

Philosophy 103: Introduction to Philosophy

Instructor: Aaron Rabinowitz
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1. Course Location and Meeting Times:

Intro to Philosophy 1:730:103:90

All lectures and discussion sections will be available online through Sakai.

Online Office Hours: and by Appointment

2. Course Description:

In this online course, we will survey key questions in the major fields of philosophy: Logic, Epistemology, Ethics, and Metaphysics. We will explore questions that impact our daily lives, including the nature of knowledge, consciousness, the self, God, and moral responsibility. You will learn how to better argue for your positions and better challenge the arguments of others.

3. Course Materials and Assignments:

Exploring Philosophy: An Introductory Anthology Steven M. Cahn Oxford University Press 6th edition

All other materials will be made available through the sakai site.

4. Core Curriculum Information:

This course meets the Aho (Area of Inquiry: Arts and Humanities) requirement.

5. Class Schedule:

Date	Topic	Reading	Homework
12/21	<p>Introductions</p> <p>The Value of Discourse</p>	<p>The Value of Philosophy by Russell pg.13</p> <p>On Liberty by Mill pg. 525</p>	<p>Topic 1: What is one controversial topic you're interested in exploring through philosophy and why?</p>
12/22	<p>Forming Good Arguments</p> <p>Reading Philosophy</p>	<p>The Elements of Argument by Cahn et al pg.45</p> <p>Necessary and Sufficient Conditions by Cahn pg.58</p>	<p>Topic 2: Form a basic argument about something you find interesting. What follows from your argument?</p>
12/23	<p>Recognizing Bad Arguments</p> <p>Informal Logical Fallacies</p>	<p>Improving your thinking by Barker pg.53</p> <p>IEP on Fallacies https://www.iep.utm.edu/fallacy/</p>	<p>Topic 3: Make a "bad" argument using one of the informal logical fallacies from the reading. See if you can guess other people's fallacies.</p>
12/24	<p>Formal Logic</p> <p>Formal Logical Fallacies</p>	<p>Hardegree Chapter 2: Truth Functional Connectives (On Sakai)</p> <p>Formal Fallacies: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Formal_fallacy</p>	<p>Topic 4: Complete problems 1-15 in Exercise set B at the end of the Hardegree chapter.</p>
12/25	<p>DAY OFF</p>		
12/26	<p>Formulating and Testing Hypothesis</p> <p>Writing a Philosophy Paper</p> <p>ONLINE Q&A Session</p>	<p>Scientific Inquiry by Hempel pg. 60</p> <p>Article on how to write a philosophy paper (Sakai)</p>	<p>Topic 5: Present an empirical hypothesis and explain how you would go about testing it.</p>

Date	Topic	Reading	Homework
12/27	Ethics of Belief	Caring and Epistemic Demands by Zagzebski pg. 69 The Ethics of Belief by Clifford (Sakai)	Topic 6: Give a modern example of a behavior that Clifford would say is ethically comparable to the shipowner's actions.
12/28	Defining 'Knowledge' Gettier Problem	What is Knowledge? pg. 72 by Ayer Is Justified True Belief Knowledge? by Gettier pg. 74 Conditions for Knowledge by Nozick pg. 76 Puzzling out Knowledge by Haack pg. 91	Topic 7: Come up with an example of something that seems like justified true belief but fails to qualify as knowledge for Gettier like reasons.
12/29	Cartesian Skepticism Pyrrhonian Skepticism	Meditations on First Philosophy by Descartes pg. 94 Appearance and Reality by Russell pg. 78 The Five Modes by Sextus Empiricus (SEP)	Topic 8: Take the belief you hold not on the basis of direct experience and apply Sextus's skeptical modes to it.

Date	Topic	Reading	Homework
12/30	Problem of Induction ONLINE Q&A	The Problem of Induction by Russell pg. 87 An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding by David Hume pg. 115 Induction Without a problem pg. 89	Topic 9: Look back at our fallacy materials for the fallacy of confusing correlation with causation. Give an example of an important situation where people conflate correlation and causation.
12/31	DAY OFF		
1/1	A Priori Knowledge vs. A posteriori Knowledge Synthetic A Priori Knowledge	Critique of Pure Reason by Kant pg. 124	FIRST PAPER DUE
1/2	Utilitarianism Deontology	Assessing Utilitarianism by Pojman pg. 342 Utilitarianism by Mill pg. 383 Kant's Ethics by O'Neill pg. 340 Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals by Kant pg. 378	Topic 10: Choose an applied ethics topic and explain how Utilitarianism and Deontology might disagree on that topic.

