

**Philosophy 104**  
**Introduction to Philosophy**  
**(Writing Intensive)**  
**Prof. Stephen Stich**  
**Fall Term 2021**

**Syllabus – Part I: Information About the Course**

This syllabus has two Parts. This part, Part I, contains a lot of information about the course, including information about the goals of the course, the Canvas website, the grading system, the attendance policy, and the policy on cheating and plagiarism. You should read Part I carefully at the beginning of the term, and consult it again whenever you have questions about the course. If you can't find the answer to your question, Prof. Stich and the TAs will be happy to help. Part II: *Topics and Readings* is a detailed list of the lecture topics and assigned readings, arranged by date. Part II may be revised and updated from time to time. You will be notified by e-mail whenever a revised version of *Topics and Readings* is posted on the course Canvas site.

**Course Format:** Philosophy 104 is a **lecture plus discussion section course**. This term the lectures will be **online** and **synchronous** from 1:00 PM to 2:20 PM on Mondays and Wednesdays. The lectures will be recorded and posted on the course Canvas site, usually within 24 hours. The lectures will be given by Prof. Stich. In addition, each student is assigned to a discussion section taught by one of our outstanding TAs. There are twelve discussion sections. Six of the discussion sections (Sections 01 thru 06) are **in person**. The other six discussion sections (07 thru 12) are **online** and **synchronous**. It is important that you know what section you are signed up for, and that you attend the correct section. Check your class schedule if you are unsure. The times and locations of the discussion sections are listed below.

**Where and When the Course Meets**

The **Lectures** are **online** on Monday & Wednesday, from 1:00 PM to 2:20 PM. You will receive a Zoom invitation for each lecture the morning before the lecture.

There are 12 **Sections**. The times, locations and instructors for the sections are as follows:

Section 01	Monday	9:00 – 9:55	SC-203	Ms. Accomando
Section 02	Wednesday	10:05 – 11:00	SC-203	Ms. Accomando
Section 03	Thursday	11:05 – 11:55	SC-207	Mr. Brooks
Section 04	Thursday	1:00 – 1:55	SC-206	Mr. Brooks
Section 05	Tuesday	5:00 – 5:55	SC-106	Mr. McIntyre
Section 06	Tuesday	7:00 – 7:55	SC-204	Mr. McIntyre

Section 07	Tuesday	1:00 – 1:55	Online	Mr. Fernandez
Section 08	Friday	3:00 – 3:55	Online	Mr. Fernandez
Section 09	Wednesday	5:00 – 5:55	Online	Mr. Sorensen
Section 10	Monday	5:00 – 5:55	Online	Mr. Sorensen
Section 11	Friday	11:00 – 11:55	Online	Ms. Mitchley
Section 12	Friday	1:00 – 1:55	Online	Ms. Mitchley

### **Instructors**

Prof. Stephen Stich

Office: 106 Somerset St., 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, room 540

E-mail: [stich@philosophy.rutgers.edu](mailto:stich@philosophy.rutgers.edu)

Office Hours: TBA

Ms. Mia Accomando

Office: 106 Somerset St., 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, room 532

E-mail: [mia.accomando@rutgers.edu](mailto:mia.accomando@rutgers.edu)

Office Hours: Monday & Wednesday, 10:30 – 11:30

Mr. Patrick Brooks

Office: 106 Somerset St., 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, room TBA

E-mail: [p.brooks@rutgers.edu](mailto:p.brooks@rutgers.edu)

Office Hours: TBA

Mr. Ronnie Fernandez

Office: 106 Somerset St., 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, room TBA

E-mail: [rf476@scarletmail.rutgers.edu](mailto:rf476@scarletmail.rutgers.edu)

Office Hours: TBA

Mr.. James McIntyre

Office: 106 Somerset St., 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, room TBA

E-mail: [james.mcintyre@rutgers.edu](mailto:james.mcintyre@rutgers.edu)

Office Hours: TBA

Ms. Hazel Mitchley

Office: 106 Somerset St., 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, room 540

E-mail: [hazel.mitchley@rutgers.edu](mailto:hazel.mitchley@rutgers.edu)

Office Hours: TBA

Mr. David Sorensen

Office: 106 Somerset St., 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, room TBA

E-mail: [dss170@english.rutgers.edu](mailto:dss170@english.rutgers.edu)

Office Hours: TBA

## **Core Curriculum Information**

Philosophy 104 has been certified by the faculty as meeting the following SAS Core Curriculum requirements:

- i) Writing and Communication, Revision (WCR)
- ii) Writing and Communication in a Discipline (WCD),
- iii) Philosophical and Theoretical Issues (AH-o)

A bit of bureaucratic gobbledeygook required by Rutgers: Assessment of learning goals (o), (s), (t), (u) and (v) will be by an SAS generic rubric embedded in the evaluation criteria laid out in this syllabus. For more information on these goals, go to:

[file:///C:/Users/sstich/Downloads/The%20CORE%20Curriculum%20%20\(7-25-12\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/sstich/Downloads/The%20CORE%20Curriculum%20%20(7-25-12).pdf)

## **The Goals of the Course**

The course has three goals.

