

University of Central Florida
PHI 2010 H: Honors Introduction to Philosophy
Fall 2018, Syllabus, v. 08192018



Course Information

- Title: Honors Introduction to Philosophy
- Course number-section: PHI 2010 H-203 (81478)
- Credit hours: 3.0
- Term: Fall semester 2018
- Days and times: Tuesday and Thursday; 12:00 pm – 1:15 pm
- Location: Psychology Building (PSY) 228B

Instructor Information

- Name: Luis Favela, Ph.D. (Please refer to me as “Dr. Favela” or “Professor Favela.”)
- Email: luis.favela@ucf.edu
- Website: <http://philosophy.cah.ucf.edu/staff.php?id=1017>
- Office location: PSY 0245
- Office hours: Tuesday and Thursday 3:00 – 4:30 pm

Course Description

- Catalogue 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.
- Detailed description: The word ‘philosophy’ comes from the ancient Greek word for “love of wisdom.” Many of the sciences of today—e.g., biology, physics, psychology, etc.—began as philosophy, and were called “natural philosophy.” One way to think of philosophy historically is as the place where investigations of the world begin when we are not even sure what are the right questions to ask. When the theories and methods begin to get clear, then that part of human inquiry is sometimes carved off and becomes a discipline on its own. So, in one sense, philosophy is where other disciplines begin, but in another, it is also the most general of disciplines. As one philosopher put it, “The aim of philosophy...is to understand how things in the broadest possible sense of the term hang together in the broadest possible sense of the term” (Wilfrid Sellars, 1912-1989 CE). Typical topics of study in philosophy include ethics (“What is the right or wrong thing to do?”), mind (“How do my thoughts relate to my brain?”), and ontology (“What is it to be?”).

Since philosophy has such a deep history (dating at least to around 500 BCE), has been practiced in many forms around the world (e.g., African, ancient Greek, Buddhist, etc.), and covers just about any topic worthy of attention (e.g., god, knowledge, logic, politics, etc.), it is impossible to introduce all of philosophy in a single course. As such, this course will introduce philosophy by means of a sampling of some of the big problems in philosophy, for example: “Can computers have minds,” “Do non-human animals have rights,” “Does a god exist,” “What is knowledge,” and “What is the meaning of life?” By taking the *big problems* approach, along the way we will discuss some of the big names in philosophy (e.g., Descartes, Hume, etc.) and some of the methods that are particular to philosophy (e.g., logic, Socratic method, thought experiments, etc.).

Student Learning Outcomes

- Students will be able to *describe* a number of the “big problems” in the history of philosophy.
 - Students will be able to *reconstruct* the arguments (premises and conclusion) behind a number of the “big problems” in the history of philosophy.
 - Students will be able to *articulate* their positions concerning whether or not they agree with the conclusions of the arguments behind a number of the “big problems” in the history of philosophy.
- Students will be able to *distinguish* opinions from arguments.
 - Students will be able to *categorize* statements about various topics as either an opinion or an argument.
 - Students will be able to rewrite opinions as arguments (in premises and conclusion format).

