



PHI 2010, Introduction to Philosophy, Fall 2022

Professor: Matthew Taylor

Phone:

Office Hours:

Class Meeting Time:

Office:

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Prerequisites: None

Term: Fall 2022

Class Location:

Course Description

This course will introduce students to a variety of main topics in philosophy. We will cover topics such as the meaning of life, the nature of morality and political justice, free will, and personal identity. Importantly, Introduction to Philosophy has a significant focus on moral issues in philosophy (we will examine some basic ethical positions and look at how they are applied to issues such as poverty, the treatment of animals, and other issues).

From the FAMU Catalog: *“An examination of rival views on morality, economic justice, political philosophy, the existence of God, and theories of knowledge.”*

The **Overarching Goal** of this course is for students to have an understanding of rival views on morality, economic justice, political philosophy, the existence of God, and theories of knowledge.

Course Objectives include students

- (1) Developing the ability to appreciate and deploy philosophical thinking.
- (2) Cultivating the skills needed to understand and clearly communicate complex ideas and concepts.
- (3) Critically engaging with classic philosophical problems.
- (4) Becoming ethically engaged citizens and logical thinkers.
- (5) Developing an interest in philosophy.

Required Texts/Readings

Textbook

Introduction to Philosophy: Classical and Contemporary Readings, 8th edition (2018)

John Perry, Michael Bratman, and John Martin Fischer

Oxford University Press

ISBN: 9780190698720

**Note: earlier additions do not include all of the assigned readings or have the same page numbers. Please be sure to purchase or rent the correct edition.*

The course textbook can be obtained here: [Florida A&M University Official Bookstore](#)

Additional Required Readings

Any other readings and materials will be made available on Canvas.

Course Schedule

Abbreviations: *IP* (Introduction to Philosophy), *CM* (Canvas Material)

Week	Topic	Assigned Content
1	Introduction What is Philosophy? Why should we study Philosophy?	CM: Syllabus IP: “Philosophy” (pp. 8-14, 17-21)
2	Argumentation Meaning of Life	CM: “Arguments” IP: Albert Camus. “The Myth of Sisyphus” (pp.751) IP: Thomas Nagel. “The Absurd” (pp.753)
3	Meaning of Life (cont.)	IP: Richard Taylor. “The Meaning of Human Existence” (pp. 761) IP: Susan Wolf. “The Meanings of Lives” (pp. 778)
4	Ethics (The Good Life)	<i>Workshop</i> IP: Aristotle. “Nicomachean Ethics” (pp. 607)
5	Ethics (Virtue Ethics)	IP: Rosalind Hursthouse “Right Action” (pp. 623) CM: Jennifer Baker. “Procrastination as Vice”
6	Ethics (Consequentialism)	IP: Jeremy Bentham. “The Principle of Utility” (pp. 528) IP: John Stuart Mill. “Utilitarianism” (pp. 532)
7	Ethics (Consequentialism (cont.)) Ethics (Kantianism)	CM: Alastair Norcross. “Puppies, Pigs, and People” IP: Immanuel Kant. “Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals” (pp. 583)
8	Ethics (Kantianism (cont.))	IP: Onora O’Neill. “Kantian Approaches to Some Famine Problems” (pp. 600).
9	Review Exam	
10	Political Philosophy (Liberalism)	IP: John Rawls. “A Theory of Justice” (pp. 633) CM: John Rawls. “Justice as Fairness, A Restatement”
11	Political Philosophy (Libertarianism)	IP: Robert Nozick. “Justice and Entitlement” (pp. 646)
12	Free Will (Libertarianism)	CM: Theodore Sider. “Free Will and Determinism” IP: Roderick Chisholm. “Human Freedom and

Week	Topic	Assigned Content
		the Self” (pp. 449)
13	Free Will (Compatibilism)	IP: David Hume. “Of Liberty and Necessity” (pp. 457)
14	Personal Identity	IP: John Perry. “A Dialogue on Personal Identity and Immortality” (pp. 349) IP: Bernard Williams. “The Self and the Future” (pp. 370)
15	Personal Identity	IP: Derek Parfit. “Personal Identity” (pp. 380)
16	Review	
Final Exam		

Course

Policies and Requirements

Grading Policy

Attendance and Participation

Your attendance will be required for this course and it will count for 5% of your final grade. Attendance will be taken daily and regular participation is expected. You are allowed three unexcused absences, but any additional unexcused absences will prevent you from receiving full credit for this portion of your final grade. For more attendance information, see the University Attendance Policy.

