**PHIL 1103, Introduction to Philosophy**

**CR# 13475**

**Spring 2019**

Class Location: HSS 3032 Instructor: Michele Merritt, Ph.D.

Class Meeting Times: TR 11-12:15 Office: HSS 4072

Section: 009 Office Hours: TR 12:45-1:45 p.m. or Email: [mmerritt@astate.edu](mailto:mmerritt@astate.edu) by appointment

**Course Description**

Basic problems of philosophy based upon readings in the works of selected leading philosophers. A prerequisite for upper level philosophy.

This course is intended to introduce students to the fundamental ideas, principles, and history of philosophy. Thus, we will cover the core areas of western philosophical inquiry: logic, metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics, but we will also spend some time addressing non-western philosophical reasoning in order to broaden our understanding of philosophy writ large. Some of the specific questions we will seek answers to include: What makes a claim true? How can we better defend our claims? What is the ultimate nature of the universe? Is there a god? What and who are ‘we’? What can we know? What makes something morally praiseworthy and what makes it morally reprehensible? By attempting to better understand how others have tried to answer these perennial questions, students will also learn to develop their own answers and in so doing, will sharpen their reflective and critical reasoning skills.

**Learning Outcomes**

Developing an appreciation of the arts and humanities

GOAL: Students should develop an appreciation for the arts and humanities. They

should be aware of the role of art and literature in human civilization and contemporary

culture.

OUTCOMES: Students will be able to recognize works of literature or fine art and place them in their historical, cultural, and social contexts, and interpret works of fine art or literature.

**Course-Specific Learning Outcomes**

This course satisfies the following general education goal for the arts and humanities: to develop a lifelong appreciation of the arts and the humanities. Expected student learning outcomes are that students should be able to 1) recognize works of literature or fine art and place them in their historical, cultural, and social contexts, and 2) interpret works of fine art or literature.

Other learning goals of the course include, but are not limited to:

* Learning to integrate ideas into a coherent argument. (This supports one of ASU's university-wide goals, namely, Thinking Critically)
* Develop and hone the ability to interpret works of philosophy. (This supports one of ASU's 2012 General Education Goals, namely, Developing an Appreciation of the Arts and Humanities.)
* Reading critically. (This supports Philosophy B.A. Goal #1: students will develop the critical skills necessary to coherently discuss and evaluate various philosophical figures and ideas.)

**Assessment of Learning Outcomes**

Besides the required assignments described below, student learning outcomes will be assessed by way of a post-test designed to measure improvement in each outcome over the duration of the course.

**Required Materials**

Online readings, videos, handouts. See Blackboard.

**Grading Scale**

90-100 points = A

80-89 points = B

70-79 points = C

60-69 points = D

Below 60 points = F

**Grade Distribution**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Assignment | % of grade |
| *Homework*  Nearly every week, there will be at least one homework assignment, usually in the form of some questions about the upcoming reading that you must answer and turn in BEFORE we discuss the reading in class. Sometimes, homework will consist of an online quiz. All assignments can be completed on Blackboard. Please see the syllabus for dates and details. NO HOMEWORK CAN BE MADE UP UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCE. I will drop your two lowest homework assignment grades. | 15 |
| *Exams: 2 Exams, 20% each*  Two exams will be administered. Each exam will test you on whatever material we have covered to that point. Thus, the ‘final exam’ is not cumulative (however, much of the material builds on previous material, so it is helpful to always keep all course readings, discussions, etc. in mind). Exams will consist of multiple choice, true/false, fill in the blank-type questions, along with some short response/essay questions (several sentences at least). Exams can only be made up if there is a viable excuse (see the policy on make-up work). | 40 |
| *Papers: 3 Papers, 10% each*  I will assign 3 short papers (approximately 3-4 pages in length). Note the due dates for each paper on the attached schedule. Paper topics will be announced *at least* a week prior to when they are due. There is a rubric on Blackboard that I will use to grade your papers in lieu of commenting on and handing them back to you. As always, I have office hours and will be available to discuss your papers individually, should you need more guidance. | 30 |
| *Attendance/Participation*  Attending each class is mandatory. Most of the material the exams and papers will cover will be delivered during lectures and will NOT be available on Blackboard. While I do put prezis/powerpoints that I present on Blackboard, those will not contain anywhere near the amount of information I give during class. Class time is *necessary* for success and good notetaking is CRUCIAL. You will have 3 absences free of charge and after that, you lose points for every absence. Please see below for the specific university-wide attendance policy. Part of your grade in this category also comes from participation, by which I mean showing up on time, staying the entire time, being active and attentive, not sleeping, not texting, asking questions, answering questions, and generally appearing as if you are engaged in the course. Thus, if I see you on your phone the whole class, I will mark you as ‘absent’ even if you were physically present the whole time. | 15 |
| 100 |

