

PHIL 100 A02
CRN# 13743 + 23586

September-April 2021-2022
TWF: 11:30am – 12:20pm

Introduction to Philosophy

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Office Hours: Tuesday 10am-11am group hours + individual meetings by appointment

See page #10 of the outline for details about online teaching of this section of PHIL 100.

Course Description:

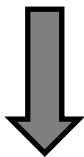
The aim of this course will be to introduce students to the most fundamental questions in Western philosophy. A mix of classic and contemporary readings will be used. We will work our way through the essential issues that have attracted attention from philosophers as old as Plato right up to those working in the field today. Careful examination of these issues will give students a sense of what philosophy in the Western tradition is about, and it will allow students to learn the more general (and exceedingly valuable!) skill of thinking critically about tough conceptual problems. Topics include: Can rational arguments be used to prove the existence of God? Do human beings have free will, or are our 'decisions' determined by purely physical forces? How can we be certain about what we think we know about the external world? Is there an objective basis for morality? The goal of the course will be to encourage students to develop informed opinions about these kinds of difficult questions.

Course Website: Online materials will be made available via Uvic *Brightspace*. Access your customized *Brightspace* page by signing in to Uvic and clicking on *Online Tools*. You should see *Brightspace* as an option.

Texts: *Reason and Responsibility, 16th ed.* by Joel Feinberg and Russ Shafer-Landau
Writing Philosophy, 2nd ed. by Lewis Vaughn and Jillian Scott MacIntosh

The *R&R* textbook is expensive, but prior editions work reasonably well.

Requirements: Ten quote & comment assignments (1% each)
Two short writing assignments (5% each)
Two longer writing assignments (10% each)
Two midterm tests (10% each)
Two end of term online tests (20% each)



Note: Writing assignment due dates and midterm test dates are posted below in the weekly schedule. *You are responsible for knowing these dates.* Plan ahead, and manage your overall personal workload accordingly.

Grading System

Percentage	Letter Grade	Grade Point	Grade Definition
90 – 100	A+	9	An A+, A, or A- is earned by work which is technically superior , shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of an A+ offers original insight and/or goes beyond course expectations. Normally achieved by a minority of students.
85 – 89	A	8	
80 – 84	A-	7	
77 – 79	B+	6	A B+, B, or B- is earned by work that indicates a good comprehension of the course material, a good command of the skills needed to work with the course material, and the student's full engagement with the course requirements and activities. A B+ represents a more complex understanding and/or application of the course material. Normally achieved by the largest number of students.
73 – 76	B	5	
70 – 72	B-	4	
65 – 69	C+	3	A C+ or C is earned by work that indicates an adequate comprehension of the course material and the skills needed to work with the course material and that indicates the student has met the basic requirements for completing assigned work and/or participating in class activities.
60 – 64	C	2	
50 – 59	D	1	A D is earned by work that indicates minimal command of the course materials and/or minimal participation in class activities that is worthy of course credit toward the degree.
0 – 49	F	0	F is earned by work, which after the completion of course requirements, is inadequate and unworthy of course credit towards the degree.

Interpretation of these grade definitions is up to the discretion of the instructor. If you receive a grade during the course that you believe is unfair, please begin by discussing the matter with the instructor (or TA) in a respectful, open-minded manner. Rest assured that if you still believe the grade you received is unfair you can appeal the matter to the chair of the department.

For additional information regarding undergraduate grades, please consult the [Grading](#) section of the Uvic Undergraduate Calendar.

All evaluations of tests and assignments will be calculated according to percentage scores. Letter grades and grade point scores are listed purely for reference.

Final examinations are the property of Uvic and are not returned. They are available for viewing at the Records Office according to Uvic [Examinations](#) procedures and regulations.

Uvic is committed to providing a safe, supportive learning environment for all members. Further information regarding Uvic policies on human rights, equity, discrimination and harassment are located in the Uvic calendar [General University Policies](#), but if you have any particular concerns related to our course please do not hesitate to contact me.

Policy on Late Assignments: 5% per working day will be subtracted from grade unless students are set back by illness or family emergency.