1) To acquaint students with some of the important positions and arguments on a number of central questions in Western philosophy. Those questions include:

- i) Does God exist?
- ii) Can we trust our senses to learn about the world around us?
- iii) What justification do we have for our predictions about the future?
- iv) What is a person? What is required for a person to continue to exist in the future? Is life after death possible?
- v) What is a mind? How is the mind related to the brain? Is it possible for a computer to think and to be conscious?
- vi) Do we have free will?
- vii) What do moral claims mean? Are there correct and incorrect answers to moral questions?
- viii) How should a moral person behave? What sorts of things are intrinsically valuable?

2) To improve students' skills in analyzing and criticizing arguments both verbally and in writing.

3) To improve students' skills in explaining and defending their own philosophical views, both verbally and in writing.

## **Canvas**

The learning management system used in this course is Canvas (canvas.rutgers.edu). There will be a Canvas Module for each of the 14 weeks of the term. The recorded lectures, readings that are not in the textbook, and lots of other stuff will be available in the weekly Modules.

## **Textbook**

*Philosophy: Asking Questions – Seeking Answers* by Stephen Stich & Tom Donaldson (Oxford University Press, 2019). The book is available at the Rutgers University Book Store. New and used copies can also be purchased on Amazon and on many other online booksellers. There is a digital version available [HERE](#).

## **Evaluation**

- Discussion section attendance and participation: 25%  
This portion of your grade will be determined by the extent to which you are actively engaged with your section: contribution to class discussion are most important, but attendance and individual meetings with your TA will also count. Your TA will regularly assign activities like online discussion forums, brief homework assignments, and class presentations. These will play an important part in determining your participation grade.

If you are in a section that meets online rather than in person, you will be expected to have your camera on. If your camera is not on, you will be counted as absent.<sup>1</sup>

- Writing assignments: 75%  
You will write three papers for this course. The first paper will be about 900 words, the second about 1800 and the third about 2700. Each paper will be submitted twice. Each first draft will be graded and worth 5% of your course grade. First drafts will be returned with suggestions and comments. The final draft of your first paper will be worth 10% of your course grade. The final draft of your second paper will be worth 20% of your course grade. The final draft of your third paper will be worth 30% of your course grade. Your grade on final drafts will depend, in part, on how you respond to the feedback on your first draft.

Due dates will be specified for each first draft and final draft. Late papers will lose 3 points (on a 100 point scale) for every day they are late. Exceptions will be made only for documented serious circumstances.

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<sup>1</sup> Philosophy professor Thony Gillies has suggested some rules and expectations to make this work:

- Put on your fave fake background and turn your video on.
- If you are just watching tik toks at least drop a link to the funny ones in the chat.
- You have to wear clothes. PJs are totally fine.
- If you have a dog, you need to show us the dog if he's a good boy (yes he is a good boy).

## **Policy on Cheating and Plagiarism**

The policy on cheating and plagiarism in this course is very simple. **If you cheat or plagiarize you will fail the course.** You will also be reported to the Office of Student Conduct. There are no exceptions to this policy.

Early in the term, the TAs will explain how plagiarism rules are interpreted at Rutgers. It is important to keep in mind that if you use material from an on-line source, you *must* acknowledge this and provide a reference to the source. Changing a few words in the material that you have borrowed does *not* exempt you from this requirement. For additional information on the Rutgers University policies on academic integrity, go to <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>.

All papers will be submitted to Turnitin.com (via Canvas) for the detection of plagiarism. Further, all papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of Turnitin.com service is subject to the usage policy posted on the Turnitin.com site.

Students are not permitted to buy or sell any course materials, online or otherwise. This includes handouts, paper topics, homework questions, slides, etc. Such behavior constitutes academic misconduct.

## **Disability Services**

Lucy Stone Hall, Suite A145, Livingston Campus, 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue, Piscataway, NJ 08854. Phone: (848) 445-6800.

<https://ods.rutgers.edu/>

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at:

<https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

## **Other important Rutgers Services:**

- Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS) (848) 932-7884; 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick ([www.rhscaps.rutgers.edu/](http://www.rhscaps.rutgers.edu/)).
- Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA) (848) 932- 1181; 3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick ([www.vpva.rutgers.edu/](http://www.vpva.rutgers.edu/)) 4

