

# INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY

PHIL 102. FALL 2016. CITY COLLEGE. M & W 3:30-4:45

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Course website:

<http://elismiller.wixsite.com/mysite/intro-to-philosophy-fall-2016>

## **ABOUT THE COURSE**

Philosophy, simply stated, is the love of wisdom. But what this means, specifically, is altogether elusive. Many argue that the tradition itself is born from the ancient Greeks— Plato, Aristotle. This course will challenge that notion. This course will begin with India during a period where ancient people asked many of the same questions as the Greeks: what is knowledge? what is the self? what is moral?

Throughout this course we will challenge what is known as traditional or western philosophy, and examine many texts that have been barred from the western canon. We will look at philosophers from many different backgrounds, all of whom are concerned with important issues that concern human affairs. More importantly, all of these philosophers challenge ideas that are often accepted without question in our societies. These include ideas about the mind, sexuality, gender, class, perception, and language. The goal of this course is for you to engage with these ideas and discover new areas of contention.

## **ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION**

You will be granted up to 3 excused absences throughout the term, any absences above that number will affect your grade significantly. Students are expected to participate by engaging with classroom discussions.

## **WEEKLY WRITING**

Each week you will identify and evaluate the claims of one of the weekly assigned readings. Print and turn in on Mondays. ~250 words

## **MIDTERM PAPER**

The midterm paper will be a longer version of your weekly writing. You'll be given a choice of topics at least two weeks before the paper is due. And more info will be provided during the PAPER WRITING WORKSHOP. 1000 words

## **CLASS PRESENTATIONS & FINAL PAPER**

5-10 minute presentations on your final paper topic. For this paper I'll also provide a choice of topics. 1500 words

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Attendance & Participation — **10%**

Weekly writing — **40%**

Midterm paper — **20%**

Final paper — **30%**

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

1. Learn some philosophy
2. Practice thinking like a philosopher
3. Practice writing like a philosopher

This course will teach you how to challenge outdated notions, and develop new strategies and solutions using the analytic method. You will think carefully and critically, decipher arguments, and pinpoint valuable claims.

## **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

City College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g. plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The College is committed to enforcing the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the City College Academic Integrity Procedures.

([http://www1.ccny.cuny.edu/facultystaff/provost/policies\\_integrity.cfm](http://www1.ccny.cuny.edu/facultystaff/provost/policies_integrity.cfm))

## **READINGS AND WEBSITE**

All of the required (and optional) readings will be available on the course website. Don't worry about buying any books.

## **HOW TO GET A GOOD GRADE**

1. Attend all classes and take excellent notes.
2. Do all the readings before we discuss them in class. It never hurts to reread texts after class discussions.
3. Regularly ask questions, preferably during class, but alternatively by email or office hours.
4. Practice applying the theories we discuss by thinking about how they connect to news articles, social media, politics etc.
5. Learn to write in a clear and concise way. This will help you formulate convincing arguments.
6. Proofread and revise your written work, especially for grammatical mistakes. Never submit your first draft!

