

Syllabus

Introduction to Philosophy (PHI2010), Fall 2019

1. Course description

This course is a general introduction to philosophy. The class will be divided into three sections. The first will look at the philosophy of religion, focusing on arguments for and against the existence of God. The second section will consider topics related to the meaning of life. We will discuss how such things as pleasure, morality, love, and work relate to the value and meaning of life as a whole. The third section will look at some relevant works from the history of philosophy—namely, some of the dialogues of the ancient Greek philosopher Plato, and the political philosophy of the seventeenth-century English philosopher Thomas Hobbes.

Throughout our discussion of these topics, we will have two main aims. The first is to come to understand some views that philosophers have had on these issues. The second is to develop your own skills in such matters as careful reading, critical thinking, and clear writing.

The class involves both lectures and discussion section meetings. The lectures will be on Tuesdays and Thursdays, seventh period (1:55–2:45pm) in Pugh 170. The discussion sections all meet on Fridays.

2. Contact information

Dr. Stewart Duncan

Email: sdrd@ufl.edu

Office hours: Tuesdays, 3:00-5:00pm, and by appointment, in 330A Griffin-Floyd

Office phone: (352) 273-1808

Ms. Ayşegül Çakal

TA for sections 009B, 01CA, and 01DF

Email: acakal@ufl.edu

Office hours: Wednesdays, 1:45-2:45pm, Thursdays, 3:00-5:00pm, and by appointment, in 320 Griffin-Floyd

Ms. Julianna Costanzo

TA for sections 01AB, 01CG, and 01DH

Email: jsc1998@ufl.edu

Office hours: Tuesdays, 11:45am-12:35pm, Thursdays, 11:45am-1:40pm, and by appointment, in 318 Griffin-Floyd

Ms. Shadi Heidarifar

TA for sections 0094, 01C1, and 01C4

Email: sheidarifar@ufl.edu

(<mailto:sheidarifar@ufl.edu>) Office hours: Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, 11:00am-12:00pm, and by appointment, in 318 Griffin-Floyd

Outside class and office hours, email will usually be the easiest way to communicate with your instructors. In doing so, please use your ufl.edu email address.

There is a site for the class on Canvas. You can login at <http://elearning.ufl.edu> (<http://elearning.ufl.edu>). This will be the place to find the syllabus, announcements, grade information, and notes. It will also be the place to submit your papers.

3. Books, other readings, and clickers

For the first section of the class, on the philosophy of religion, all readings will be taken from Torin Alter and Robert Howell, **The God Dialogues: A Philosophical Journey** (Oxford University Press, 2011; ISBN 9780195395594). You need a copy of this book. (The price is \$22.95.)

For the second section of the class, on the meaning of life, all readings will be posted on Canvas. Links to those files are provided in the schedule below.

For the third section of the class, on Plato and Hobbes, there are two books that you may wish to acquire. For reading Plato, I strongly recommend you acquire a copy of **The Trial and Death of Socrates**, third edition, translated by Grube and Cooper (Hackett Publishing, 2001). This contains a good, modern translation, and only costs \$8.00. Other versions are available for free online, but they use nineteenth-century translations, which tend to be harder to work with.

When we read sections from Thomas Hobbes's **Leviathan**, you may wish to buy a copy of the book. Several good paperback editions are available, including one edited by Curley and published by Hackett, and one edited by Gaskin and published in the Oxford World's Classics series. There is an ebook version of the Gaskin edition. The Broadview, Cambridge University Press, and Penguin editions are also good options. Alternatively, you may wish to read Hobbes online. If so, I recommend that you use the text available in the Past Masters database to which UF subscribes. Links to the relevant chapters will be posted on Canvas. Please note that, to use this database, you need to be on the UF network or using the **VPN** (<https://connect.ufl.edu/it/wiki/Pages/glvpn.aspx>).

You will also need to purchase and register an i>clicker. For more details, see the section below on quizzes.

4. Schedule

Please see the separate [Schedule \(https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/369544/pages/schedule\)](https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/369544/pages/schedule) page.

5. Assessment

5.1 Papers (65%)

There will be three paper assignments. Each paper should be between 1370 and 1500 words long. The papers together will count for 65% of your grade for the course. Each paper will count equally towards that 65%.

