

Philosophy 100 [Introduction to Philosophy] Syllabus
June 26th – Aug. 16th | T Th 11:45-2:45 | BRC 114
Office: RAI 346 | Office Hours by appointment
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The aim of this course is to become acquainted with several major themes in the history of Western philosophical thought in order to gain a fundamental understanding of the discipline. I am of the opinion that this goal cannot be adequately accomplished without a concurrent focus on becoming comfortable with philosophical methodology. So, throughout the term there will be a heavy emphasis placed on *practicing* philosophy through:

- (1) Close reading of (small sections of) original texts,
- (2) Analysis of argumentative structures,
- (3) Focused class discussions, and
- (4) Numerous opportunities to engage in philosophical writing.

In addition, throughout the course we will frequently pause in our historical project to link older writings to contemporary works, emphasizing the fact that philosophy is a living, breathing discipline in the modern world.

TEXT(S):

We will be using one primary text for the duration of the course, an anthology which contains almost all of what we will be reading, which is available at the bookstore:

Classics of Western Philosophy, 6th edition, ed. Steven M. Cahn, Hackett Publishing Co., 2002 (ISBN: 0-87220-637-8).

In addition, we will be reading two texts that I will ask you to find online (“Letter From Birmingham Jail” by Martin Luther King Jr. and “Consenting Adults” by Onora O’Neill), and four texts that I will provide for you (readings for Week 5 and 7). Information on where to find the appropriate texts online is below (in “Course Topics and Readings”).

ASSIGNMENTS:

In this course, you will definitely be required to complete six skills assignments, a term paper draft, a term paper, and a final exam. The grading policy for the latter three exercises will be as follows:

Term Paper Draft – 10%
Term Paper – 15%
Final Exam – 25%

However, the grading policy for the six skills assignments, and the number of additional assignments, will be decided upon by the students in a manner that will be explained on the first day of class. You will be able to decide whether or not to have weekly in-class quizzes, whether or not to have graded in-class writing assignments, and whether or not to have the option of turning in only five of the six skills assignments.

The different grading policy options are as follows:

Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
Weekly Quizzes – 10%	In-Class Work – 10%	Assignment #1 – 5%	You must complete five of six of the skills assignments, which will be worth 10% each. A sixth assignment, if completed, will replace a lower grade on a previous assignment.
Assignment #1 – 5%	Assignment #1 – 5%	Assignment #2 – 5%	
Assignment #2 – 5%	Assignment #2 – 5%	Assignment #3 – 10%	
Assignment #3 – 5%	Assignment #3 – 5%	Assignment #4 – 10%	
Assignment #4 – 5%	Assignment #4 – 5%	Assignment #5 – 10%	
Assignment #5 – 10%	Assignment #5 – 10%	Assignment #6 – 10%	
Assignment #6 – 10%	Assignment #6 – 10%		

Regardless of what option is chosen, the **due dates** for all assignments will be as follows:

- Skills Assignment #1 [Argument] – due 7/3
- Skills Assignment #2 [Comparative Analysis] – due 7/10
- Skills Assignment #3 [Objection/Response] – due 7/17
- Skills Assignment #4 [Implication/Application] – due 7/24
- Term Paper DRAFT – due 7/31
- Skills Assignment #5 [Article Outline] – due 8/2
- Skills Assignment #6 [Passage Response] – due 8/9
- Term Paper – due 8/14
- Final Exam [in class] – 8/16

PLAGIARISM POLICY:

Don't plagiarize others' work. I assume you are familiar with what constitutes plagiarism and Everett Community College's rules concerning academic conduct. If you are not, I suggest you find out immediately, either by asking me or tracking the information down elsewhere (such as pg. 24 of the Catalog or the Student Conduct Code in the Student Rights and Responsibilities document). Credit your sources, and while I encourage you to talk with others about assignments, concepts, etc., make sure your work is your own. If I find an instance of plagiarism, I will do whatever I can to ensure that the responsible party is sufficiently penalized.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- (1) Describe common responses to the major philosophical questions posed throughout history.
- (2) Explain and discuss the rationale behind important philosophical positions.
- (3) Apply important philosophical concepts to situations not considered in their readings.
- (4) Assess the reasonableness of philosophical theories.
- (5) Demonstrate that they have mastered objectives 1-4 both through polite and constructive dialogue with their classmates, as well as in written form.

CAVEAT:

The procedures written above, and the course schedule below, are subject to change in the event of unusual extenuating circumstance; students will be given advance written notice of such changes.

COURSE TOPICS AND READINGS (the appropriate page numbers in the text are marked in brackets):

WEEK # 1 – What is Philosophy? / Life and Death of Socrates

Tues. 6/26 – What is Philosophy? / What is an argument?

Thurs. 6/28 – *Euthyphro* [20-28] / *Apology* [29-41]

Recommended Reading: [1-2]; plato-dialogues.org/links.htm

WEEK # 2 – Life and Death of Socrates / Obeying the Law vs. Civil Disobedience

Tues. 7/3 – *Apology* [29-41] / *Crito* [42-48]

Thurs. 7/5 – *Crito* [42-48] / Martin Luther King Jr., “Letter From Birmingham Jail” [online at www.nobelprizes.com/nobel/peace/MLK-jail.html]

Recommended Reading: plato-dialogues.org/links.htm

WEEK # 3 – Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*

Tues. 7/10 – *Meditations* I & II [460-466]

Thurs. 7/12 – *Meditations* III & IV [466-476]

Recommended Reading: [452-459]; www.wright.edu/cola/descartes

WEEK # 4 – Hume, *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*

Tues. 7/17 – *Enquiry*, Sections I-IV [734-748]

Thurs. 7/19 – *Enquiry*, Sections V-VIII [749-775]

Recommended Reading: [732-733]; www.18th.eserver.org/hume-enquiry.html

WEEK # 5 – Philosophy of Science (Confirmation of Scientific Hypotheses)

Tues. 7/24 – Selections from Hempel, “Studies in the Logic of Confirmation” [provided]

Thurs. 7/26 – Selections from Popper, *Conjectures and Refutations* [provided] and Duhem, “Physical Theory and Experiment” [provided]

WEEK # 6 – Kant, *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*

Tues. 7/31 – *Grounding*, Preface, Sections I & II [954-984] (focus on Duty and FUL)

Thurs. 8/2 - *Grounding*, Preface, Sections I & II [954-984] (focus on FUH) and Onora

O’Neill’s “Between Consenting Adults” [online at www.jstor.org]

Recommended Reading: [876-877; www.hkbu.edu.hk/~ppp/Kant.html;

philosophy.eserver.org/kant/metaphys-of-morals.txt]

WEEK # 7 – Mill, *Utilitarianism*

Tues. 8/7 – *Utilitarianism*, Chapters I & II [1017-1030]

Thurs. 8/9 – *Utilitarianism*, Chapters III & IV [1030-1037] and Williams, selections from *Utilitarianism: For and Against* [provided]

Recommended Reading: [1015-1016; www.utilitarianism.com/mill1.htm]

WEEK # 8 – To Be Decided (Time Permitting)

Tues. 8/14 – {Term Paper Due}

Thurs 8/16 – {The Final Exam will be given on 8/16}