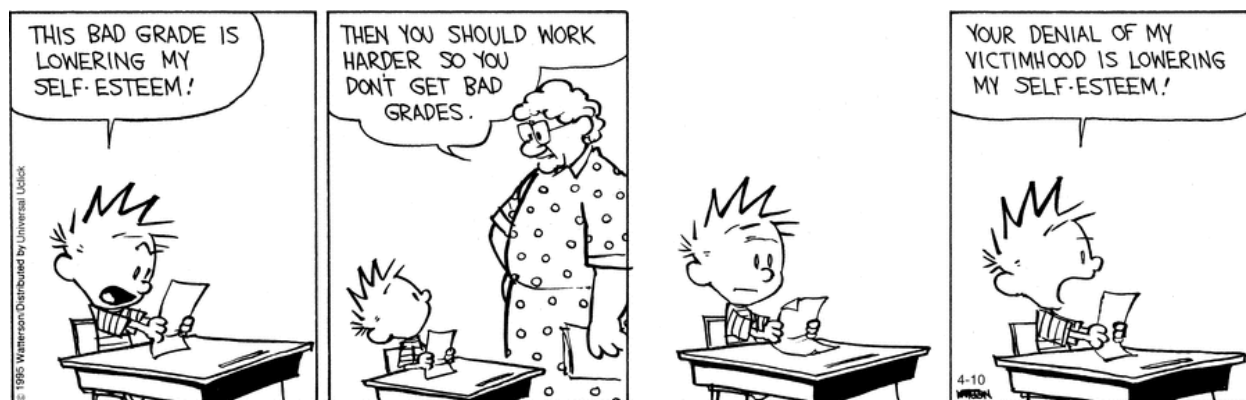
Course Materials

- Required textbook: Cahn, S. M. (2014). *Exploring philosophy: An introductory anthology, fifth edition*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. ISBN # 9780190204419

Course Requirements

- **Required Academic Activity**
 - All instructors/faculty 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 following academic activity by the end of the first week of classes or as soon as possible after adding the course. Failure to do so may result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.
 - Activity: Submit signed last page of syllabus. Due 1:15 pm, Thursday, August 23.
- Participation
 - Participation is accounted for by means of various in-class activities.
 - Examples include: class discussions, four-sentence papers, and think-pair-share.
- Quizzes
 - There will be 13 quizzes, or about one per week.
 - Quiz questions will be based on material from the assigned readings and in-class lectures and discussions.
- Papers
 - Students will have two paper assignments.
 - Guidelines and expectations will be distributed closer to the assignment dates.
- Note: You are responsible for all reading assignments. Unless stated otherwise (e.g., “optional” readings), anything assigned to you is potential quiz or paper material.

Grading

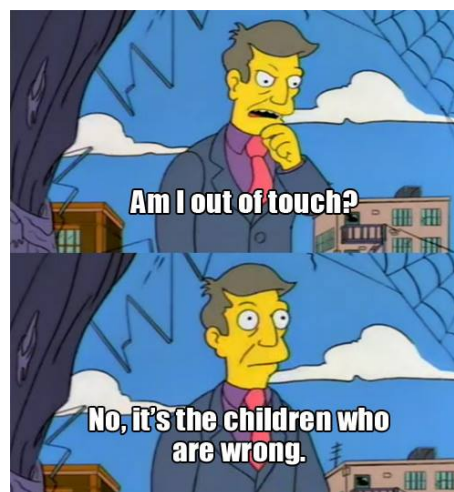


- Participation
 - 10 points each week, 16 weeks, 160 points total
 - Combined ~20% of total grade, each week ~1.25% of total grade
- Quizzes
 - 13 quizzes, 20 points each, 260 points total
 - Combined ~32% of total grade, each quiz ~2.5% of total grade
- Papers
 - Paper 1, 195 points, ~24% of total grade
 - Paper 2, 195 points, ~24% of total grade
 - Combined both papers are ~48% of total grade
- Total
 - 810 points
 - 729-810 = A
 - 648-728 = B
 - 567-647 = C
 - 486-566 = D
 - 000-485 = F
 - The following example demonstrates how +/- are assigned:
 - B- = 80, 81, 82%
 - B = 83, 84, 85, 86%
 - B+ = 87, 88, 89%
 - Percentages are not rounded, for example, an 80.2% is a B-, an 82.6% is a B-, an 89.8% is a B+, etc.
- Incomplete grades: The current university policy concerning incomplete grades will be followed in this course. Incomplete grades are given only in situations where unexpected emergencies prevent a student from completing the course and the remaining work can be completed the next semester. As the instructor for this course, I am the final authority on whether you qualify for an incomplete. Incomplete work must be finished by the end of the subsequent semester or the "I" will automatically be recorded as an "F" on your transcript.
- Extensions and late assignments
 - In general, no extensions will be allowed or late assignments accepted. (Really.)