Topics will be made available two weeks before papers are due. All paper submission will be done on e-Learning. Any papers submitted late without a good excuse will be penalized three points (on a hundred-point scale) for every day they're late.

No papers will be accepted after the day of the last class (more precisely, after 5:00pm on Tuesday 12/3). If you fail to submit a paper, you will receive a grade of zero for it.

This class qualifies for 4000 words of credit for the university writing requirement. The Writing Requirement (WR) ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. Course grades have two components. To receive writing requirement credit, a student must receive a grade of C or higher and a satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course. In this class "satisfactory completion of the writing component" will require an average grade of C (70.0) or higher for the three papers.

Information on the standards for grading papers is available in the [Paper Grading Guide](https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/369544/pages/paper-grading-guide) (<https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/369544/pages/paper-grading-guide>).

Graded papers will be returned on Canvas within two weeks of their submission. Grades will be accompanied by comments. These will refer to the standards in the [Paper Grading Guide](https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/369544/pages/paper-grading-guide) (<https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/369544/pages/paper-grading-guide>), and will include feedback with respect to grammar, punctuation, clarity, coherence, and organization.

You will not be required to use any one particular style (e.g., MLA or APA) for this class. However, if you need a guide, I suggest that you consult Kate L. Turabian, **A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations**, 8th edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013). Whichever style you prefer, please ensure that references are appropriately detailed: a reader should be able to find the text or passage you are referring to using just the information you provide, without lengthy extra searching. In particular, and no matter what your style guide says, you must provide the URL for online references.

5.2 Final exam (20%)

The final exam will be held from 10:00am to 12:00pm on Wednesday 12/11 in our usual classroom. See <https://registrar.ufl.edu/soc/201908/finalexamsched.html> (<https://registrar.ufl.edu/soc/201908/finalexamsched.html>). This class is in exam group 11B.

The final exam will count for 20% of your grade for the class.

The exam itself will have three parts, each counting equally towards your grade. The first will ask a series of short answer questions. The second and third will each ask you to write an essay. In each of those two parts, you will answer one of two questions. The essay questions (but not the short answer questions) will be drawn from a longer list of final exam review questions, which will be provided before the end of classes.

Makeup final exams will only be given in those few circumstances that merit the awarding of an incomplete grade for the class.

The final exam week is a scheduled part of the semester. Alternative exam arrangements will not be made because of vacations and other non-academic travel plans. If you fail to attend the final exam, you will receive a grade of zero for it.

5.3 Quizzes (10%)

There will be quizzes in lecture throughout the semester. Your overall quiz grade will count for 10% of your grade for the course.

Quizzes will use the i>clicker system. For information on this system, please see <https://classrooms.at.ufl.edu/classroom-technology/iclicker-response-system/> (<https://classrooms.at.ufl.edu/classroom-technology/iclicker-response-system/>). For this class, you must use a physical clicker. (That is, you may not use the software clicker system, either on a phone or a laptop, for this class.)

You must register your clicker as soon as possible, certainly before the first graded quiz on Tuesday 9/3/19. See the [Clicker registration](https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/369544/pages/Clicker%20registration?titleize=0) (<https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/369544/pages/Clicker%20registration?titleize=0>) page for more details.

There will be no quizzes in the first week of the semester, to give everyone time to acquire clickers.

There will be ungraded quizzes in the second week of the semester, to allow you to check your clicker is working properly. At all times during the semester, it is your responsibility to make sure that you have your clicker with you, and it is working properly. Makeup quizzes will not be given for clicker problems.

Starting on Tuesday 9/3/19, there will be two graded quizzes in every lecture. Typically, the first quiz will be soon after the start of class, and the second will be at the end of class. For each question, you will receive two points for a correct answer, one for an incorrect answer, and zero for not answering.

You will receive a quiz grade for each lecture from 9/3/19. Your three lowest scores will be dropped. The remaining scores will each count equally towards your quiz grade. Dropping those three lowest scores will allow for occasional absences (e.g., from minor illness).

