

Introduction to Philosophy (PHIL 1000-090)
Summer 2022 (Online)
Department of Philosophy, University of Utah
Carolyn Tanner Irish Humanities Building (CTIHB), 4th Floor



Instructor Information, Office Hours, and Study Sessions:

Derek Halm: derek.halm@utah.edu

TJ Perkins: t.perkins@utah.edu

Office hours are online and by appointment.

Instructors will host live study sessions over Zoom. Time and dates will vary, but the time of these study sessions will be announced at the beginning of each week. These study sessions are *not* required; however, you are encouraged to attend if you have questions about the material. If the virtual study session time does not accord with your schedule, please let us know as soon as possible, and we will try to work with you.

Course Description: Philosophy involves the critical examination of our fundamental beliefs, values, and practices. This course introduces students to the fields, methods, and history of philosophy. It allows students to explore some of the significant issues (e.g., the possibility of knowledge, the existence of God, free will, the nature of morality) in-depth and to develop the ability to think, speak, and write critically about complex questions.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Explain the main areas of philosophy, various central philosophical problems, and solutions proposed by several significant philosophers and schools of thought.
2. Apply philosophical methods, including clarifying concepts; analyzing, evaluating and constructing arguments; developing counterexamples; and using thought experiments,

3. Develop arguments for written presentation,
4. Demonstrate respect for different points of view,
5. Evaluate other points of view and use them to develop you.

Required Readings:

All required readings are available through Canvas. There is no textbook for this class.

Online Etiquette:

This is an online class, which means that the majority of communications will take place via email. Therefore, we ask that you follow these guidelines when reaching out to us:

1. Only use the Canvas page or your University email to contact us. Emails sent from personal emails (e.g., @gmail.com) will be ignored.
2. Ensure that your emails are respectful. You may say “Hey TJ/Derek” or “Hi!” as introductions, but please be professional. We will extend the same courtesy to you.
3. Indicate what you are emailing about. We are more than happy to help, but it saves us all time when the issue is clearly articulated from the get-go.
4. Sign your email. Sometimes, it is unclear via Canvas or the University email system who is writing.
5. We will try to respond to all emails within 24 hours during the workweek and within work hours. We do not respond to emails after 5 pm on a weeknight or emails over the weekend. Please keep this in mind if you have urgent questions. If we do not respond during the workweek within 24 hours, please send a polite reminder.

Grading:

Deadlines

We recognize that this is a difficult time and want to work with you to succeed in this class. However, assignment deadlines are strict. If you are unable to complete an assignment on time, please contact us beforehand. Reasonable accommodations may be made on a case-by-case basis.

Grading Scale

→ A	100-94%
→ A-	93-90%
→ B+	89-87%
→ B	86-83%
→ B-	82-80%
→ C+	79-77%
→ C	76-73%
→ C-	72-70%
→ D+	69-67%

- D 66-63%
- D- 62-60%
- E 59-0%

Assignments:

Quizzes (25%)

There are short quizzes due at the end of each week. These are structured to ensure that you track the main ideas in the module and are not meant to be onerous. The format will change week to week. These will be due each Friday.

Short Responses (25%)

At the end of each module, you will write a short response to a single prompt provided by the instructor. We will give several prompts, but you will pick one. Your short response will consist of two parts. First, you will briefly (in no more than 1-2 paragraphs) summarize a reading from the module or some argument from that reading. Following that, you will provide a brief response to the reading or argument in question. Likewise, this response should be no more than 1-2 paragraphs and may take the form of either a criticism or a defense. Because the assignment is brief, concision and precision are goals. This assignment allows you to demonstrate your comprehension of material and provides an inroad into the skill of philosophical analysis.

Midterm (25%)

After the first two modules, there will be a midterm over the material thus far covered. This assignment will consist of multiple-choice questions and some short essay questions. You may use notes and readings on this assignment. The midterm will allow you to demonstrate your understanding of the material and further improve your philosophical skills.

Final Exam (25%)

There will be a comprehensive final exam that consists of some short essay questions and multiple choice. While the final will cover all material in the class, it will focus on the final two modules. You may use notes and readings on this assignment. The final allows you to demonstrate mastery of course material and the ability to explore readings and arguments in sophisticated ways.

CLASS READING SCHEDULE:

NOTE: Readings may change with reasonable notice. It is your responsibility to stay on top of readings, lectures, and assignments as they are posted to Canvas. Please contact us if you have any questions. Lectures for each week will be posted no later than the Sunday before the week.