The participation grade is based on in-class “workshop” assignments. These assignments require that you offer helpful feedback to fellow student papers prior to the deadline. Students who provide quality feedback will receive higher participation scores. **If a student fails to submit a draft before the draft due date (even if they complete it late), they will receive (at most) a C for the workshop grade.**

Papers

There will be three paper assignments due throughout the semester. All papers should be submitted on the Canvas site by the corresponding deadline. Unexcused late papers (determined by attendance policy below) will be penalized at the rate of 3 percentage points per day. (For example, a paper that would receive a 90 if submitted on time will receive an 87 if submitted up to one day late, an 84 if submitted within the following day, and so on.). If you are unhappy with your paper grade, there are two opportunities to improve it. First, your lowest paper grade will be dropped from your final grade. If you do better on the other two papers, your lowest paper grade will not count against you. Second, there will be an opportunity to revise the first two papers (but not the third). To do a revision, you will need to fill out a revision form that is posted on Canvas.

Quizzes

There will be short quizzes assigned nearly every week that will cover material learned in class. These quizzes will become available to take on Canvas. Your lowest two quiz scores will be dropped and will not count towards your final grade. Quiz grades will account for a total of 15% of your final course grade. These quizzes are mainly to help students practice the course content prior to exams. There will be a grade floor of a B- on these assignments so long as you complete them. Not completing them on time will result in a 0.

Exams

There will be a total of two exams in this course. Each exam counts towards 20% of your final grade. If you are unable to make it to an exam day you must have a documented excuse in order to take it at a different time.

Cheating in any form is not permitted. Any student caught cheating will be treated accordingly. For more details, see the University Plagiarism Policy.

Extra Credit

There will be two opportunities for extra credit, each worth +2% of your final grade. The first opportunity will be available immediately after the first exam. The second opportunity will be available after the second exam. I may ask you to evaluate my teaching and offer any suggestions to improve my course. I may also ask you to reflect on your progress in the course.

Evaluation Method

Assignment	Weight
Participation	5%
Papers	15%
Quizzes	20%
Exams	20%

Course Grading Scale

Percent Range	Letter Grade
90 – 100%	A
89 – 80%	B
79 – 70%	C
69 – 65%	D
Below 64%	F

Teaching Methods

The required readings and other content used in this course will be made available on Canvas. Assigned content will be added to the class schedule at least one week in advance but is subject to change. Announcements will be made for any changes in assigned content that occur. **It is expected that students have read all the assigned readings before class on the day the content is listed on the course schedule.** If you have questions about parts of the reading please take notes and raise this question in class.

Missed work/Make-up policy

If you miss an assignment and do not have an excused absence, you will automatically not receive credit for that assignment. If you miss an assignment and do have an excused absence, you can (generally) make up the work within a reasonable timeframe.

From the University Catalog:

“Students are responsible for all assignments, quizzes, and examinations at the time they are due and may not use their absence from class as a plea for extensions of time to complete assignments or for permission to take make-up examinations or quizzes.”

“A student will be permitted one unexcused absence per credit hour of the course he or she is attending. A student exceeding the number of unexcused absences may be assigned the grade of “F.”

Plagiarism/Academic Honesty Policy

There are severe penalties for failing to properly cite an author for their work or engaging in plagiarism. Plagiarism, according to the FAMU Academic Honesty Policy, is *“the copying work created or published by others, paraphrasing, or using ideas from a source without proper attribution.”* Plagiarism can involve either using someone else’s words or putting their ideas into your own words without proper citation. The style of citation (e.g. MLA, Chicago, APA) does not matter for this course – however, for in-text citations you must at least include *author’s name, date (at first mention), and page number*. At a minimum, you must also include bibliography/works cited on the last page of your essay with each *author, date, and title of work*. Since the assigned textbook is a compilation involving several authors, you will need to cite the author and other information of the particular essay, not the textbook itself or its editors.

Compliance

This course is in full compliance with the University's *American Disabilities Act* and *Non-Discrimination Policy* (available at www.famu.edu)

Technical Assistance

If you need technical assistance at any time during the course, please access the FAMU Technology Help Desk website [Information Technology Services \(famu.edu\)](http://Information Technology Services (famu.edu)) or contact by email helpdesk@famu.edu, or by phone at (850) 599-3000.

Accommodations

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should: (1) register with and provide documentation to the Center for Disability Access and Resources; and (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of class. This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request. For more information about services available to FAMU students with disabilities, see [Center for Disability Access & Resources \(famu.edu\)](http://Center for Disability Access & Resources (famu.edu))

***Disclaimer:** This syllabus is intended to provide student guidance on the type of content and activities that will be covered in this course throughout the semester. It will be followed to the extent possible. However, modifications may be made to supplement and/or enhance student learning.*