- However, extensions and late assignments will be considered for exceptional circumstances (e.g., family or medical emergencies) if appropriate documentation can be provided (e.g., doctor's note, funeral program, etc.).
- If an assignment is accepted late, then it will be deducted 5% of the total possible points for every 12-hour block of time it is submitted late, including weekends.
- Extra credit: There is no extra credit.
- Grade distributions: The final grades will not be curved.
- Grade dissemination: Graded materials in this course will be returned individually by request. You can access your scores at any time using the Grades section of Webcourses@UCF.

Course Policies

- Contact procedures
 - In-person contact: If you have questions related to the course, then see me before or after our scheduled class meetings, or during my office hours. We can attempt to schedule another time if you are unable to meet during those.
 - Email: Keep emailing to a minimum. It is better to ask me in person. However, if you do email me, then be professional (e.g., start the email with “Hello Dr. Favela” and not “Hey you, can I have...”) and concise. Allow 24 hours for a response during the week, and possibly more during the weekend and holidays.
 - Webcourses: **Do not contact me via Webcourses.** I do not check it and will not reply.
- Professionalism policy: Per university policy and classroom etiquette, mobile phones, iPods, etc. must be silenced during the entire class time period. Those not heeding this rule will be asked to leave the classroom immediately so as to not disrupt the learning environment. Please arrive on time for all class meetings. Students who habitually disturb the class by talking, arriving late, etc., will be warned and can suffer a reduction in their final class grade.
- In-class technology policy: “Stay focused” rule (cf. Shirky 2014): *Electronic devices such as laptops, iPads, smart phones, etc. are not allowed in class, unless an assignment requires it.* Why not? First, numerous studies show that students spend a great deal of their laptop time in class on activities not related to the course (Facebook, games, Reddit, etc.) and—most importantly—that these distractions negatively impact learning and grades (Fried, 2008; Gorlick, 2009; Holstead, 2015; Thagard, 2010). Second, research shows that non-class-related laptop use distracts and impacts the learning of other students (Fried, 2008; Thagard, 2010). Third, other research shows that taking notes by hand is more effective in learning (Berninger et al., 2006; Bounds, 2010; James & Engelhardt, 2010; Konnikova, 2010; Mueller & Oppenheimer, 2014). In summary, electronic devices are not allowed in class, except for those with documented needs, which, if that is the case, you need to see me during the first two weeks of class. Contact me if you would like full references for the above citations.



- Academic integrity: Students should familiarize themselves with UCF’s Rules of Conduct at <<http://osc.sdes.ucf.edu/process/roc>>.
 - According to Section 1, “Academic Misconduct,” students are prohibited from engaging in:
 - Unauthorized assistance: Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information or study aids in any academic exercise unless specifically authorized by the instructor of record. The unauthorized possession of examination or course-related material also constitutes cheating.
 - Communication to another through written, visual, electronic, or oral means: The presentation of material which has not been studied or learned, but rather was obtained through someone else’s efforts and used as part of an examination, course assignment, or project.
 - Commercial use of academic material: Selling of course material to another person, student, and/or uploading course material to a third-party vendor without authorization or without the express written permission of the university and the instructor. Course materials include but are not limited to class notes, Instructor’s PowerPoints, course syllabi, tests, quizzes, labs, instruction sheets, homework, study guides, handouts, etc.
 - Falsifying or misrepresenting the student’s own academic work.
 - Plagiarism: Using or appropriating another’s work without any indication of the source, thereby attempting to convey the impression that such work is the student’s own.
 - Multiple submissions: Submitting the same academic work for credit more than once without the express written permission of the instructor.
 - Helping another violate academic behavior standards.
 - For more information about Academic Integrity, consult the International Center for Academic Integrity <<http://academicintegrity.org>>.
 - For more information about plagiarism and misuse of sources, see “Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism: The WPA Statement on Best Practices” <<http://wpacouncil.org/node/9>>.
- Responses to academic dishonesty, plagiarism, or cheating: Students should also familiarize themselves with the procedures for academic misconduct in UCF’s student handbook, The Golden Rule <<http://goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/docs/goldenrule.pdf>>. UCF faculty members have a responsibility for students’ education and the value of a UCF degree, and so seek to prevent unethical behavior and when necessary respond to academic misconduct. Penalties can include a failing grade in an assignment or in the course, suspension or expulsion from the university, and/or a “Z Designation” on a student’s official transcript indicating academic dishonesty, where the final grade for this course will be preceded by the letter Z. For more information about the Z Designation, see <<http://goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/zgrade>>.
- Course accessibility
 - The University of Central Florida is committed to providing access and inclusion for all persons with disabilities. Students with disabilities who need disability-related access in this course should contact the professor within the first two weeks of class. Students should also connect with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) <<http://sas.sdes.ucf.edu/>> (Ferrell Commons 185, sas@ucf.edu, phone 407-823-2371). Through SAS, a Course Accessibility Letter may be created and sent to professors, which informs faculty of

