

FALL 2017

Contact

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Course Information

- Course Name: Introduction to Philosophy
- Course ID & Section: 2010 0W63
- Credit Hours: 3
- Semester/Year: FALL 2017
- Location: Online

Course Description

This course surveys the fundamentals of philosophy through a richly historical and paradigmatic study of philosophy from the Axial Age to contemporary times. Our explorations will revolve around questions regarding the nature of philosophy itself as well as the practical significance of thinking and acting philosophically. Specifically, we will examine the differences between various “schools” of philosophy, and different sub-disciplines of philosophy (e.g., ethics, metaphysics, epistemology, etc.) for the purpose of discerning the value of philosophy for our lives.

Course Objectives:

By the end of this course, students will be able:

- To understand the basic problems of philosophy and their relationship to life.
- To develop critical thinking, writing, and reading skills that will contribute to their success in other courses and in life.
- To recognize the differences between good and bad arguments.
- To analyze and discuss meanings in philosophical texts and arguments from different historical periods.
- To draw connections between the discipline of philosophy and other academic disciplines.

--To engage actively in philosophical dialogue and critically discuss and evaluate philosophical arguments.

Required Texts:

Cottingham, John G. *Western Philosophy: An Anthology*. 2nd edition. ISBN-13: 978-140512478

Magee, Bryan. *The Great Philosophers: An Introduction to Western Philosophy*

Recommended secondary source: Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy <http://plato.stanford.edu/contents.html> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

Grading Details:

--Participation/Discussion = 30%

--Four Quizzes = 20%

--Midterm = 25%

--Final = 25%

30% Participation/Discussion—Thirty percent of your grade will be determined by your participation online, namely by (1) taking all practices quizzes, and (2) contributing to all discussions. Every week, your discussion posts will be a response to a prompt I post based on the readings.

Rubric for Discussion Topics:

I cannot express enough how important it is to write thoughtful, clear, and *well-informed* posts in order to do well in this online course. There will be no face-to-face meetings outside of office hours (if needed), so your discussion posts ought to be considered as a representation of your best comments and thoughts on the material.

Take your time on them.

For each discussion post you must write you own post and comment on at least two other posts.

The discussion postings are to be treated--and will be graded--as formal, academic written assignments. For this reason it is advisable to compose each discussion post in Word (or a similar program) and then copy and paste it into the text box.

When you are composing your posts, you should keep in mind the important difference between expository and critical posts. An expository post merely explains something. And although some of the prompts will call for some explanation, make sure you are also writing something critical.

Critical writing involves the construction of an argument--a position or thesis that you defend. This means you need to support the claims you make. **An argument is not an opinion, an assertion or a belief**, though you should feel free to construct your argument in the first person.

Your posts and replies on the discussion group must original.

What makes a post or reply original?

Answer:

1. One that does not repeat what others have said
2. One that does not cut and paste or copy what is on the internet
3. One that is articulate and answers the prompt

20% Quizzes--Twenty percent of your grade will be based on your performance on four quizzes.

25% Midterm--Another twenty-five percent of your grade will be based on your performance on the midterm, which will cover material covered in the first half of the semester.

25% Final--The final will be a cumulative final, all the material in all modules will be testable items.

Pace and Exams

Philosophy is a difficult discipline. It requires one to call into question the “normal” or common way of perceiving and understanding the world and one’s place in it. Consequently, it is extremely important not to rush through the material or to “look and find” answers to quizzes and exams. Many of the exam questions—and all your posts—will require serious reflection, without which it will be difficult to do well in this course.

Academic Honesty

The integrity of student's work is a critical component of the academic process. The submission of another’s work as one’s own is plagiarism and will be dealt with using the procedures outlined in the University of Central Florida catalog.

Examples of cheating include but are not limited to:

1. The unauthorized possession or use of notes, texts, electronic devices (e.g., computers, mobile phones), online materials or other such unauthorized materials/devices in fulfillment of course requirements.
2. Copying another’s person work or participation in such an effort.
3. An attempt or participation in an attempt to fulfill the requirements of the course with work other than one’s own.

4. Forging or deliberately misrepresenting data or results.
5. Obtaining or offering either for profit or free of charge materials one might submit or has submitted for academic credit. This includes uploading course materials to online sites devoted in whole or in part, to aiding and abetting cheating under the guise of providing “study aids.” There is no prohibition concerning uploading exemplars of one’s work to one’s personal website or to departmental, divisional, University or professional society websites for the purposes of publicity, praise, examination or review by potential employers, graduate school admissions committees, etc.
6. Violating the specific directions concerning the operation of the honor code in relation to a particular assignment.
7. Making unauthorized copies of graded work for future distribution.
8. Claiming credit for a group project to which one did not contribute.

There are NO MAKE UPS for any parts of this course without a legitimate excuse.

Legitimate Excuses: college-sponsored activities closely linked to academics or to other official college functions (administrative, athletic, etc.); student illness or injury—with a note from health services—as well as critical illness/death in one’s immediate family; jury duty (or subpoena for court appearance); religious holidays (for students who actively practice the religion).

Incomplete: The grade of incomplete will be given only in special circumstances such as an illness, an accident, or a death in the family.

Accessibility Statement

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 with disabilities who need accommodations in this course must contact the professor at the beginning of the semester to discuss needed accommodations. No accommodations will be provided until the student has met with the professor to request accommodations. Students who need accommodations must connect with [Student Accessibility Services](#), Ferrell Commons, 7F, Room 185, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, before requesting accommodations from the professor.

Copyright

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Third-Party Software and FERPA

During this course you might have the opportunity to use public online services and/or software applications sometimes called third-party software such as a blog or wiki. While some of these could be required assignments, you need **not** make any personally identifying information on a public site. Do not post or provide any private information about yourself or your classmates. Where appropriate you may use a pseudonym or nickname. Some written assignments posted publicly may require personal reflection/comments, but the assignments will not require you to disclose any personally identity-sensitive information. If you have any concerns about this, please contact your instructor.

Schedule

Since I don't want you to work too far ahead, each module (including quizzes, exams will be released ONLINE on the Sunday of each new week (with the exception of the first week, which will be released on Tuesday, the 21st). ALL READINGS AND ALL INSTRUCTIONS FOR DISCUSSION POSTS, QUIZZES AND EXAMS ARE ONLINE, BELOW ARE THE DUE DATES FOR ALL ASSIGNMENTS:

The Structure of our Schedule (VERY IMPORTANT, PLEASE READ):

--Modules will be released every week. For example, for week one, I will release module one, week two, module two, etc. Each module will include reading assignments for the week, a discussion post prompt, sometimes videos when appropriate.

--Each student will be required to post their discussion posts online (total posts=15).

IMPORTANT DATES --PLEASE WRITE THESE DATES INTO YOUR PHONES OR UPON SOME TYPE OF CALENDAR YOU CHECK REGULARLY:

Dates for Four Quizzes (each quiz will be opened at 12:01 a.m. and will be closed at 11:59 p.m. the same day):

Quiz One: FRIDAY--9/15

Quiz Two: FRIDAY--9/29

Quiz Three: FRIDAY--11/5

Quiz Four: FRIDAY--11/17

Students will have 24 hours to take each quiz, though each quiz will be time limited, for example, 20 minutes. There are no make-ups for missed quizzes.

Midterm and Final Dates:

MIDTERM: FRIDAY--10/20

FINAL: FRIDAY--12/1