Although lecture attendance is not graded as such, you are required to attend all lectures. Notice too that you will receive half the quiz points for just answering all the questions, even if you get them all wrong.

Your three lowest scores will be dropped. Given that, make-up quizzes will only be given if you have an appropriate excuse that shows you had to miss three or more lectures during the semester. I will excuse absences only for the acceptable reasons stated in the UF attendance policy (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx> (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>)).

There may be one optional extra credit assignment during the semester. If there is, it will be online, and will be treated as another quiz. If there is such an assignment, we will drop your four lowest quiz scores for the semester.

Quizzes are individual assignments. You may not consult other students while taking the quiz. You may not use someone else's clicker for them, or have someone else use your clicker. These are violations of

academic honesty (see section 5 below).

5.4 Discussion section attendance (5%)

Attendance in discussion sections is required. You may miss two sections without penalty during the semester. Attendance in week 1, during the add-drop period, will not count towards attendance grades. Attendance at each of the other meetings during the semester will count equally towards your attendance grade, which will be 5% of your overall grade.

If you arrive after the instructor has taken attendance, you will be marked as absent. If you leave class early, you will be marked as absent.

Absence from discussion sections will only be excused if you have an appropriate and documented excuse.

5.5 Numerical grades and letter grades

All assignments will be given a numerical grade. At the end of the semester, your overall numerical grade will be calculated, based on your grades for and the relative weights of the assignments. This numerical grade will be converted to a letter grade using the following scale.

Numerical grade (n) Letter grade GPA*

$90.0 \leq n \leq 100$	A	4.0
$86.7 \leq n < 90$	A-	3.67
$83.3 \leq n < 86.7$	B+	3.33
$80.0 \leq n < 83.3$	B	3.0
$76.7 \leq n < 80$	B-	2.67
$73.3 \leq n < 76.7$	C+	2.33
$70.0 \leq n < 73.3$	C	2.0
$66.7 \leq n < 70$	C-	1.67
$63.3 \leq n < 66.7$	D+	1.33
$60.0 \leq n < 63.3$	D	1.0
$56.7 \leq n < 60$	D-	0.67
$0 \leq n < 56.7$	E	0

* Current UF policies for assigning grade points may be found at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx> (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>).

5.6 University attendance policy

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

(<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>). That page also explains what are acceptable reasons for absence from class.

5.7 Syllabus quiz

In addition to the in-class quizzes, there is one quiz on Canvas ([Syllabus quiz \(https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/369544/assignments/3800136\)](https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/369544/assignments/3800136)). It will simply ask you to confirm that you have read and understood the syllabus, and have contacted your TA with any questions you have about it.

This quiz is due on Thursday 8/29/19, to give those who add the class during the add/drop period time to take it. However, I encourage you to complete it as soon as possible.

This quiz does not itself count towards your course grade. However, you will not receive credit for any other assignment unless you have completed this quiz.

6. Academic honesty

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states,

We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment".

The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/> (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>)) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

You should expect the minimum penalty for academic dishonesty to be a grade of E for the class (not just the assignment). All incidents of academic dishonesty will be reported to Student Judicial Affairs. Repeat offenders may be penalized by suspension or expulsion from the university.

You should already have a good idea of what constitutes plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. I will also review this when handing out paper assignments. If you have any questions about this, ask me or your TA before it's too late.

All papers submitted for the course will be checked using turnitin.com (<http://turnitin.com>).

Using someone else's clicker for them is cheating. As with other sorts of academic dishonesty, you should expect the minimum penalty for this sort of cheating to be a grade of E for the class, for all students involved (both those in class and those not in class).

7. Other policies and information

7.1 General education

PHI2010 meets the Humanities General Education requirement. A minimum grade of C is required for general education credit.

Humanities courses provide instruction in the history, key themes, principles, terminology, and theory or methodologies used within a humanities discipline or the humanities in general. Students will learn to identify and to analyze the key elements, biases and influences that shape thought. These courses emphasize clear and effective analysis and approach issues and problems from multiple perspectives.

This course will achieve those objectives by introducing and discussing a series of important issues in Philosophy. These include topics of contemporary discussion and views from the history of the field. We will examine a variety of views and arguments about these topics, aiming both to understand and to critically discuss them.