Plagiarism: Review the [University Policy on Academic Integrity](#) *very carefully*, and be aware that anti-plagiarism software may be used in this course. Resources will be provided via *Brightspace* for students seeking guidance about what constitutes plagiarism and how they can avoid it, but *it is the responsibility of each student* to be informed about these details.

Counseling Services: Many, if not most, students experience some difficulties with their mental health during their years as undergraduate students. Make sure you are familiar with Uvic [Counseling Services](#), which is an excellent resource you have at your disposal on campus. It is hard to shake the stigma associated with problems like depression and anxiety, but if at any point you can benefit from help with mental health issues, please contact *Counseling Services*. They genuinely want to help, and why not take advantage of this free resource?

Important Dates: Please consult the Uvic calendar's [Academic Year Important Dates](#) for information about last possible dates to withdraw from courses without penalty, examinations period start/end dates, etc.

Technology in Classroom: Some students require laptops or voice recognition apps for their learning strategies, so I do not prohibit their use in the classroom. However, studies demonstrate that multi-tasking reduces the performance of *other nearby students*, so anyone caught on social media, internet surfing, etc. will be asked to leave and potentially subject to disciplinary action.

Academic Advising: For information about declaring a program (like declaring a major in Philosophy!), academic concessions or interpreting your Uvic CAPP report, please go visit [Undergraduate Advising](#) or make an appointment with an adviser.

Territory Acknowledgment

The University of Victoria is committed to acknowledging and respecting the Lekwungen peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands, and the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

For information about support for indigenous students and efforts to foster reconciliation, please visit the Uvic [Office of Indigenous Academic & Community Engagement](#).

An Important Note on Diversity:

You may notice that in this course we will be reading an overwhelming majority of “dead white men”. You may wonder why this is the case. Why not read more women and non-European philosophers? This is an excellent question. Here are some initial answers:

1. This course introduces students to a particular thread of philosophical thought that is grounded in work from Ancient Greece and European enlightenment thinking, but it should not be viewed as the *only* valuable thread in the history of philosophy. It is a thread best studied comprehensively as a linked narrative, but it is one among many.
2. I obviously believe this thread of philosophical thought is worth studying, but I also encourage students to take courses at Uvic that explore alternative perspectives. For example, courses like *Gender Studies* (GNDR 100; Gender, Power and Difference) and *Indigenous Studies* (IS 101; Indigenous Foundations) would nicely complement our survey of Western philosophy.
3. The fact that there are so few women and persons of colour on our reading list is *not* because they are less philosophically capable than white men! It is because Western civilization has a long history of gender discrimination, racism, and colonialism that excluded women and persons of colour from the formal study of philosophy.
4. There is still much work to be done to make philosophy fully inclusive for members of disadvantaged groups, but remember that (despite our reading list) there are many distinguished philosophers today who are women, persons of colour, members of the LGBTQ community and disabled persons. Students who identify with these groups can take inspiration from the fact that these contemporary role models exist.

If you have further concerns about diversity in our course or suggestions for how it may be more effectively promoted, please do not hesitate to contact me.


Schedule of Readings and Assignments


Note: Dates and page numbers listed are subject to change, so regular class attendance is essential to stay informed about scheduling changes. Material should be read *before* the class in which it is discussed. Note that the page numbers assigned often refer to selected passages from longer chapters in the text.

RR page #'s refer to the 16th Edition of the, *Reason & Responsibility* textbook.

WP page #'s refer to the 2nd Edition of the *Writing Philosophy* textbook.

Other readings listed by author are available online via *Brightspace*. Access these online readings well in advance to avoid last-minute technical problems.

