

Introduction to Philosophy

Spring Semester Update



Second Term Course Work

Four Quizzes 3.75% each

Five Writing Assignments Your lowest writing assignment grade for the year will automatically be dropped.
The nine remaining writing assignments will count for 70% of the course grade.

DRAFT
Not the official
course outline

	Writing Assignment Topic	Philosophical Work
WA 6 1/16	Philosophy of Religion: Can you believe it?	Explain the debate between two philosophers with divergent criteria
WA 7 2/3	Scientific Method: Is it <i>all</i> pseudoscience?	Consider further implications of a theory
WA 8 2/11	Free Will and Control: Get control of yourself!	Develop an argument by analogy; consider an objection
WA 9 3/10	Minds and Machines: What do I have to do to convince you?	Evaluate the success of an objection
WA 10 4/7	Existential Crisis: Face the Question	Do a comparative evaluation of theory based practical advice

Spring Semester Schedule

“S&D” stands for Stich and Donaldson’s **Philosophy: Asking Questions—Seeking Answers**.

“EP” stands for **Experiencing Philosophy** by Falikowski and Mills

Readings with no source indicated can be found through the Brightspace page.

Philosophy of Religion and the Ethics of Belief

T 1/6	Hume Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion , Parts I and II, EP 2.3 Non-Deductive Arguments
W 1/7	Hume Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion , Parts III through IX S&D Chapter 3: <i>Does God exist?</i> Introduction—3.5
F 1/9	<i>continued</i>
T 1/13	Hume Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion , Parts X through XII S&D Chapter 4: <i>Why does God leave us to suffer?</i>
W 1/14	Clifford <i>The Ethics of Belief</i> James <i>The Will to Believe</i> S&D Chapter 3: <i>Does God exist?</i> 3.8
F 1/16	Workshop for Writing Assignment 6: <i>Can You Believe It?</i>

Philosophy of Science

T 1/20	S&D Chapter 7: <i>Will the sun rise tomorrow?</i> Introduction—7.2
W 1/21	Writing Assignment 6: <i>Can You Believe It?</i> due 8pm S&D Chapter 7: <i>Will the sun rise tomorrow?</i> 7.3 and 7.6 Gould <i>The Chain of Reason vs. the Chain of Thumbs</i> Pigliucci and Boudry <i>The Dangers of Pseudoscience</i>
F 1/23	Dicken Competing Paradigms: On “The Last Writings of Thomas S. Kuhn”
T 1/27	Workshop for Writing Assignment 7: <i>Is it All Pseudoscience?</i>
W 1/28	QUIZ 4 Science and Religion open from 9:30 am to 11:30 am

Free Will

F 1/30	Introduction to Free Will
T 2/3	Writing Assignment 7: <i>Is it All Pseudoscience?</i> due 8pm Dennett <i>Please Don't Feed the Bugbears</i>
W 2/4	Dennett <i>Making Reason Practical, Control and Self-Control</i>
F 2/6	Workshop for Writing Assignment 8: <i>Get Control of Yourself!</i>
T 2/10	Dennett <i>Self-Made Selves, Acting Under the Idea of Freedom</i>
W 2/11	Writing Assignment 8: <i>Get Control of Yourself!</i> due 8pm Dennett “ <i>Could Have Done Otherwise</i> ”, <i>Why do we want free will?</i>
F 2/13	QUIZ 5 Free Will open from 9:30 am to 11:30 am

2/16 – 2/20 Reading Break – No Classes

Philosophy of Mind

T 2/24	S&D Chapter 11: <i>How is your mind related to your body?</i> Introduction—11.1
W 2/25	Ryle from The Concept of Mind S&D Chapter 10: <i>How is your mind related to your body?</i> 11.2
F 2/27	S&D Chapter 10: <i>How is your mind related to your body?</i> 11.3—11.5
T 3/3	Workshop for Writing Assignment 9: <i>What do I have to do to Convince You?</i> Turing from <i>Computing Machinery and Intelligence</i>
W 3/4	Searle <i>Watson Doesn't Know It Won on “Jeopardy!”</i>
F 3/6	Nagel <i>What is it like to be a bat?</i>
T 3/10	Writing Assignment 9: <i>What do I have to do to Convince You?</i> due 8pm Churchland <i>The Hornswoggle Problem</i>
W 3/11	Quiz 6 Mind open from 9:30 am to 11:30 am

The Good Life and the Meaning of Life

F 3/13	Tolstoy from <i>My Confession</i>
T 3/17	Schopenhauer <i>On The Vanity of Existence</i>
W 3/18	Camus from <i>The Myth of Sisyphus</i>
F 3/20	EP 3.2 <i>Existentialism: Born Free, Let Me Be</i>
T 3/24	Dreyfus <i>Nihilism on the Information Highway: Anonymity vs. Commitment in the Present Age</i>
W 3/25	Nagel <i>The Absurd</i>
F 3/27	EP 3.3 <i>The Meaning of Life</i> Wolf <i>Happiness and Meaning</i> , Section II <i>Meaning in Life</i> , recommended
T 3/31	Workshop for Writing Assignment 10: <i>The Question</i> Wallace <i>This is Water</i> Russell <i>The Value of Philosophy</i>
W 4/1	Quiz 7 The Meaning of Life open from 9:30 am to 11:30 am
T 4/7	Writing Assignment 10: <i>Face the Question</i> due 8pm

For all other course information see the course outline from the fall semester, available on Brightspace.