Courses meeting the Humanities General Education requirement have the following Student Learning Outcomes:

- Know the history, underlying theory and methodologies used within the discipline studied.
- Identify and analyze key elements, biases and influences that shape thought within that discipline. Approach issues and problems within that discipline from multiple perspectives.
- Communicate knowledge, thoughts and reasoning clearly and effectively in forms appropriate to that discipline, individually and/or in groups.

All three SLOs will be assessed through paper assignments and a final exam. These will be supplemented by in-class quizzes, which will emphasize the first SLO.

For more information about General Education, please see

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/general-education-program.aspx>
(<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/general-education-program.aspx>).

7.2 Accommodations for students with disabilities

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc>)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

7.3 Classroom behavior

You are expected to attend all class meetings, arriving on time and not leaving early. Failing to do so will affect your ability to perform well in the class.

Please remember that it is not enough to be merely physically present. You are expected to do all assigned reading in advance, which is not to say you should not revisit it again afterwards.

You should also be paying attention, taking notes as appropriate, and participating in class discussions.

My aim is to have a classroom atmosphere that is both serious and relaxed. Things will go well if you come to class prepared, avoid behavior that is rude or distracts others, and remember to treat others with

respect in classroom discussions.

You may use laptops or tablets only for purposes immediately related to the class—taking notes is the obvious example. Unrelated use of such devices is a distraction to you and those around you, and is not allowed. Anyone using laptops or tablets in this way may be asked to switch them off, or in extreme cases to leave the classroom, or to cease using those devices for the rest of the semester.

Phones may not be used at any time during class meetings. Anyone using a phone during class may be asked to leave immediately.

Unless you have Dr Duncan's explicit written permission, you may not make any audio or video recordings of the class or related meetings. Making such recordings is a violation of the honor code.

7.4 Evaluations


Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/> (<https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>). Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/> (https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A_ufl.bluera.com_ufl_&d=DwMFAg&c=sJ6xIWYx-zLMB3EPkvcnVg&r=y2HjEMjRMHJhfdvLrqJZIYczRsfp5e4TfQjHuc5rVHg&m=WXko6OK_Ha6T00ZVAsEaSh99qRXHOgMNFrywCoehRho&s=itVU46DDJnlg4CW6efJOOLgPjdzsPvCghyFzJoFONs&e=)). Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/> (<https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>).

8. UF academic resources

- E-learning technical support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learning-support@ufl.edu. <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>. (<https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>).
- Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask> (<http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>).
- Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. <http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/> (<http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>).
- Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> (<http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>).

Schedule

Week 1

- 8/20. Introductory lecture
- 8/22. Philosophy of religion lecture 1: religion and morality. Reading: God Dialogues, chapter 1.
 - This chapter is available on Canvas ( [God Dialogues ch1.pdf](#) (<https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/369544/files/42722303/download?wrap=1>)). Later chapters will not be available here.
- 8/23. Discussion section meeting 1

Week 2

- 8/27. Philosophy of religion lecture 2: design arguments. Reading: God Dialogues, chapter 2.
 - First ungraded clicker quiz.
- 8/29. Philosophy of religion lecture 3: cosmological arguments. Reading: God Dialogues, chapter 4.
 - Second ungraded clicker quiz.
 - [Syllabus quiz](#) (<https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/369544/assignments/3800136>) due before class.
 - Paper 1 topics available.
- 8/30. Discussion section meeting 2

Week 3

- 9/3. Philosophy of religion lecture 4: the ontological argument. Reading: God Dialogues, chapter 5.
 - First graded clicker quiz. There will be clicker quizzes in all subsequent lectures.
- 9/5. Philosophy of religion lecture 5: miracles. Reading: God Dialogues, chapter 6.
- 9/6. Discussion section meeting 3


Week 4

- 9/10. Philosophy of religion lecture 6: the problem of evil (1). Reading: God Dialogues, chapter 7.
- 9/12. Philosophy of religion lecture 7: the problem of evil (2). Reading: God Dialogues, chapter 7.
 - Paper 1 due on Canvas before class
- 9/13. Discussion section meeting 4

Week 5

- 9/17. Philosophy of religion lecture 8: Pascal's wager argument. Reading: God Dialogues, chapter 8.
- 9/19. Philosophy of religion lecture 9: faith. Reading: God Dialogues, chapter 9.
- 9/20. Discussion section meeting 5

Week 6

- 9/24. The meaning of life lecture 1: the question of the meaning of life. Reading:  [Susan Wolf, The Meanings of Lives.pdf](#) (<https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/369544/files/42722306/download?wrap=1>) .