- potential access and accommodations that might be reasonable. Determining reasonable access and accommodations requires consideration of the course design, course learning objectives and the individual academic and course barriers experienced by the student.
- Campus safety statement: Emergencies on campus are rare, but if one should arise during class, everyone needs to work together. Students should be aware of their surroundings and familiar with some basic safety and security concepts.
 - In case of an emergency, dial 911 for assistance.
 - Every UCF classroom contains an emergency procedure guide posted on a wall near the door. Students should make a note of the guide's physical location and review the online version at http://emergency.ucf.edu/emergency_guide.html.
 - Students should know the evacuation routes from each of their classrooms and have a plan for finding safety in case of an emergency.
 - If there is a medical emergency during class, students may need to access a first-aid kit or AED (Automated External Defibrillator). To learn where those are located, see <http://www.ehs.ucf.edu/AEDlocations-UCF> (click on link from menu on left).
 - To stay informed about emergency situations, students can sign up to receive UCF text alerts by going to <https://my.ucf.edu> and logging in. Click on "Student Self Service" located on the left side of the screen in the toolbar, scroll down to the blue "Personal Information" heading on the Student Center screen, click on "UCF Alert", fill out the information, including e-mail address, cell phone number, and cell phone provider, click "Apply" to save the changes, and then click "OK."
 - Students with special needs related to emergency situations should speak with their instructors outside of class. To learn about how to manage an active-shooter situation on campus or elsewhere, consider viewing this video <https://youtu.be/NIKYajEx4pk>.
 - Make-up assignments for authorized university events or co-curricular activities: Students who represent the university in an authorized event or activity (for example, student-athletes) and who are unable to meet a course deadline due to a conflict with that event must provide the instructor with documentation in advance to arrange a make-up. No penalty will be applied. For more information, see the UCF policy at <http://policies.ucf.edu/documents/4-401.1MakeupAssignmentsForAuthorizedUniversityEventsOrCocurricularActivities.pdf>.
 - Religious observances: Students must notify their instructor in advance if they intend to miss class for a religious observance. For more information, see the UCF policy at <http://regulations.ucf.edu/chapter5/documents/5.020ReligiousObservancesFINALOct17.pdf>.
 - Deployed active duty military students: Students who are deployed active duty military and/or National Guard personnel and require accommodation should contact their instructors as soon as possible after the semester begins and/or after they receive notification of deployment to make related arrangements.
 - Controversial content: We will be learning about and discussing a number of controversial topics. Materials may include unsettling examples, profanity, and nudity. If you feel uncomfortable with this, please let me know and we can attempt to make accommodations.
 - In-class recording policy: Outside of the note-taking and recording services offered by Student Accessibility Services, the creation of an audio or video recording of all or part of a class for personal use is not allowed.

