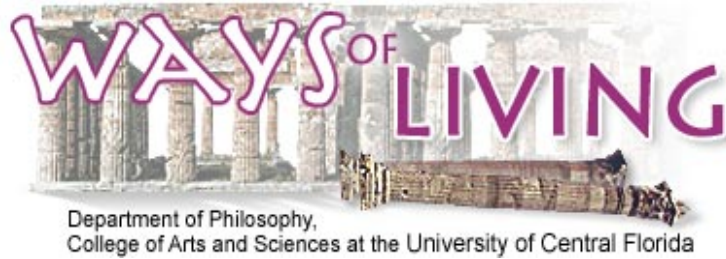


Course Introduction



PHI 3684 - Ways of Living **Dr. Sabatino DiBernardo**

Course Description:

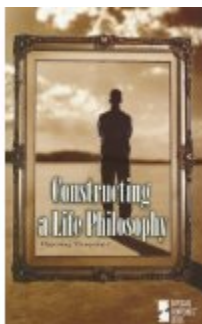
This course is an introduction to various philosophical and religious systems of meaning, value, and truth in premodern, modern, and postmodern historical contexts. In addition to familiarizing students with "Eastern" and "Western" cultural constructions of reality, this course will facilitate critical thinking regarding different worldviews and various modes of being/living in the world that continue to provide meaning and exert influence in contemporary culture regarding.

Course Objectives:

- To provide students with an introductory survey of various trans-historical and cross-cultural philosophical and religious worldviews
- To engage students in critical thinking about diverse beliefs, values, and practices in relation to life philosophies
- To provide students an opportunity to think about and discuss philosophical and religious approaches to questions about the self, community, and culture
- To introduce students to various modern and postmodern theoretical perspectives

Texts:

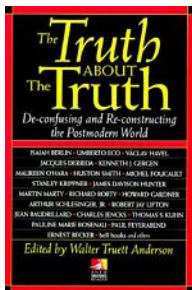
***Constructing a Life Philosophy*, Mary Williams ed. (Greenhaven Press, 2005)**



***The Good Life*, Charles Guignon ed. (Hackett Publishing, 1999)**



***The Truth About The Truth: De-Confusing and Re-Constructing the Postmodern World*, Walter Truett Anderson ed. (Penguin Putnam, 1995)**



Course Introduction:

The course is structured around anthologies of primary readings from diverse historical, geographical, philosophical and religious perspectives. Let me begin by saying that condensing an entire semester's worth of readings, assessments, and assignments into a six-week summer session will not be easy. There will be at least 100+ pages worth of readings to get through in each weekly module followed by assessments and assignments. The books will progress from very accessible (i.e., easy) to less accessible (i.e., not so easy) in order to ease into the philosophical and theoretical matters at stake in thinking about worldviews. If you hope to do well in the course, make sure you keep up with the readings, assessments, and assignments. If you encounter any problems or have any questions about the material, don't hesitate to message me through course mail. If you have any questions about Canvas (or technical questions), click on **Help** icon at the top right of the screen after you have gone through the student's manual later in this module.

Point Distribution:

I. Written Assignments (44% of total possible points): Participation in the course will be determined by different writing assignments (i.e., posts) in each of the modules. These may consist of discussion questions/responses, essays, short answer, or video posts. Directions for these written assignments will be provided under the "Assignments" heading in each module. Discussions will close at the end of each module; do not wait until the last day to

respond. Writing assignments **will not** be reopened once closed. If you have a documented medical emergency, you must provide a note from your doctor in order for me to consider allowing a missed assignment to be completed.

II. Quizzes/Final (56% of total possible points): There will be a quiz in each of the modules as well as a final exam in the last module to assess your comprehension of the material. Quizzes and the final exam will consist of responding to multiple-choice questions based on the readings. Given the (default) open book nature of the course, **quizzes and the final will be timed**. So, make sure you have read and comprehended the chapters before taking the quizzes/final. I would also suggest making a handy reference guide with names, theoretical positions, beliefs, etc. along with page numbers to reduce page-flipping during the timed assessments.

Final grades will be based on the **number of points earned** by the student out of a total of 500 possible points. Canvas has a habit of breaking down different types of assignments in terms of percentages. This feature cannot be turned off; do not let those percentages confuse you. AS you complete assignments, you will be given points. This and the grading grid below should give you an idea of where you stand at any point throughout the semester. Final grades will be based on your **total number of points** (as reflected in the grading grid below).