❑ Module 1: Truth

- ❑ Week 1: **What is Philosophy?**; Russell - *Truth and Falsehood*
 - ❑ [What is Philosophy? \(Youtube Video\)](#)
 - ❑ [The Meaning of Knowledge \(Youtube Video\)](#)
- ❑ Week 2: **Different Ways to Conceptualize Truth**; Foucault - *Truth and Power*; Alcoff - *The Case for Coherence*
 - ❑ ***Further Reading***
 - ❑ [Intro to Foucault \(Youtube Video\)](#)
 - ❑ Austin - *Truth*
 - ❑ James - *Pragmatism's Conception of Truth*
 - ❑ Heal - *The Disinterested Search for Truth*
- ❑ Week 3: **Why is Truth Important?**; Nguyen - *The Disinterested Search for Truth*;
 - ❑ ***Further Reading***
 - ❑ Akutagawa - *In a Bamboo Grove*
 - ❑ Orwell - *Politics and the English Language*
 - ❑ Fallis - [What is Disinformation?](#)
 - ❑ Bradshaw & Howard - [Troops, Trolls, and Troublemakers: A Global Inventory of Organized Social Media Manipulation](#)

❑ Module 2: Metaphysics

- ❑ Week 4: **What is Ultimately Real?**; Carroll & Markosian - *What is metaphysics?* (4 pages); Russell - [Appearance and Reality](#) (~9 pages); Comic - [A Brief History of Metaphysics](#)
 - ❑ ***Further Reading***
 - ❑ Aristotle - *Metaphysics*
 - ❑ Epicurus - [Letter to Herodotus](#)
 - ❑ Berkeley - [Principles of Human Knowledge](#)
- ❑ Week 5: **What is the Nature of the Human Mind?**; Carroll & Markosian - [The Mind-Body Problem](#) (3 pages); Thomas Nagel - [Ch. 4. The Mind-Body Problem](#) (4 pages); Video: [Where Does Your Mind Reside?: Crash Course Philosophy #22](#); Comic: [Captain Metaphysics and the Ghost in the Machine](#)
 - ❑ ***Further Reading***
 - ❑ Descartes - [Meditations on First Philosophy](#)

- ❑ Elisabeth of Bohemia, [Correspondence with Descartes](#), 6.v.1643 to 1.vii.1643 (pp.1-8).
 - ❑ Gilbert Ryle, [Descartes' Myth](#)
- ❑ Week 6: **Do You Have Free Will?**; Carroll & Markosian - [Freedom and Determinism](#) (3 pages); Thomas Nagel - [Ch. 6. Free will](#) (5 pages); Video: [Determinism vs Free Will: Crash Course Philosophy #24](#) & [Compatibilism: Crash Course Philosophy #25](#)
 - ❑ ***Further Reading***
 - ❑ Music: [Rush - Freewill](#)
 - ❑ Poetry: Ella Wheeler Wilcox - ['Tis the Set of the Sail](#)
 - ❑ Sartre - [Man Makes Himself](#)
 - ❑ William James - [The Dilemma of Determinism](#)
- ❑ **Module 3: Ethics**
 - ❑ Week 7: **What is Ethics?**; Rachels - Selections on Utilitarianism; [Utilitarianism \(Video\)](#)
 - ❑ ***Further Reading***
 - ❑ Singer - [Famine, Affluence, and Morality](#)
 - ❑ Week 8: **Aren't Rules Important?**; Rachels - Selections on Moral Rules; [Kant & Categorical Imperatives \(Video\)](#)
 - ❑ ***Further Reading***
 - ❑ Marquis - [Why Abortion Is Immoral](#)
 - ❑ Regan - [The Case for Animal Rights](#)
 - ❑ Week 9: **Thinking Like a Moral Philosopher**; Bostrom - *The Fable of the Dragon Tyrant*; Le Guin - *The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas*
 - ❑ ***Further Reading***
 - ❑ [The Fable of the Dragon Tyrant \(Video Reading\)](#)
 - ❑ Greenberg - [Important Things](#)
- ❑ **Module 4: Science**
 - ❑ Week 10: **Epistemology: How do we know what killed the dinosaurs?**; Carol Cleland (2001) Section 1-3; [Einstein's Eclipse Changed the Course of Physics Forever](#) (video); [The Mystery of the Cleveland-Lloyd Dinosaur Death Trap](#) [SciShow video]
 - ❑ ***Further Reading***
 - ❑ Adrian Currie, *Rock, Bone, and Ruin* (2018)
 - ❑ Karl Popper, "Conjectures and Refutations" (1953)
 - ❑ Week 11: **Metaphysics: What is a species?**; [Metaphysics of Science](#) (Sections 1., 1a., and 3e.); [What are Natural Kinds \(Philosophical Definition\)](#) [video]; [What is a species?](#) [video].
 - ❑ ***Further Reading***
 - ❑ Joyce Havstad, "Messy Chemical Kinds"

- ❑ Week 12: **Ethics: Why do scientists lie?**; Liam Kofi Bright's (2021) "Why do Scientists Lie?"; [Meet this super-spotter of duplicated images in science papers](#) (*Nature*); [Trust in research -- the ethics of knowledge production](#) (TEDx) [video].

- ❑ ***Further Reading***

- ❑ Robert Merton, "A Note on Science and Democracy" (1942)
 - ❑ Richard Feynman, "Cargo Cult Science" (1976)