
Introduction to Philosophy PHIL 20

Course Description

This course is an introduction to some central questions of philosophy through the writings of both traditional and contemporary authors. We will address questions in three major branches of philosophy: metaphysics, ethics, and epistemology. We will learn to read and critically engage with difficult historical and contemporary texts while challenging basic assumptions and developing the skills of analyzing concepts, drawing distinctions, and forming and assessing arguments. The class is reading and writing intensive.

Learning Goals

- Develop a familiarity with historical and contemporary approaches to philosophy.
- Increase proficiency in reading and interpreting philosophical arguments.
- Acquire strategies for sustaining meaningful and productive philosophical discussions.

Assessment

Assessment will consist of **two** papers, **one** online exam, and **regular** quizzes, worksheets, and online discussion posts.

Online Classes

This is an online class. There will be a mix of synchronous and asynchronous meetings. Attendance at the synchronous meetings is required unless you have already made alternative arrangements with me. All classes will be recorded and posted on Canvas.

Zoom Policies

We will be using Zoom for all synchronous meetings. For you attendance to be counted, you must activate your video and have a working microphone. Contact me immediately if you need to make alternative arrangements or are experiencing technical difficulties.

Policy Regarding Late Work

I do not accept late work. Exams may be rescheduled for 1) medical reasons, 2) religious holidays, or 3) school-sanctioned extracurricular activities. I will consider other circumstances on a case-by-case basis. Except in the case of illness, you will need to let me know of your excuse a week in advance of the exam date. In the case of illness, you must have your dean contact me as soon as possible.

SUMMER 2020
[MTWR 10:45-12:45]
Canvas & Zoom

Instructor: Katherine Ward
Email: kw555@georgetown.edu
Zoom Office Hours: W 1-2 EST
and by appointment

REQUIRED TEXTS

Devs – an FX limited series

Available via:
[Hulu streaming](#)
[Amazon Video](#)



All other texts will be provided via Canvas.

IMPORTANT DATES

6/01	First Day of Class
6/15	Paper 1 Rough Draft
6/19	Paper 1 Final Draft
6/30	Paper 2 Rough Draft
7/02	Exam
7/03	Paper 2

Assessment

Quizzes/Worksheets	20%
Online Discussion	20%
Paper 1	20%
Exam	20%
Paper 2	20%

Grade	Point Scale
A	≥94
A-	≥90
B+	≥87
B	≥83
B-	≥80
C+	≥77
C	≥73
C-	≥70
D+	≥67
D	≥60
F	<60

SCHEDULE

Day	Date	Reading Due	In-Class
M	6/01	Watch: <i>Ders</i> Episodes 1 & 2 (On Canvas)	Craig, <i>Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction</i> "Introduction" J. Nagel, "Introduction"
T	6/02	Ichikawa & Steup, "Knowledge as Justified True Belief"	Gettier, "Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?"
W	6/03	Watch: <i>Ders</i> Episodes 3 (Hulu or Amazon) Listen: "Katalin Farkas on Knowing a Person" <i>Philosophy Bites</i>	J. Nagel, Ch. 6 "Testimony"
R	6/04	Jones, "The Politics of Credibility"	Grasswick, "Epistemic Injustice" SEP (excerpt) T. Nagel, "Free Will"
M	6/08	Watch: <i>Ders</i> Episodes 4 Listen: "Gregg Caruso on Freewill and Punishment" <i>Philosophy Bites</i> Listen: "Daniel Dennett on a Freewill Worth Wanting" <i>Philosophy Bites</i>	Dennett & Caruso, "Just Deserts"
T	6/09	Frankfurt, "Alternate Possibilities and Moral Responsibility"	
W	6/10	Strawson, "Freedom and Resentment"	
R	6/11	Watch: <i>Ders</i> Episodes 5 Bartky "Narcissism, Femininity, and Alienation"	Appiah, "But Would That Still Be Me?" <i>Optional</i> : Ball, "Why the Many-Worlds Interpretation Has Many Problems"
M	6/15	PAPER 1 ROUGH DRAFT DUE	
T	6/16	Watch: <i>Ders</i> Episodes 6 Mumford, "How Does Time Pass?" McTaggart, "Time is not Real"	
W	6/17	Williams, "The Myth of Passage"	
R	6/18	Mellor, "McTaggart, Fixity and Coming True." Lewis, "The Paradoxes of Time Travel"	
F	6/19	PAPER 1 FINAL DRAFT DUE	
M	6/22	Watch: <i>Ders</i> Episodes 7 Sartre, "Condemned to be Free"	Nietzsche, "The Eternal Recurrence"
T	6/23	Camus, "The Myth of Sisyphus" T. Nagel, "The Absurd"	
W	6/24	Watch: <i>Ders</i> Episodes 8	Bostrom, "Are You Living in a Computer Simulation?"
R	6/25	Descartes, "Meditations 1 and 2"	Nozick, "The Experience Machine"
M	6/29	Parfit, "Personal Identity"	Egan, "Learning to be Me"
T	6/30	PAPER 2 ROUGH DRAFT DUE	
W	7/01	Critchley, "To Philosophize Is to Learn How to Die"	
R	7/02	FINAL EXAM	
F	7/03	PAPER 2 FINAL DRAFT DUE	