Date	Topic	Reading	Homework
1/3	<p>The Trolley Problem</p> <p>Virtue Ethics and Care Ethics</p>	<p>The Trolley Problem by Thomson pg. 629</p> <p>Turning the Trolley by Thomson pg. 630</p> <p>Virtue Ethics by Driver pg. 349</p> <p>Nicomachean Ethics pg. 373</p> <p>The Ethics of Care by Held pg. 352</p>	<p>Topic 11: Concoct a version of the trolley problem which highlights an interesting ethical principle. How would virtue and care ethics answer the problem you concocted?</p>
1/4	<p>The Nature of Ethics</p>	<p>How Not to Answer Moral Questions by Regan pg. 331</p> <p>Moral Isolationism by Midgley pg. 335</p> <p>Egoism and Moral Skepticism pg. 356</p> <p>Happiness and Morality by Vitrano pg. 366</p>	<p>Topic 12: Do you believe Morality is invented or discovered. Defend your answer.</p>
1/5	<p>Social Contract Doctrine</p> <p>ONLINE Q&A Day</p>	<p>Leviathan by Hobbes pg. 577</p> <p>A Theory of Justice by Rawls pg. 541</p> <p>Distributed Justice by Nozick pg. 545</p> <p>Non-Contractual Society: A Feminist View by Held pg. 550</p>	<p>Topic 13: What principles would you agree to from the original position?</p>

Date	Topic	Reading	Homework
1/6	DAY OFF		
1/7	Free Will Moral Luck	Free Will by Nagel pg. 181 Free Will and Determinism by State pg. 186 Moral Luck (PDF on Sakai)	MIDTERM DUE
1/8	Buddhism Confucianism Taoism	The Buddha's Message by Gowans pg. 697 The Confucian Way pg. 704 The Tao by Billington pg. 710	Activity: Engage in five minutes of seated meditation as discussed at the end of lecture Topic 14: What do you notice about your experience while meditating?
1/9	Theories of a Good Life	The Handbook by Epicurus pg. 658 Meaning in Life by Wolf pg. 687 Meaningful Lives by Vitrano pg. 691	Topic 15: What are your projects of worth? Why do you find them compelling?
1/10	Abortion	On the Moral and Legal Status of Abortion by Warren pg. 406 Why Abortion is Immoral by Marquis pg. 418	Topic 16: Do you believe abortion should be legal? Restricted? Why or why not.

Date	Topic	Reading	Homework
1/11	Animal Rights ONLINE Q&A DAY	All Animals Are Equal by Singer (Sakai) Speaking for Animal Rights by Warren pg. 465	Topic 17: How do your views on Abor- tion connect to your views on Animal rights? Are they con- sistent?
1/12	DAY OFF		
1/13	The Mind-Body Problem Qualia and The Hard Problem of Consciousness	The Mind-Body Prob- lem by Churchland pg. 140 The Qualia Problem by Jackson pg. 156 Knowing What It's Like by Lewis pg. 159 What Is It Like to Be a Bat? by Nagel pg. 153	Topic 18: Which of the various metaphys- ical positions on the mind body problem do you lean towards, and why?
1/14	AI Personhood	Computing Machinery and Intelligence by Turing pg. 161 Do Computers Think? by Searle pg. 165	SECOND PAPER DUE

Date	Topic	Reading	Homework
1/15	Identity Over Time	A Case of Identity by Smart pg. 229 The Problem of Personal Identity by Perry pg. 231 Where Am I? By Dennett (Sakai)	Topic 19: Explain one of the persistence criteria discussed in class and whether you think it is necessary or sufficient for personhood over time.
1/16	Theism The Problem of Evil	Does God Exist? by Nagel pg. 253 Why God Allows Evil by Swinburne pg. 260 The Problem of Hell by Adams pg. 275	Topic 20: Explain what you consider the strongest argument for or against the existence of God, and give a substantial objection to that argument.
1/17	Aesthetics Final Review ONLINE Q&A DAY	Excerpt from Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance by Pirsig (Sakai) Aesthetic Concepts by Sibley pg.595	Topic 21: Take a piece of art and explain what features of it you find aesthetically pleasing.
1/18	Final Exam due by 11:55pm		

6. Grading and Assignments:

A. Quizzes (10%)

There will be one short quiz for each day of assigned reading posted on Sakai. These are due by 11:55pm on the day the reading is assigned. The quizzes are meant to be completed alongside the reading to make sure you are getting through the material.