- **Copyright and intellectual property**
 - 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.
 - Unauthorized use of class materials: There are many fraudulent websites claiming to offer study aids to students but are actually cheat sites. They encourage students to upload course materials, such as test questions, individual assignments, and examples of graded material. Such materials are the intellectual property of instructors, the university, or publishers and may not be distributed without prior authorization. Students who engage in such activity are in violation of academic conduct standards and may face penalties.
- Syllabus adjustments: The instructor reserves the right to modify all parts of the syllabus during the course. The instructor will inform students if any modifications are made.

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

- Classes begin: August 20
- Last day to drop and request full refund: August 23
- Add deadline: 11:59 pm, August 24
- Withdrawal deadline: 11:59 pm, October 26
- No class: November 22 (holiday)
- Classes end: December 1
- Finals: December 3-8
- Grades available: 9:00 am, December 14

Schedule

Week	Dates	Topic	Readings	Assignments
1	Aug 20 - 25	Introduction	1-3	Required academic activity; Participation; Quiz 1
2-3	Aug 26 - Sept 8	Knowledge	4-7	Participation; Quizzes 2-3
4-6	Sep 9 - 29	Mind	8-18	Participation; Quizzes 4-6; Paper 1 assigned
7	Sep 30 - Oct 6	Writing Workshop	No new readings.	Participation
8-9	Oct 7 - 20	God	19-22	Participation; Quizzes 7-8; Paper 1 due 11:59 pm, Oct. 22
10-11	Oct 21 - Nov 3	Morality	23-27	Participation; Quizzes 9-10
12-14	Nov 4 - 24	Life and Death	28-32	Participation; Quizzes 11-12 Paper 2 assigned
15	Nov 25 - Dec 1	Meaning of Life	33-35	Participation; Quiz 13
16	10:00 am - 12:50 pm, Dec 6	Final	No new readings.	Participation; Paper 2 due 11:59 pm, Dec. 7

Readings

1. Syllabus
2. Edmonds & Warburton (2010) What Is Philosophy (*Not in book. PDF in Webcourses*)
3. "What is philosophy?" Beardsley & Beardsley
4. "What is knowledge" Ayer
5. "First Meditation" Descartes
6. "Appearance and reality" Russell
7. "What can I know?" Phillips
8. "Second Meditation" Descartes
9. "The ghost in the machine" Ryle
10. "The body problem" Montero
11. "The mind-body problem" Churchland
12. "What is it like to be a bat?" T. Nagel
13. "The qualia problem" Jackson
14. "Computing machinery and intelligence" Turing
15. "Do computers think?" Searle
16. Korn (2016) Robotic Teaching Assistant (*Not in book. PDF in Webcourses*)
17. Wile (2017) Mark Cuban Job Skill 10 years (*Not in book. PDF in Webcourses*)
18. Zumbun (2016) Knowledge Workers Threat Automation (*Not in book. PDF in Webcourses*)
19. "Does God exist?" E. Nagel

20. "Pascal's wager" Blackburn
21. "Why God allows evil" Swinburne
22. "The problem of Hell" Adams
23. "Famine, affluence, and morality" Singer
24. "World hunger and moral obligation: The case against Singer" Arthur
25. "The case for animal rights" Regan
26. "Why animals have no rights" Cohen
27. "Speaking of animal rights" Warren
28. "Death" T. Nagel
29. "The badness of death" Kagan
30. "The afterlife" Scheffler
31. "How the afterlife matters" Frankfurt
32. "The significance of doomsday" Wolf
33. "The meaning of life" Taylor
34. "Meaning in life" Wolf
35. "Meaningful lives?" Vitrano

Films

- A. Garland, A. (Director). (2015). *Ex machina* [Motion picture]. United States: Universal Pictures. <<http://exmachina-movie.com>>
- B. Cuarón, A. (Director). (2006). *Children of men* [Motion picture]. United Kingdom and United States: Universal Pictures. <<https://www.uphe.com/movies/children-of-men>>

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Please fill out and sign this sheet once you have read the syllabus, detach this page, and turn it in to the professor during the first week of class—or, if you transferred in late, by the end of that week.

I have read the syllabus. I understand and agree to follow all course policies in the syllabus.

Name (print clearly): _____

Student ID #: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____