Papers

Prompts

You will be given a prompt for each paper, but you will have some choices about which philosophers or theories you draw on in your response. The prompts will be posted well ahead of time on Canvas under “Assignments.”

First Draft & Peer Review

A first draft of each paper is due ahead of time. You will have to submit the draft on Canvas. You will also exchange your draft with an assigned partner to give and receive peer feedback. Completion of the peer review will be part of your grade

Rubric

A rubric for each paper will also be posted ahead of time. You should refer to the rubric before you turn in your final draft.

Tests

Format

There will be one cumulative final exam that you will take on Canvas. It will have a mix of multiple choice, fill in the blank, short answer, and essay questions. Although you will have a 24-hour period in which you can start the exam, once you begin, there is a strict 2-hr time limit. You may use your notes, books, etc. **You may not discuss your answers with or receive help from anyone else.**

Preparation

I strongly recommend studying with a group.

ACCOMMODATIONS & DIFFERING ABILITIES

I am happy to accommodate a multitude of learning styles. Please come speak to me early in the term about any disability-related accommodations you may need. Also, if over the course of the term you find that additional accommodations are necessary, let me know so we can work together to make this course a beneficial experience. Below are a few resources that you may find helpful.

Academic

Academic Support

<http://academicsupport.georgetown.edu/>

"Offers an array of academic support services, including study skills workshops, individual consultations, and tutoring in introductory courses." Links to Disability Support, Student-Athlete Support, Academic Support, and the Writing Center.

Scholarly Research and Academic Integrity

<http://www.library.georgetown.edu/tutorials/academic-integrity/refresher-tipsheet>

Honor Council

<http://honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/>

Personal

Student Health Services

<http://studenthealth.georgetown.edu/>

Links to Student Health Center, Counseling and Mental Health, Crisis Counseling.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The Georgetown University Honor System defines cheating as:

“the use or attempted use of unauthorized materials, information, study aids, or unauthorized collaboration on in-class examinations, take-home examinations, or other academic exercises. It is the responsibility of the student to consult with the professor concerning what constitutes permissible collaboration. Cheating or assisting another student to cheat in connection with an examination or assignment is academic fraud.”

Unless otherwise instructed, **collaboration with anyone during the exam or quizzes is prohibited.**

In accordance with university policy, any case of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported to the Honor Council. **I reserve the right to fail a student for the entire course if they are found in violation of the honor code for cheating.**

TITLE IX

I am committed to supporting survivors of sexual misconduct, including relationship violence and sexual assault. However, **university policy requires me to report any disclosure of sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator**, whose role is to coordinate the University's response to sexual misconduct.

Georgetown has a number of fully confidential professional resources who can provide support and assistance to survivors of sexual assault and other forms of sexual misconduct. These resources include:

Jen Schweer, MA, LPC
Associate Director of Health Education Services for Sexual Assault Response and Prevention
(202) 687-0323
jls242@georgetown.edu

Erica Shirley, Trauma Specialist
Counseling and Psychiatric Services (CAPS)
(202) 687-6985
els54@georgetown.edu

More information about campus resources and reporting sexual misconduct can be found at Georgetown's Sexual Assault page: <https://sexualassault.georgetown.edu/>

Difficult and/or Triggering Topics

As you may know, there is a difference between being triggered (in the sense of post-traumatic stress disorder) and feeling uncomfortable. Feeling uncomfortable (and sometimes even angry or offended) is part of intellectual growth. Feeling triggered or psychologically traumatized is not.

We will touch on topics that are difficult intellectually and emotionally including death, suicide, assault, and more. Some of the assigned readings and shows touch on or depict these issues. If you become so distressed by an assignment that you cannot finish it, please contact me so we can arrange an alternate.

If you anticipate acute distress as a result of encountering a particular topic in class, talk to me before class to arrange an alternative written assignment in lieu of in-class participation.

Please take care of yourselves and each other, and let me know what I can do to help.