

Introduction to Philosophy

Philosophy 104
Prof. Stephen Stich

Fall Term 2014

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 Sakai 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 Sakai site.

Course Format: Philosophy 104 is a **lecture plus discussion section course**. Everyone in the course will attend two lectures each week. The lectures will be given by Prof. Stich. In addition, each student is assigned to a discussion section taught by one of our five outstanding TAs. There are ten discussion sections. It is important that you know which section you are assigned to and that you attend the correct section.

Where and When the Course Meets

The **Lecture** meets in 105 Voorhees Hall, Monday & Wednesday, 6th period (= 4:30 – 5:50)

There are 10 **Sections**. The time and location of the sections is as follows:

Section 01	Monday	6:25 – 7:20	SC-103	Mr. Rubio
Section 02	Monday	6:25 – 7:20	FH-B6	Ms. Feeney
Section 04	Monday	6:25 – 7:20	FH-B1	Ms. Laity-D'Agostino
Section 06	Wednesday	6:25 – 7:20	FH-B6	Ms. Feeney
Section 07	Wednesday	6:25 – 7:20	SC-102	Mr. Black
Section 08	Wednesday	6:25 – 7:20	FH-B1	Ms. Laity-D'Agostino
Section 09	Wednesday	3:05 – 4:00	SC-106	Ms. Coetsee
Section 10	Wednesday	3:05 – 4:00	SC-204	Mr. Black
Section 11	Wednesday	6:25 – 7:20	SC-219	Mr. Rubio
Section 12	Wednesday	6:25 – 7:20	SC-104	Ms. Coetsee

Instructors

Prof. Stephen Stich

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Office Hours: Monday 1:30 – 3:00 & Wednesday 2:30 – 4:00, and by appointment

Mr. David Black

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Office Hours: Monday 11:00 – 1:00, and by appointment.

Ms. Marilie Coetsee:

Office: 106 Somerset St., 5th Floor, room 532

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Office Hours: Wednesday 11:00 – 1:00, and by appointment

Ms. Megan Feeney

Office: 106 Somerset St., 5th Floor, room 517

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Office Hours: Friday 2:00 – 4:00, and by appointment

Ms. Kelsey Laity-D'Agostino

Office: 106 Somerset St., 5th Floor, room 511

E-Mail: kelaity.d@rutgers.edu

Office Hours: Monday 1:30 – 3:00, and by appointment

Mr. Daniel Rubio

Office: 106 Somerset St., 5th Floor, room 534

E-Mail: danielkfrubio@gmail.com

Office Hours: Monday 11:45 – 12:45, and by appointment

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 (AHo)

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.

Important Note About E-mail

You will be getting lots of e-mails about the course. These e-mails can only be sent to your official Rutgers e-mail address. So you should monitor that e-mail account frequently. If you usually use a non-Rutgers e-mail account (e.g. Gmail or Hotmail) you should arrange to have your Rutgers e-mail forwarded to the account you usually use.

Sakai Site

Much of the material needed for the course will be available on [Rutgers Sakai](https://sakai.rutgers.edu/), one of the electronic course platforms offered by Rutgers. To access this material, go to

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

or just Google "Rutgers Sakai". You will need a Rutgers NetID to enter Sakai. Once you're on Sakai you should see a tab that says "Intro to Philosophy." If that tab is not visible on the top of the Sakai screen, click on "More Sites." If "Intro to Philosophy" is not there either, ask Prof. Stich or one of the TAs for help.

When you get to the "Intro to Philosophy" page, there will be a column on the left with a number of buttons. Much of the material you will need in the course, *including most of the readings*, can be found in the Resources folder that you can reach by clicking on "Resources".

Grading

Your grade for the course will be determined by your grade on the following five components of the course:

- 1) **Mid-term exam** (15% of your course grade)
Date: Wednesday, October 8. This will be an essay exam. All the questions will be posted on Sakai in advance and discussed in the Discussion Sections. The Mid-term exam will held in our regular lecture room, Voorhees 105, at our regular lecture time, 4:30 – 5:50.
- 2) **Final exam** (15% of your course grade)
Date: Tuesday, December 16. Time: 9:30 AM – 11:00 AM. This will be an essay exam. All the questions will be distributed in advance and discussed in the Discussion Sections. The Final exam is NOT cumulative. It will cover the material from the Mid-term onward. The Final exam will held in our regular lecture room, Voorhees 105.