Dates	Readings	FALL 2021
Sept. 8	First Meeting	
Sept. 10	René Descartes: <i>Meditations on First Philosophy</i> [RR 242 – 249]	
Sept. 14	René Descartes: <i>Meditations on First Philosophy</i> [RR 249 – 256]	
Sept. 15	Saja Parvizian: <i>Al-Ghazālī and Descartes on Defeating Skepticism</i> [pdf]	
Sept. 17	René Descartes: <i>Meditations on First Philosophy</i> [RR 256 – 260]	
Sept. 21	Descartes & Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia: <i>Letters</i> [pdf]	
Sept. 22	G.E. Moore: <i>Proof of an External World</i> [RR 290 – 293] John Locke: <i>The Causal Theory of Perception</i> [RR 279 – 282]	
Sept. 24	John Locke: <i>The Causal Theory of Perception</i> [RR 274 – 279]	
Sept. 28	George Berkeley: <i>Three Dialogues between Hylas and ...</i> [pdf: 1 – 15, 24 – 26]	
Sept. 29	George Berkeley: <i>Three Dialogues between Hylas and ...</i> [pdf: 27 – 32, 38 – 39]	
Oct. 1	George Berkeley: <i>Three Dialogues between Hylas and ...</i> [pdf: 40 – 45]	
	*** Writing Assignment #1 Due ***	
Oct. 5	David Hume: <i>An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding</i> [RR 293 – 302]	
Oct. 6	David Hume: <i>An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding</i> [RR 302 – 308]	
Oct. 8	Wesley C. Salmon: <i>An Encounter with David Hume</i> [RR 320 – 340]	
Oct. 12	Michael Huemer: <i>Three Skeptical Arguments</i> [RR 195 – 200]	
Oct. 13	Review	
Oct. 15	*** Midterm Test #1 ***	


Oct. 19	Deductive Arguments [WP chapter 2]
Oct. 20	More Deductive Arguments [WP chapter 2]
Oct. 22	Inductive Arguments [WP chapter 2]
Oct. 26	Anselm of Cantebury: <i>The Ontological Argument</i> [RR 31 – 33] Gaunilo of Marmoutiers: <i>On Behalf of the Fool</i> [RR 33 – 36]
Oct. 27	William L. Rowe: <i>The Ontological Argument</i> [RR 36 – 46]
Oct. 29	William Paley: <i>The Argument from Design</i> [RR 59 – 64]
Nov. 2	David Hume: <i>Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion</i> [RR 76 – 88]
Nov. 3	David Hume: <i>Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion</i> [RR 88 – 90, 101–6]
Nov. 5	Richard Dawkins: <i>Accumulating Small Change</i> [pdf]
Nov 9	Blaise Pascal: <i>The Wager</i> [RR 169 – 172] Simon Blackburn: <i>Infini – Rien</i> [RR 180 – 183]
Nov 10 Nov 12	----- Reading Break – No Class -----
Nov. 16	More Inductive Arguments [WP chapter 2]
Nov. 17	Logical Fallacies [WP chapter 6]
Nov. 19	More Logical Fallacies [WP chapter 6]
Nov. 23	Saint Thomas Aquinas: <i>The Five Ways</i> [RR 47 – 48] Samuel Clarke: <i>A Modern Formulation of the Cosmological...</i> [RR 49]
Nov. 24	William L. Rowe: <i>The Cosmological Argument</i> [RR 50 – 59]
Nov. 26 	Émilie du Châtelet: <i>Foundations of Physics chapter 2</i> [pdf] *** Writing Assignment #2 Due ***


Nov. 30	J.L. Mackie: <i>Evil and Omnipotence</i> [RR 118 – 126]
Dec. 1	Peter Van Inwagen: <i>The Argument from Evil</i> [RR 126 – 136]
Dec. 3	Review