**The “Fine Print”**

Students are expected to adhere to all guidelines in the Student Bulletin and Student Handbook (found online at astate.edu). In addition to all the guidelines therein, students in this class are expected to comply with the following:

* + Arrive to class on time and stay for the entirety of the class. If not, I reserve the right to mark you as absent for the day.
  + Attendance Policy: Missing more than 8 classes results in automatic failure from the course. Participation is weighted heavily, so I suggest missing no more than 3 classes to maintain good standing in this regard. The only excused absences will be documented and will pertain to university sanctioned events, illness, family emergency, or inclement weather. (Attending a routine dental appointment during my class is NOT an excused absence, e.g.).
  + Inclement Weather Policy: Information on campus closure can be found on the ASU web page, KASU, and local radio and television stations. If inclement weather prevents you from being able to come to class and campus is not closed, please call the university for further instruction.
  + Technology Policy: laptops, phones, etc. are not to be used during class time without prior approval from me. Quickly checking your phone is fine, but extended use of technology that I deem inappropriate will result in me asking you to put it away for good or leave the class. This includes headphones, or any other distraction. Talk to me about your note-taking style or specific learning strategies and we might be able to work something out, but otherwise, put away the technology for the hour and fifteen minutes we have together.
  + Cheating: Just Don't Do It! I reserve the right to maximally penalize you if I catch you cheating in any way (including failing you from the course). If you are unsure about what constitutes plagiarism, just ask. Better to be safe than sorry. Here is the official statement from the Handbook:

**Academic Misconduct Policy:**

Plagiarism (the act of taking and/or using the ideas, work, and/or writings of another person as one’s own) is a serious offense against academic integrity which could result in failure for the paper or assignment, failure for the course, and/or expulsion from Arkansas State University. Cheating is an act of dishonesty with the intention of obtaining and/or using information in a fraudulent manner. For further information, including specifics about what constitutes plagiarism or cheating, see ASU’s Academic Integrity Policy at: <http://studentconduct.astate.edu/AcademicIntegrity.html>.

* + If you have a disability which makes it difficult for you to succeed in this course, please contact me as soon as possible. Your privacy will be respected and every effort will be made to meet your needs. All students requesting accommodations for disabilities should be registered through ASU’s Disability Services (870 972 3964). If Disabilities Services determines you should be able to take tests in their office, it is your responsibility to schedule the test for the same time and date as the exam is administered to other students.
  + Policy on Missed Assignments/Make up work: The only reasons I will accept late or missed assignments are documented emergencies, illnesses, deaths in the family, or weather related issues.
  + Email Policy: You must email me with essential information, such as who you are, what class of mine you are in, and what your question or concern is. I try to adhere to the 24 hour response rule of thumb – if I have not responded to you within 24 hours, feel free to send a follow-up, but be aware that if you have not addressed me properly, told me who you are and what exactly you need, I reserve the right not to respond.
  + Negative Points: I reserve the right to take away points already earned on assignments for cheating, disrespectful behavior, or any other violations of the university and course policies.
  + Inclusiveness Policy: I am part of the SafeZone community network of trained AState faculty/staff/students who are available to listen and support you. As a SafeZone Ally, I can help you connect with resources on campus to address problems you face that interfere with your academic success, particularly issues of sexual violence, hateful acts, or concerns faced by individuals due to sexual orientation/gender identity. My goal is to help you be successful and to maintain a safe and equitable campus. As well, I will not tolerate any acts of hate or violence in my classroom and by agreeing to take this course, you also agree not to enact any intolerance.