Grade Scale

A = 473-500 pts.
 A- = 448-472 pts.
 B+ = 423-447 pts.
 B = 398-422 pts.

C+ = 373-397 pts.
 C = 348-372 pts.
 D+ = 323-347 pts.
 D = 298-322 pts.
 F = 297 pts. and below

Module Schedule

Module	Topics	Text & Readings	Opens/Closes
1	Course Introduction Choosing a Life Philosophy and Life's Ultimate Meaning	Course and Canvas Material <i>Constructing a Life Philosophy</i> • Chs. 1 & 2	Monday 5/18 @ 8:00 am -- Monday 5/25 @ 6:00 pm
2	Religion, Meaning, Morals, and Guiding Principles	<i>Constructing a Life Philosophy</i> • Chs. 3-5	Monday 5/25 @ 6:00 pm -- Monday 6/1 @ 6:00 pm

3	Classics and Religion	<i>The Good Life</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classical Sources (Chs. 1-5) • Religious Ways of Life (Chs. 6-10) 	Monday 6/1 @ 6:00 pm -- Monday 6/8 @ 6:00 pm
4	Reason and the Self	<i>The Good Life</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Use of Reason (Chs. 11-13) • Self-Exploration (Chs. 14-17) • Self-Realization (Chs. 18-20) 	Monday 6/8 @ 6:00 pm -- Monday 6/15 @ 6:00 pm
5	Themes and Definitions The Construction of Reality Three Useful Inventions Symbols at Work and Play Different Kinds of Difference	<i>The Truth About The Truth</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction • Part One: In And Out Of The Grand Hotel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Chs. 1-9 • Part Two: All That Is Solid Melts Into Air <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Chs. 10-19 	Monday 6/15 @ 6:00 pm -- Monday 6/22 @ 6:00 pm
6	The Pluralistic Person, the Disappearing Self Sex and Gender Reconstructing Psychology Science without Scientism Religion in the Age of Disbelief Final Exam	<i>The Truth About The Truth</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part Three: Self, Sex, and Sanity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Chs. 20-26 • Part Four: Faith and Freedom <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Chs. 27-33 	Monday 6/22 @ 6:00 pm -- Friday 6/26 @ 11:59 pm (Note: This final module closes Friday 6/26 @ 11:59 pm)

Personal and Academic Conduct

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism and Cheating of any kind on an examination, quiz, or assignment will result at least in an "F" for that assignment (and may, depending on the severity of the case, lead to an "F" for the

entire course) and may be subject to appropriate referral to the Office of Student Conduct for further action. See the [UCF Golden Rule](#) for further information. I will assume for this course that you will adhere to the academic creed of this University and will maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. In other words, don't cheat by giving answers to others or taking them from anyone else. I will also adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity, so please do not ask me to change (or expect me to change) your grade illegitimately or to bend or break rules for one person that will not apply to everyone.

Personal Conduct

You are expected to conduct yourself in a manner that is conducive to the academic ends that we are attempting to achieve (see University standards for personal conduct as outlined in The Golden Rule). It is expected that each student will respect the views of those in the course and will refrain from offensive posts. Furthermore, it is expected that each student will be sensitive to the beliefs/values of others in the course. **Critical thinking should not be understood as “belief bashing.”** In the case that this advice is not followed you should expect a lowering of your final grade or, in the event of continuous serious violations, removal from the course.

Disability 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 be registered with Student Disability Services, Student Resource Center Room 132, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, before requesting accommodations from the professor.

Copyright

This course may contain copyright protected materials such as audio or video clips, images, text materials, etc. These items are being used with regard to the Fair Use doctrine in order to enhance the learning environment. Please do not copy, duplicate, download or distribute these items. The use of these materials is strictly reserved for this online classroom environment and your use only. All copyright materials are credited to the copyright holder.

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.

Protocols

Cyber Classroom Expectations

The following ground rules will help your work in this course to go more smoothly. Please review these expectations carefully and follow them.

1. Academic integrity will be appraised according to the student academic behavior standards outlined in *The Golden Rule of the University of Central Florida's Student Handbook*. See <http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/> for further details.
2. Keep up with the reading. You have quite a few chapters, modules, discussion postings, and messages to read for the class. Students who keep up with the reading tend to do much better in this kind of class than those who do not.