*****Note:** There will be an **Online Exam in December*****
 Details TBA

Schedule of Readings and Assignments Continued

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Readings</u>	WINTER 2022
Jan. 11	Frank Jackson: <i>The Qualia Problem</i> [RR 372 – 376]	
Jan. 12	Brie Gertler: <i>In Defense of Mind-Body Dualism</i> [RR 359 – 372]	
Jan. 14	David Papineau: <i>The Case for Materialism</i> [RR 376 – 382]	
Jan. 18	William G. Lycan: <i>Robots and Minds</i> [RR 407 – 413]	
Jan. 19	John R. Searle: <i>Minds, Brains, and Programs</i> [RR 400 – 407]	
Jan. 21	Daniel C. Dennett: <i>Imagining a Conscious Robot</i> [pdf]	
Jan. 25	How to Write a Philosophy Paper [WP chapters 3 – 5, 7 – 9]	
Jan. 26	Paul Churchland: <i>Functionalism and Eliminative Materialism</i> [RR 387 – 391]	
Jan. 28	Paul Churchland: <i>Functionalism and Eliminative Materialism</i> [RR 382 – 387]	
Feb. 1	John Locke: <i>The Prince and the Cobbler</i> [RR 413 – 416]	
Feb. 2	Thomas Reid: <i>Of Mr. Locke’s Account of Personal Identity</i> [RR 416 – 419]	

Feb. 4	David Hume: <i>The Self</i> [RR 419 – 421] Derek Parfit: <i>Divided Minds and the Nature of Persons</i> [RR 421 – 427]
Feb. 8	James Rachels: <i>The Case against Free Will</i> [RR 481 – 490]
Feb. 9	Roderick M. Chisholm: <i>Human Freedom and the Self</i> [RR 459 – 467]
Feb. 11 	Helen Beebe: <i>Compatibilism and the Ability to Do Otherwise</i> [RR 510 – 521] *** Writing Assignment #3 Due ***
Feb. 15	Harry Frankfurt: <i>Alternate Possibilities and Moral Responsibility</i> [RR 528 – 534]
Feb. 16	Review
Feb. 18	*** Midterm Test #2 ***
*****	February 21 – 25 Reading Break No Class
Mar. 1	Plato: <i>The Immoralist's Challenge</i> [RR 574 – 580]
Mar. 2	Plato: <i>Crito</i> [pdf]
Mar. 4	James Rachels: <i>Ethical Egoism</i> [pdf]
Mar. 8	Thomas Hobbes: <i>Leviathan</i> [RR 622 – 624]
Mar. 9	Thomas Hobbes: <i>Leviathan</i> [RR 625 – 626]
Mar. 11	Thomas Hobbes: <i>Leviathan</i> [RR 626 – 628]
Mar. 15	Immanuel Kant: <i>The Good Will and the Categorical Imperative</i> [RR 638 – 642]
Mar. 16	Immanuel Kant: <i>The Good Will and the Categorical Imperative</i> [RR 642 – 644]
Mar. 18	Immanuel Kant: <i>The Good Will and the Categorical Imperative</i> [RR 644 – 645]

Mar. 22	John Stuart Mill: <i>Utilitarianism</i> [RR 645 – 648]
Mar. 23	Peter Singer: <i>Famine, Affluence, and Morality</i> [RR 672 – 678]
Mar. 25	John Harris: <i>The Survival Lottery</i> [RR 678 – 683]
Mar. 29	Hilde Lindemann: <i>What is Feminist Ethics?</i> [RR 663 – 670]
Mar. 30	Sally Haslanger: <i>Gender and Race: (What) Are They? (What) Do We Want Them To Be?</i> [pdf]
April 1 	Kwame Anthony Appiah: <i>What Will Future Generations Condemn Us For?</i> *** Writing Assignment #4 Due ***
April 5	Richard Taylor: <i>The Meaning of Life</i> [RR 705 – 711]
April 6	Review

*****Note: There will be an Online Exam in December*****
Details TBA

Major Registration Issue:

Be advised that *this is a single, full-year course*. Unfortunately, the Uvic Registration System requires you to register for two single-term sections of the course (each with its own CRN number). This is a very unfortunate glitch. It is a technicality in the general registration system used by the university, and it's highly misleading. This course is a **year-long course** that strangely requires you to register via two different sections: fall (CRN 13743) and spring (CRN 23586).

In other words, students are *not permitted* to drop after one term and still receive 1.5 units of credit. Students are also *not permitted* to switch into a different section of PHIL 100 in January. Each section of PHIL 100 is taught in its own unique way with its own unique schedule, so switching midway through the courses is not an option.