PLEASE NOTE: We cannot give make-up exams to accommodate your vacation travel plans.

- 3) **I>Clicker quizzes** (15% of your course grade)
Starting on Wednesday, September 17, there will be two I>Clicker quizzes in each lecture. The first will begin about 5 minutes after the beginning of the lecture. The second will be at the end of the lecture. There will be three multiple choice questions in each quiz. You will get 1 I>Clicker point for every question you answer (whether or not your answer is correct). If your answer is correct, you will get 2 additional I>Clicker points. Thus you can earn a maximum of 18 I>Clicker points in each lecture (6 quiz questions each worth 3 points). Some of the I>Clicker quiz questions will be based on the assigned readings; some will be based on the material in the lecture or in the preceding lecture. The “curve” mapping I>Clicker scores to the 40 point grading scale used in this course will be posted on Sakai and updated periodically. **In computing your final I>Clicker score, the 4 lowest days will be dropped.**
- 4) **Writing & revising papers and critiquing the written work of other students** (55% of your course grade)

Philosophy 104 has been certified by the Faculty of the School of Arts and Sciences as meeting the Core Curriculum Learning Goals for Writing and Communication (Goals WCr and WCd). Thus students will do quite a lot of writing for this class, and will get quite a lot of feedback on it from the TAs and from fellow students. They will also be required to revise their work in light of

the feedback from TAs and fellow students. This will be accomplished through repeated cycles of writing and revision. Each cycle will be structured as follows.

Writing and revision cycle

Step 1: Student A selects a topic from the list of topics posted on the course Sakai site and informs his or her TA via e-mail.

Step 2: The TA will assign two other students in the class (student B & student C) as the initial review committee for student A's paper.

Step 3: Student A will submit a first draft of the paper to the TA who will send it on to students B & C. Target length for the paper will be 1500 – 2000 words.

Step 4: Students B & C will submit detailed written critiques of student A's first draft to the TA who will send them on to Student A.

Step 5: Student A will submit a second draft of the paper to the TA.

Step 6: The TA will prepare a written critique of student A's second draft and send it to student A. At this time, student A will also be invited to meet with the TA, if he or she wishes, to discuss the paper.

Step 7: Student A will submit a third and final draft of the paper to the on-line submission folder.

Grading:

(i) Grading Student Critics: After step 4, the TA will provide students B & C with feedback on their written critiques, and assign grades for those critiques.

(ii) Grading Student Authors: After step 7, the TA will grade student A on the full cycle, taking into account both the quality of the final product and the trajectory of the paper as student A reacted to the suggestions and critiques offered by students B & C and by the TA.

Repetition of the writing and revision cycle:

In role A, each student will be required to repeat writing and revision cycle 3 times during the term. Thus each student will write nine paper drafts during the term.

In roles B & C, each student will also be required to repeat the cycle 3 times. Thus each student will write three critiques of another student's paper draft.

The contribution of the paper and critique grades to the student's course grade:

Student A's three full cycle grades will account for 45% of his or her course grade. Students B & C's three critiques will account for 10% of his or her course grade. Thus 55% of a student's final course grade will be determined by his or her writing and critiques.

Detailed schedules for the writing and revision cycles

Detailed schedules for the three writing and revision cycles are available in the Resources folder on Sakai. When you read these schedules, you should pay particular attention to the due dates. **All due dates will be strictly enforced, as will the penalties for submitting late work.**

Classroom writing instruction:

In addition to the individualized feedback on their writing that students will receive in the writing and revision cycles, the first two recitation sessions of the term will spend a significant amount of time discussing how to write a paper aimed at arguing for a conclusion.