	Mondays	Wednesdays
1	<p>August 29</p> <p><i>What is Philosophy?</i></p> <p>Kristie Dotson: <i>How is this paper philosophy?</i> (optional)</p>	<p>August 31</p> <p>Indian Buddhist Philosophy: <i>The Milindapanha</i></p> <p>Descartes: <i>Meditations</i></p>
2	<p>September 5</p> <p>LABOR DAY NO CLASSES</p>	<p>September 7</p> <p>Kwame Gyekye: <i>The Akan Concept of a Person</i></p> <p>Podcast:Katrin Fliksch, African Philosophy  <a href="http://philosophybites.com/2015/12/katrin-flikschuh-on-philosophy-in-africa.html">http://philosophybites.com/2015/12/katrin-flikschuh-on-philosophy-in-africa.html</a></p> <p>SEP Akan philosophy of the Person:  <a href="http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/akan-person/">http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/akan-person/</a> (optional)</p>
3	<p>September 12</p> <p>Hegel: <i>Phenomenology of Spirit</i> master/slave dialectic</p>	<p>September 14</p> <p>Simone de Beauvoir: <i>The Second Sex</i></p>
4	<p>September 19</p> <p>Kant: <i>Critique of Pure Reason</i> The Second Analogy</p>	<p>September 21</p> <p>Kant: <i>Critique of Pure Reason</i> phenomena and noumena</p>
5	<p>September 26</p> <p>Ian Hacking: <i>Social Construction of What?</i></p> <p>Podcast:Jesse Prinz, Is everything socially constructed?  <a href="http://philosophybites.com/2015/09/jesse-prinz-on-is-everything-socially-constructed.html">http://philosophybites.com/2015/09/jesse-prinz-on-is-everything-socially-constructed.html</a></p>	<p>September 28</p> <p>Jennifer Church: <i>Making Order out of Disorder-on the social construction of Madness</i></p> <p>Hanna Pickard: <i>Mental Illness is indeed a myth</i> (optional)</p>

6	<p>October 3</p> <p>NO CLASSES</p>	<p>October 5</p> <p>Frank Jackson: <i>What Mary didn't know</i></p> <p>Podcast: Frank Jackson, What Mary knew  <a href="http://philosophybites.com/2011/08/frank-jackson-on-what-mary-knew.html">http://philosophybites.com/2011/08/frank-jackson-on-what-mary-knew.html</a></p> <p>Ex Machina (optional)</p>
7	<p><b>THURSDAY</b> October 6</p> <p>PAPER WRITING WORKSHOP</p> <p>Pryor: <i>Guidelines on Writing a Philosophy Paper</i></p> <p>Horbon: <i>How to write a philosophy essay</i> (optional)</p>	<p>Monday October 10 &amp; Wednesday October 12</p> <p>NO CLASSES</p>
8	<p>October 17</p> <p><b>MIDTERM PAPER DUE</b></p> <p>Philosophical fallacies</p>	<p>October 19</p> <p>Logical Inferences</p> <p>*Logic homework*</p>
9	<p>October 24</p> <p>Keith Payne: <i>Prejudice and Perception</i></p>	<p>October 26</p> <p>Susanna Siegel: <i>Rational Evaluability and Perceptual Farce</i></p>
10	<p>October 31</p> <p>Serene Khader: <i>Adaptive Preferences and Procedural Autonomy</i></p>	<p>November 2</p> <p>Jennifer Morton: <i>Reasoning under Scarcity</i></p>
11	<p>November 7</p>	<p>November 9</p>

	Wittgenstein: <i>Philosophical Investigations</i>	Wittgenstein: <i>Philosophical Investigations</i>
12	<p>November 14</p> <p>J. L. Austin: <i>How to do things with words</i></p> <p>SEP Speech Acts  <a href="http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/speech-acts/">http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/speech-acts/</a> (optional)</p>	<p>November 16</p> <p>Rae Langton: <i>Speech Acts and Unspeakable Acts</i></p>
13	<p>November 21</p> <p>Luvell Anderson: <i>Slurring Words</i></p>	<p>November 23</p> <p>Rachel McKinney: <i>Extracted Speech</i></p>
14	<p>November 28</p> <p>Jeremy Waldron: <i>The Harm in Hate Speech</i></p>	<p>November 30</p> <p>Kate Manne &amp; Jason Stanley: <i>When free speech becomes a political weapon</i>  <a href="http://chronicle.com/article/When-Free-Speech-Becomes-a/234207">http://chronicle.com/article/When-Free-Speech-Becomes-a/234207</a></p>
15	<p>December 5</p> <p>CLASS PRESENTATIONS</p>	<p>December 7</p> <p>CLASS PRESENTATIONS</p>
16	<p>December 12</p> <p>NO CLASS</p> <p>*Office hours for final paper help*</p>	<p><b>FINAL PAPERS DUE MONDAY DECEMBER 19</b></p>