wednesday, November 7 & Friday, November 9

Philosophy of Religion: Feminist Perspectives on Divinity

- Mary Daly, [“The Gender of God”](#)
- Alice Walker, [“The Only Reason....”](#)
- Carol Christ, [“Why Women Need the Goddess....”](#)
- Harriet A. Jacobs, [Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl](#) (1861)

Journal: Feminist Perspectives on God

- Drawing on a minimum of two different essays, describe how these works challenge the conventional debate about God’s existence? What thoughts have they provoked in you?

Wednesday, November 14

Epistemology: Skepticism and Descartes

- *Consider Philosophy* Chapter 3: “What Can We Know,” pp.63-82

Journal: How I Know

- In your day-to-day life, how do you come to determinations that something is true rather than false? How does this approach to truth relate to chapter 3?


Friday, November 16 & Monday, November 19

Epistemology: Rationalism and Empiricism

- *Consider Philosophy* Chapter 4: “Rationalism, Empiricism, Kant,” pp.91-113

Wednesday, November 21

Epistemology: Existentialism

- Nietzsche, “[On the Prejudices of Philosophers](#) ,” from *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future* read sections marked number 3-6, 11, 16-17 (note these are *not* page numbers but the section numbers appearing at the center above each separate section).
- Optional: Friedrich Nietzsche, “[On Truth and Lie in an Extra-Moral Sense \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](#),” or Summary of the work: Maria Popova, “[Nietzsche on Truth, Lies, the Power and Peril of Metaphor, and How We Use Language to Reveal and Conceal Reality \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](#),”

Journal: Existentialist Epistemology

- How do Nietzsche’s ideas confront and challenge those of other philosophers? What are the key differences?
- What key criteria does Nietzsche identify for the determination of what is true?
- Do his ideas resonate with you, or do you find yourself deeply resistant to them?

Monday, November 26

Epistemology: Pragmatism

- *Consider Philosophy* Chapter 5: “Contemporary Epistemology,” pp.125-142

Journal: Pragmatist Epistemology

- What factors have contributed to changing visions of epistemology, as per Waller?
- Is the contemporary vision of epistemology more reasonable, in your view, than those of prior ages? Why?
- What do you find most striking about the reading?

Wednesday, November 28

Epistemology and Social Power

- Val Plumwood, “[Blindspots of Centrism](#) ,” pp.97-109 (optional: pp.109-122)

Journal: Epistemology and Power

- Explain “hegemonic centrism” in your own words, and then identify two examples of such “centrisms.”

Friday, November 30

Feminist Epistemology

- Sandra Harding, "["Strong Objectivity?": A Response to the New Objectivity Question](#)"; Start with section headed "["Standpoint Approaches: Systematic Procedures for Maximizing Objectivity"](#)" and conclude with "["Consciousness Not Determined by Social Location,"](#) pp. 341-345

Journal: Feminist Epistemology

- What do you think of feminist epistemology: How does feminist epistemology compare to other forms we've explored so far? How does it differ from the theories presented by Descartes, Locke, and Hume? In what ways does it relate to Nietzsche's ideas?

Monday, December 3, 10-12:50pm

Self-Evaluation Group Share & Final Exam

- Review for exam

Extra Credit:

- Students wishing to receive +4% to their final exam grade may bring in a copy of their self-evaluation reflection to share with the class. Students can omit any private details relayed in the self-evaluation but are asked to read as much of the reflection as they are comfortable sharing.
- To receive the +5% credit students will hand in a printed copy of the self-evaluation to the professor after they have shared it with the class.