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, two in-class tests, and regular pop-quizzes.

Attendance & Tardiness
Attendance is required. Missing more than 25% of the classes for whatever reason will result in automatic failure of the course. Quizzes are given at the start of class. You will not be permitted to take a quiz if you arrive after everyone has turned it in.

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.

Classroom Technology
The use of laptops and cellphones is not allowed in class.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading Due</th>
<th>In-Class</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
<th>Test</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>6/02</td>
<td>Descartes, “Meditations 1 and 2”</td>
<td>Craig “What Am I?” Egan, “Learning to Be Me”</td>
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<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>6/10</td>
<td>McTaggart, “Time is not Real”</td>
<td>J. Nagel, “Introduction”</td>
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<td>R</td>
<td>6/11</td>
<td>Ishikawa &amp; Steup, “Knowledge as Justified True Belief”</td>
<td>Gettier, “Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?”</td>
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<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>6/15</td>
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<td>Nagel, Ch. 6 “Testimony”</td>
<td>TEST 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>6/17</td>
<td>Fricker, “Epistemic Injustice and a Role for Virtue in the Politics of Knowing”</td>
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<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>6/18</td>
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<td>Paper 1 Rough Draft Due</td>
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<td>Paper 1 Final Draft Due</td>
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<td>M</td>
<td>6/22</td>
<td>Fricker, “Hermeneutical Injustice”</td>
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<td>T</td>
<td>6/23</td>
<td>Sandy Bartky “Narcissism, Femininity, and Alienation”</td>
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<td>W</td>
<td>6/24</td>
<td>Watch: “Phoenix”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Day</td>
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<td>Reading 1</td>
<td>Reading 2</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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| T   | 6/30 | Bernard Williams, “The Amoralist”  
    |      | David Benatar, “Why it is Better Never to Come into Existence” |       |
| W   | 7/01 |           |           | Paper 2 Rough Draft Due |
| R   | 7/02 |           |           | TEST 2 |
| F   | 7/03 |           |           | Paper 2 Final Draft Due |
Papers

Prompts

You will be given a prompt for each paper, but you will be able to respond using any of the philosophers or theories we’ve studied. 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 online and bring a hard copy to class. You will exchange your draft with one other person 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 two tests. These tests will have a mix of multiple choice, fill in the blank, short answer, and essay questions. You will take the test in class on Canvas. **You must bring in a laptop to take the tests.** The second test is not cumulative; it covers only the material that is covered after the first test.

Preparation

I strongly recommend studying with a group.
Quizzes

Format

These are pop quizzes that will test your understanding of the readings due that day. You cannot make these quizzes up, and you cannot take them if you arrive after everyone else has turned the quiz in. If you miss a quiz due to a documented, excused absence, your grade for that quiz will be the average of all your other quizzes.

Preparation

Make sure you understand and can explain the main ideas in each reading.
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, using any materials or collaboration with anyone during the in-class exams or quizzes is prohibited. All exams are closed book.

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 he or she is found in violation of the honor code for cheating.
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 racism, homophobia, sexual assault, abuse, and more. Many of the assigned readings and films touch on or depict these issues. If you become so distressed by an assigned film or reading 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. If you become so distressed that you need to leave during class, talk to me afterward and we can arrange an alternate assignment.

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