Guidelines on Writing a Philosophy Paper

Prof. James Pryor at NYU has provided some very useful advice on writing a philosophy paper in his "Guidelines for Writing a Philosophy Paper." There is a copy available in the Resources folder of the class Sakai site.

- 5) **Extra Credit for Discussion Section Participation:** After your final grade has been computed, as outlined above, your discussion section instructor may add up to 3 points (on the 40 point scale) for constructive participation in section.

Important note on I>Clickers:

I>Clicker quizzes will be an important part of your grade. **So you must obtain and register an I>Clicker.** The quizzes will be designed for the I>Clicker Gen 1 and the I>Clicker +, not for the newer and more expensive I>Clicker 2. However, the I>Clicker 2 can also be used. Pictures of the I>Clicker Gen 1 and the I>Clicker + appear below. I>Clickers can be purchased at campus area bookstores. They can also be purchased on-line. The I>Clicker company has recently introduced an option called the Web>Clicker. **The Web>Clicker cannot be used in this course.**

I>Clicker quizzes will start on Wednesday, September 17. So you should be sure that you have your Clicker before class on September 17. In previous years, a number of students who ordered their Clickers from on-line vendors did not get their Clickers on time. Thus we advise that you buy your Clicker from a local bookstore. If you come to class on September 17 (or on any other class day) without your Clicker, your Clicker grade for that day will be zero.

It is very important that you remember to bring your I>Clicker with you to every lecture. If you forget, your Clicker grade for that day will be zero. We also strongly recommend that you always bring a spare batteries for your Clicker. If your batteries fail and you don't have spares, your Clicker grade for that day will be zero.



I>Clicker Gen 1



I>Clicker +

In this course, you can use either of the I>Clickers pictured above, or you can use the more expensive I>Clicker 2 (not pictured). You cannot use the Web>Clicker.

Attendance Policy

Attendance statement required by Rutgers: “Students are expected to attend all classes; if you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me.”

OK. Now that you have read the statement required by Rutgers, here is an explanation of how attendance will be handled in this course.

Lecture attendance policy: There is no formal attendance requirement in the lecture for this course. However, starting on Wednesday, September 17, there will be two I>Clicker quizzes in each class. If you miss class, your grade for those two quizzes will be zero. Even if you have

not done the reading assigned for a lecture, you would be wise to attend the lecture and take the quizzes, since you will get one I>Clicker point for each question you answer, even if your answer is wrong. At the end of the term, your quiz grades for the lowest four days will be dropped before computing and curving your I>Clicker grade for the term. Thus you will, in effect, have four automatically excused absences. You might think of them as “free passes.” But it would be wise to use these free passes VERY cautiously since, as explained below, if you are ill **the first four lectures you miss will not be excused**. You will be expected to use your free passes for them.

If you have a legitimate excuse for missing a lecture (e.g., a documented medical excuse or family emergency or a religious holiday) you should print *two* copies of the Excused Absence Form available in the Sakai Resources folder and give them to Prof. Stich along with appropriate documentation, like a letter from your health care provider. Prof. Stich will keep one copy on file and return the other copy to you. You should keep it until after your final grade has been recorded. If, at the end of the term, you have more than four excused absences, you will be expected to use your free passes for the first four. Quiz grades for additional excused absence days will be dropped before computing your average quiz grade for the term.

Section attendance policy: Starting on Wednesday, September 17, attendance will be taken at every section meeting. You can miss two section meetings with no penalty. (So you have two “free passes” for missed sections.) For each additional section meeting you miss, one point will be deducted from your final grade on the 40 point scale used in this course. If you have a legitimate excuse for missing a section, you should follow the procedure described in the previous paragraph. For your first two excused section absences, you will be expected to use your free passes. Additional excused absences will incur no penalty.

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/>.

Since I>Clicker quizzes determine a substantial part of students’ grades in this course, at the end of a lecture we may sometimes randomly select 10 or 15 names and ask those students to identify themselves and show photo ID before leaving the lecture room. If a student is not present and his or her I>Clicker has been used during the class, the student will fail the course and be reported to the university authorities.