Online Teaching Information

This section of PHIL 100 will be taught online to promote accessibility for students who may have difficulty attending in person. Nevertheless, it is meant to be taken as a regular (synchronous) course if possible. Here are some details regarding how it will work:

Lecture Format

The lectures will occur in the regular time slot for the course (TWF: 11:30am – 12:20pm) via Zoom. However, to promote accessibility for students facing challenges like variable wifi availability, living in other time zones, losing access to daytime childcare, etc., I will record the lectures and make them available via *Brightspace*.

If you can attend the lectures live via Zoom, then I strongly recommend doing so in order to allow for you to ask questions as we discuss the material. Online teaching has certain challenges and benefits, but my aim is to facilitate as much *collaborative discussion* as there would be in an ordinary lecture. We will work out the relevant Zoom conventions for making this happen during the first week of class. However, if at any point you find that you face challenges to fully participating in the course please let me know so that we can try to work out a solution.

Online Testing

Midterm tests will be run online during regular class time (11:30am-12:20pm). If you are unable to write the midterm tests at that time, please contact me in advance to make other arrangements. End of term exams will be run online after classes are over at a time TBA by the Uvic Office of the Registrar.

Technical Support

Most technical difficulties are best answered by the Uvic [Computer Help Desk](#), but if you find yourself facing persistent technical difficulties, please get in contact with me so I can help in whatever way I can.

Intellectual Property of Course Materials

Note that all of the assignments, lectures and other materials posted to *Brightspace* are the intellectual property of myself and the University of Victoria. **Do not circulate this material** online without my permission. Posting course materials to secondary sites or otherwise circulating course materials online without the permission of your instructor violates the University of Victoria [Policy on Academic Integrity](#). Evidence of students circulating materials without permission will be referred to the Chair of the Philosophy Department for investigation.

University Covid Policy + Updates

For general Uvic information about how the university is dealing with covid at this stage of the pandemic, see the [COVID-19 information page](#) for updates.

Frequently Asked Questions

Please read these over so you can anticipate common issues before it's too late.

Q: Do I really need to read the material assigned? It's very hard to understand.

A: Yes, *make the effort*. We can sort things out in class, but reading the material on your own (and then also coming to class) will help you to understand the content.

Q: Do I need to complete each of the course requirements to pass the course?

A: No, in this particular course (unlike some other courses at Uvic), I do not require each of the various tests/assignments to be completed for an overall pass. So, for example, if you are unable to complete a certain assignment you can still pass the course.

Q: I'm having a difficult week in terms of workload in my other courses and hours at my job (that I need to pay for school). Can I have an extension?

A: No. I genuinely sympathize with these requests, but I do not grant extensions based on workload rather than illness or family emergency so **please do not ask me this**. As stressful as workload issues are for students, I can't compare the workloads different students in the class might be facing without my knowledge. All I can do is give due dates well in advance and recommend that students plan accordingly.

Q: I'm over the word count. Does this really matter?

A: Would I include it in the instructions if it didn't? If you are only a few words over I won't give you a zero, but still: use the opportunity to work on *editing* your writing.

Q: Are you willing to look over drafts of our assignments?

A: I'm not against it in principle, but in a large class it's not always feasible. Still, if you finish early enough I'll do my best to make time. More often it's helpful to send me a provisional outline of your argument so that I can make suggestions.

Q: I didn't read the instructions for the Q&C Assignments. Now it's the last week of class. Can I hand in retroactive assignments on readings we already covered?

A: No. It defeats the point of the assignment. Read instructions. Read course outlines.

Q: I'm not feeling well, but *maybe* I'm ok to write the test. Should I just try and see what happens? I can always just quit and write it again later, right?

A: No. I respect students trying to tough things out, but think it over procedurally from the perspective of the university: it is 100% reasonable to delay a test due to student illness, but it is another thing entirely to let a student see the contents of that test and then take a second try at it. So if you think you might not be well enough to write an exam, then do not write that exam. Contact me instead.

Q: Is philosophy really that great? Will it really change the way I think?

A: Yes, it is. Yes, it will. ☺