- 9/26. The meaning of life lecture 2: pleasure and the best life. Reading: 🔊 [Joel Kupperman, Myth One.pdf](https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/369544/files/42722299/download?wrap=1) (<https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/369544/files/42722299/download?wrap=1>)
 - Paper 2 topics available.
- 9/27. Discussion section meeting 6

Week 7

- 10/1. The meaning of life lecture 3: morality and the best life (1): moral theory. Reading: 🔊 [Julia Driver, Classical Utilitarianism.pdf](https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/369544/files/42722305/download?wrap=1) (<https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/369544/files/42722305/download?wrap=1>)
- 10/3. The meaning of life lecture 4: morality and the best life (2): moral saints. Reading: 🔊 [Susan Wolf, Moral Saints.pdf](https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/369544/files/42722311/download?wrap=1) (<https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/369544/files/42722311/download?wrap=1>)
- There are no discussion sections in week 8, as there are no classes on 10/4 because of Homecoming.

Week 8

- 10/8. The meaning of life lecture 5: love and the best life. Readings: 🔊 [Martha Nussbaum, Love's Knowledge.pdf](https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/369544/files/42722308/download?wrap=1) (<https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/369544/files/42722308/download?wrap=1>), 🔊 [Marcel Proust, The Fugitive.pdf](https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/369544/files/42722301/download?wrap=1) (<https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/369544/files/42722301/download?wrap=1>)
- 10/10. The meaning of life lecture 6: work and the best life – Marx on alienated labour. Reading: 🔊 [Jonathan Wolff, Playthings of Alien Forces.pdf](https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/369544/files/42722302/download?wrap=1) (<https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/369544/files/42722302/download?wrap=1>)
 - Paper 2 due on Canvas before class.
- 10/11. Discussion section meeting 7.

Week 9

- 10/15. The meaning of life lecture 7: immortality and the best life. Reading: 🔊 [Bernard Williams, The Makropulos Case.pdf](https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/369544/files/42722300/download?wrap=1) (<https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/369544/files/42722300/download?wrap=1>)
- 10/17. The meaning of life lecture 8: the alleged absurdity of life. Reading: 🔊 [Thomas Nagel, The Absurd.pdf](https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/369544/files/42722309/download?wrap=1) (<https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/369544/files/42722309/download?wrap=1>) . Paper 2 due.
- 10/18. Discussion section meeting 8

Week 10

- 10/22. Plato lecture 1.
 - Detailed readings for the Plato and Hobbes section will be made available later in the semester.
- 10/24. Plato lecture 2.
 - Paper 3 topics available
- 10/25. Discussion section meeting 9

Week 11

- 10/29. Plato lecture 3.
- 10/31. Plato lecture 4.
- 11/1. Discussion section meeting 10

Week 12

- 11/5. Plato lecture 5.
- 11/7. Hobbes's Leviathan lecture 1.
 - Paper 3 due on Canvas before class.
- 11/8. Discussion section meeting 11

Week 13

- 11/12. Hobbes's Leviathan lecture 2.
- 11/14. Hobbes's Leviathan lecture 3.
- 11/15. Discussion section meeting 12

Week 14

- 11/19. Hobbes's Leviathan lecture 4.
- 11/21. Hobbes's Leviathan lecture 5.
- 11/22. Discussion section meeting 13. This is the last discussion section meeting of the semester.

Week 15

- 11/26. Lecture.
 - Final exam review questions available.
- There are no classes on the rest of week 15, because of Thanksgiving.

Week 16

- 12/3. Lecture. This will be a review class for the final exam.

Exam week

- 12/11, 10:00am-12:00pm. Final exam.