**Course Schedule (Subject to Revision)**

*\*Note: All readings, videos, websites, etc. will be on Blackboard (BB) under the tab “Readings”*

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| Week | Date | Topic | Assignment |
| 1 | 1/15 | Introductions, etc. | Overview of Syllabus |
| 1/17 | Philosophy Fundamentals | Read (In Class): Zeno’s Achilles, Descartes’ Evil Demon, Thomson’s Trolley Online  **HW Assignment:** Complete Syllabus Quiz (on Blackboard), last day to finish: 1/22 at 11:59pm |
| 2 | 1/22 | Basics of Reasoning and Argument I | Reading: Logic (online videos), 1-2 |
| 1/24 | Basics of Reasoning and Argument II | Reading: Logic (online videos), 3-4  **HW Assignment:** Logic Quiz (on Blackboard), last day to finish: 1/29 at 11:59pm |
| 3 | 1/29 | Ancient Philosophy, Metaphysics | Read (Before Class, Online): *Apology*  **HW Assignment:** Republic Reading Questions, due *before class 1/31* |
| 1/31 | Metaphysics | Read (Before Class, Online): *Republic* Excerpts(Allegory of the Cave)  **HW Assignment:** Descartes Reading questions due *before class 2/5* |
| 4 | 2/5 | Modern Metaphysics | Read (Before Class, Online): Descartes |
| 2/7 | Modern Metaphysics, cont’d | Continue with Descartes, Read (In Class): Smullyan  **\*\* 1st Paper Due by 11:59pm \*\***  **HW Assignment:** Spinoza Reading questions due *before class 2/12* |
| 5 | 2/12 | Modern Metaphysics, cont’d | Read (Before Class, Online): Spinoza (first half of packet) |
| 2/14 | Modern Metaphysics, cont’d | Read (Before Class, Online): Leibniz (second half of packet)  **HW Assignment:** Free Will Reading questions due *before class 2/19* |
| 6 | 2/19 | Free Will and God | Read (Before Class, Online): “Free Will” |
| 2/21 | Free Will and God | Read (Before Class, Online): Pascal |
| 7 | 2/26 | Mind and Consciousness | Read (Before Class, Online): Hobbes  **HW Assignment:** Nagel Reading questions due *before class 2/28* |
|  | 2/28 | Mind, Self, Consciousness | Read (Before Class, Online): Nagel |
| 8 | 3/5 | **EXAM 1 – Midterm** | **Exam 1 – Midterm;**  **HW Assignments:** Dennett Reading questions due *before class 3/7* |
| 3/7 | Mind, Self, Consciousness | Read (Before Class, Online): Dennett |
| 9 | 3/12 | Epistemology | Read (Before Class, Online): Hume’s Missing Shade of Blue AND Molyneux’s Question |
| 3/14 | Epistemology | Read (Before Class, Online): Kant, *Prolegomena*  **\*\* 2nd Paper Due by 11:59pm \*\***  **HW Assignment:** Feminist Epistemology Reading questions due *before class 3/26* |
| 10 | 3/19 | **Spring Break** | **No Class** |
| 3/21 | **Spring Break** | **No Class** |
| 11 | 3/26 | Epistemology | Read (Before Class, Online): IEP Entry on Feminist Epistemology  **HW Assignment:** Turing Reading questions due *before class 3/28* |
| 3/28 | Non-Human Minds: Machines | Read (Before Class, Online): Turing |
| 12 | 4/2 | Non-Human Minds: Machines | Read (Before Class, Online): Haugeland  **HW Assignment:** Andrews Reading questions due *before class 4/9* |
| 4/4 | Non-Human Minds: Animals | NO Class Meeting, **Assignment: Online Quiz, due by end of the day 4/9** |
| 13 | 4/9 | Non-Human Minds: Animals | Read (Before Class, Online): Andrews, Chapter 1 |
| 4/11 | Non-Human Minds: Animals | Continue with Andrews reading  **HW Assignment:** Plato Reading questions due *before class 4/16* |
| 15 | 4/16 | Ethics | Read (Before Class, Online): Plato’s Ring of Gyges |
| 4/18 | Ethics | Read (Before Class, Online): Aristotle’s Ethics |
| 15 | 4/23 | Ethics | Read (Before Class, Online): Kant, Excerpts from the *Groundwork* |
| 4/25 | Ethics | Read (In Class): Selections from IEP Entry on Care Ethics and hooks, “Feminist Manhood”, Review for Final Exam  **3rd Paper Due by 11:59pm** |

**Final Exam: Thursday, May 2, 12:30-2:30**