Messaging

Make sure you:

1. Check your inbox/conversations at least twice per week (more often is better).
2. Be patient. Don't expect an immediate response when you send a message. Generally, two days is considered reasonable amount of time to receive a reply. I will do my best to get back to you as soon as possible after receiving your message.
3. Be courteous and considerate. Being honest and expressing yourself freely is very important but being considerate of others online is just as important as in a face-to-face classroom.
4. Make every effort to be clear. Online communication lacks the nonverbal cues that fill in much of the meaning in face-to-face communication.
5. Do not use all caps. This makes the message very hard to read and is considered "shouting." Check spelling, grammar, and punctuation (you may want to compose in a word processor, then cut and paste the message into the discussion).
6. Break up large blocks of text into paragraphs and use a space between paragraphs.
7. Never assume that your conversations can be read by no one except yourself; others may be able to read or access your mail. Never send or keep anything that you would not mind seeing on the evening news.

Written Assignments

General "rules of the road" or protocols that apply to messaging also apply to the written assignments. Use the following conventions when composing a written assignments or discussion posting:

1. During a written assignment, deadlines for posting and replying will be specified with each assignment. It is a good practice to always check the assignments multiple times during the week.

2. Be patient. Don't expect an immediate response when you post something. The comment box in assignments does not provide your instructor with an alert (unlike messaging). If you do post a comment in the box, send me a message to make sure I go back into the module and look at it (or send me your comment through course mail).
3. A helpful hint for use with written assignments --- Compose your message in your word-processing application in order to check spelling, punctuation, and grammar --- then copy and paste your composition into the assignment or the discussion. This also saves time online.
4. Everyone should feel free to participate in class and online discussions. Regular and meaningful discussion postings constitute a substantial portion of your grade.
5. Respect each other's ideas, feelings, and experiences.
6. Be courteous and considerate.
7. Explore disagreements and support assertions with data and evidence.
8. Use the "reply" button if you are replying to someone else's posting.
9. Do not use postings such as "I agree," "I don't know either," "Who cares," or "ditto." They do not add to the discussion, take up space, and will not be counted for assignment credit.
10. Avoid posting large blocks of text. If you must, break them into paragraphs and use a space between paragraphs.

Word of Caution

Since this course is predominantly self-paced and a highly condensed summer session, my **very strong recommendation** is that you keep up with the readings, written assignments, and quizzes in order to stay on track. It has been my experience that self-paced courses are a double-edged sword. The flexibility that makes online courses popular also brings with it the temptation to procrastinate in the absence of weekly F2F meetings. As a result, withdrawals and "F's" (and generally poor grades) due to the inability to complete work are very high in online courses. This is especially the case during summer sessions. Given this flexibility as well as the open-book nature of this course, **unless specified, assignments will not be reopened once closed; no "Incomplete" will be granted without a documented medical emergency. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of all deadlines.** If you find that you have forgotten, misread, misunderstood, misconstrued the deadlines, and/or have "misplaced" your cyber-calendar, are the victim of a computer crash, have fallen prey to cyber-gremlins, and/or your cyber-dog ate your cyber-paper, and/or just plain procrastinated, **do not** contact the instructor with a request (let alone expect) that a quiz or written assignment be reopened.

The moral of the story is this: if you want to avoid undue stress, anxiety, and do well in the course, make sure you take the time to read on a consistent basis and check in on the conversation messages regularly; **do not wait until the last possible day/minute to take assessments and post assignments.** I can't stress this last point enough, since it is inevitable that many students wait until the last possible minutes prior to the deadline to turn in assignments. Keep in mind those students that are actively engaged in the course will fare better at the end of the semester. If you have any questions concerning the course, feel free to message me. If you encounter material in the readings that you do not understand, contact me and I will gladly assist you. Also, if you wish to have a conversation about any of the material (just because you're interested), feel free to message me.

Federal Financial Aid Regulation

All faculty members are required to document students' engagement in the course based on their academic activity at the beginning of each semester. In order to document that you have begun this course, the **student information for instructor** assignment included in this module must be completed within the first week of classes (or, if adding the course late, as soon as you have access to the course). One of the questions in that assignment will be used to determine your registered attendance in the course. Failure to complete this assignment prior to the deadline will result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.