B. Forum Responses (10%)

There will be a forum prompt for each day of reading. You will have until 11:55 to post a 100-200 word response to the prompt. The goal is to make sure you are absorbing and processing through the material.

C. First Paper (20%)

You will write a 1,000-1300 word argumentative paper on one of the topic prompts provided. If you want to write on a separate subject, please check with me to make sure it's an appropriate topic. I'll explain the desired structure for the paper, and I'll provide a sample essay. Papers will be submitted online through Sakai. Late papers will receive 2 points off (out of 40) for every day that they are late.

D. Second Paper (20%)

You will write a 1,300-1,600 word argumentative paper on one of the topic prompts provided. If you want to write on a separate subject, please check with me to make sure it's an appropriate topic. I will explain the desired structure for the paper, and I'll provide a sample essay. **It is expected that the quality of your writing will improve based on feedback from the first paper.** Papers will be submitted online through Sakai. Late papers will receive 2 points off (out of 40) for every day that they are late.

E. Exam One (20%)

Exam one will be an open notes exam posted on Sakai covering topics from the first half of the class. It will contain 15 multiple choice questions. **This exam must be taken through the ProctorTractor program. Please make sure you are set up to access this program.**

F. Exam Two (20%)

Exam two will be an open notes exam posted on Sakai covering primarily topics from the second half of the course, though you will be expected to retain key ideas from the first half. It will contain 15 multiple choice questions. **This exam must be taken through the ProctorTractor program. Please make sure you are set up to access this program.**

Late Work Policy: If you don't submit an assignment on time, you will not be able to submit it late unless you have an appropriate excuse and the relevant documentation.

Your letter grade will be determined by the following grading scale:

A	B+	B	C+	C	D	F
100%-90%	89%-87%	86%-80%	79%-77%	76%-70%	69%-60%	59%-0%

7. Sakai Site:

Some reading materials and important information, including your grades, will be available on the site. You can check Sakai for this information, and an email will be sent to you when any information is added to the site. Emails sent through Sakai will be sent to your Rutgers email address. So, if you do not check the Sakai site regularly and primarily use another email aside from your Rutgers one, you should set up the email that you primarily use so that messages sent from Sakai to your Rutgers email account can be forwarded to your primary email address.

The Sakai site can be accessed at:

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

8. Online Interaction: My goal as an online educator is to be available as much as possible to help you in your studies. On top of the recorded lectures I will provide, I will also make myself available roughly once a week, on the days marked ONLINE Q&A, for group discussions on any topics or questions you may have. There is a poll up on sakai for what times of day are preferable for holding these sessions. My aim is to change up the days and times so that everyone in the course can attend at least one of these sessions. I will also do my best to monitor the chat on Sakai and to respond to emails within 24 hours. If you ever feel like you need more one on one discussion to understand the material, I will make myself available each week for private office hours, so please contact me to schedule a meeting.

9. Policy on Cheating:

Anyone caught cheating in any way, or aiding anyone else in cheating, will receive an automatic F for the course and be referred to the appropriate authorities for further measures to be taken. These further measures may include suspension or expulsion.

Rutgers Academic Integrity Information: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>

Tutorial about plagiarism: <http://library.camden.rutgers.edu/EducationalModules/Plagiarism/>

10. Student-Wellness Services:

Just In Case Web App

<http://codu.co/cee05e>

Access helpful mental health information and resources for yourself or a friend in a mental health crisis on your smartphone or tablet and easily contact CAPS or RUPD.

Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS)

**(848) 932-7884 / 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901/
www.rhscaps.rutgers.edu/**

CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professional within Rutgers Health services to support students' efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.

Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA)

(848) 932-1181 / 3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 / www.vpva.rutgers.edu/

The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff and faculty. To reach staff during office hours when the university is open or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181.

Disability Services

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

Scarlet Listeners

(732) 247-5555 / <http://www.scarletlisteners.com/>

Free and confidential peer counseling and referral hotline, providing a comforting and supportive safe space.