

INTRO PHILOSOPHY

Philosophy 104, Fall 2018
M/W 2:50-4:10, Voorhees 105
office hours M 1:30-2:30 & by appt

Philosophers ask big questions. Do we really know anything? Is there a god? Do we have free will? How should a moral person act? But they do not engage in whimsical speculation about vaguely defined issues. They use rigorous and disciplined methods to bring these topics under intellectual control. This course will be an in-depth look at a few questions rather than a comprehensive historical survey. You will learn what philosophy is about and how to do it yourself.

TAs

<i>TA</i>	<i>sections</i>	<i>email</i>
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Requirements

One 3–5 page paper (10%), one 5–7 page paper (20%), two exams (30% each), section grade (10%). The second exam is not cumulative. For each paper, you will receive feedback on a first draft and then submit a second (and final) draft; your grade will be based on both drafts (25% on the first, 75% on the second), and on how you respond to the feedback.

Papers must be turned in via Sakai by the start of class on the due date. Late papers will be penalized as described here: http://tedsider.org/teaching/intro/lateness_policy.pdf. (Short version: two day grace-period with no lateness penalty; 2.5 points per day subsequently; exceptions only for documented serious circumstances; technological mistakes are not excuses.) Similarly, missed exams will receive a failing grade, except in documented serious circumstances.

Websites

Paper topics, handouts, study guides, canceled classes and other announcements will be posted on the course website:

<http://tedsider.org/teaching/intro/intro.html>

The Sakai site is here:

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

Textbook

Joel Feinberg and Russ Shafer-Landau, *Reason and Responsibility* (16th ed).
(Feel free to purchase a previous edition, but you will need to find other access to any missing readings.)

Important dates

10/1 paper 1 first draft due
10/15 paper 1 second draft due
10/30 exam 1 (in class)
11/21 no class—Rutgers on a Friday schedule
12/3 paper 2 first draft due
12/?? paper 2 second draft due (noon)
12/?? exam 2

Tentative schedule (Readings from the textbook unless otherwise noted; items marked “Sakai” can be accessed on the Sakai site under “Resources”)

Existence of God

- 9/5 What is philosophy? Preliminaries for discussing God’s existence
- 9/10 Cosmological arguments. Aquinas, “The Five Ways”; Clark, “A Modern Formulation of the Cosmological Argument”, Rowe, “The Cosmological Argument”
- 9/12 Cosmological arguments continued; argument from design. Paley, “The Argument from Design”
- 9/17 Problem of evil. Mackie, “Evil and Omnipotence”
- 9/19 Problem of evil continued. Swinburne, “Why God Allows Evil” (Sakai)
- 9/24 Pascal’s wager. Pascal, “The Wager”

9/26 Pascal's wager continued.

10/1 catch-up. **First draft of paper 1 due**

Free will and determinism

10/3 The problem of free will.

10/8 Hard determinism. Holbach, "We Are Never Free" (Sakai)

10/10 Libertarianism. Chisholm, "Human Freedom and the Self"

10/15 Soft determinism. **Second draft of paper 1 due**

10/17 Soft determinism continued. Wolf, "Sanity and the Metaphysics of Responsibility"

10/22 catch-up

Epistemology

10/24 The challenge of skepticism. Descartes, "Meditations on First Philosophy", Meditations I and II (skim III–VI)

10/29 **Exam 1 (in class)**

10/31 Simplicity. Russell, "Appearance and Reality and the Existence of Matter"

11/5 The problem of induction. Hume, "An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding", section IV (parts I and II)

11/7 Common sense and externalism. Reid, "Of the Existence of a Material World" (Sakai)

11/12 Attacking the skeptic. Rinard, "Reasoning one's Way out of Skepticism" (Sakai)

11/14 catch-up

Ethics

11/19 Introduction to value theory. Shafer-Landau, "Ethical Subjectivism"

11/26 continued.

11/28 Singer, "Famine, Affluence, and Morality"

12/3 Wolf, "Moral Saints" (Sakai). **First draft of paper 2 due**

12/5 Thomson, "A Defense of Abortion" (Sakai)

12/10 Marquis, "An Argument that Abortion is Wrong"

12/12 catch-up; **last class**

12/?? **Second draft of paper 2 due at 12:00 noon**

12/?? **Second exam.** The exam will be on epistemology and ethics (it's not cumulative).