



# Introduction to Philosophy

PHI 2010

## Instructor Info —



Shadi Heidarifar



TUE 1-4pm & By Appointment



Online via Zoom



Sheidarifar@ufl.edu

## Course Info —



Prereq: None



MTWRF



11 am - 12:15 pm



Online via Zoom

## Overview

In this course, we practice philosophical thinking. We start by talking about the pandemic, as an example of something in our daily life about which philosophical questions can be raised. We will then move to more well-shaped philosophical questions. We will discuss questions such as how to govern a society, how to treat minorities in a society, and how to tolerate each other while maintaining a position of free speech. Next, we move to the history of philosophy and discuss some of the historically influential figures in philosophy, looking at their questions and how they came up with answers as examples of how to think philosophically. In the end, we will see some of the contemporary examples of doing philosophy around the world and become more familiar with some of the important and worldwide questions in philosophy.

## Material

All are provided on Canvas.

## Course Requirements

- 15% Participation, 0.5% each session: If you show up in class having read the material each day, you will get a perfect 15 points for participation. Each class is worth half a point, so that 30 sessions of full credit is 15 points. If you are absent without excuse, or if you show in class that you have not read the material or have not been paying attention, you will get zero points for that day.
- 30% Regular Short Writings, 1% each session: In the end of each session you will be given a (very) short writing assignment that is due in by the end of that day. If your assignment shows a serious effort, avoids serious grammatical errors, and shows a fair comprehension of the material, you get full credit (1 point) for that day. With 30 sessions that is 30 points for the final grade.
- Attention: The final paper you will write for this class will take the form of a dialogue. Your work on that paper will require several steps as described below.
- 10% The Final Paper's Topic: You need to propose a topic that I approve by **May 21st**. If you do so, you get full credit – that is, 10 points.
- 10% The Final Paper's Draft: By **June 5th** you must hand in a draft of the final paper. If you make a serious effort, make explicit the question you are addressing, state your thesis, and give a brief preview of your reasoning, you will get full credit – that is, 10 points. To the extent that the draft fails to include those elements the grade is reduced.
- 10% The Final Paper's Presentation: On **June 11th** and **June 12th**, each student must present a version of their final paper in class to get feedback and reactions from their peers. If you do this and are reasonably well prepared, you will get full credit – that is, 10 points. If your presentations shows a lack of preparation or a lack of effort, the grade will be reduced. Also, Students should sign up in a sheet provided to them in the class to secure their own spot for their presentations.
- 25% The Final Paper's Final Draft, in the Form of Dialogue by **June 18th**: This final paper will be given a letter grade (A, A-, B+, ...) each of which is worth a number of the 25 points possible for this assignment. The grades are equivalent to these points: A (25), A- (23), B+ (21), B (19), B- (17), C+ (15), C (13), C- (11), D+ (9), E (0).
- Attention: The sum of all the points for each assignment is then a percentage, and the course grade is based on the standard scale of 100-93=A; 92-90=A-; 89-86=B+; 85-82=B; 81-79=B-; 78-75=C+; 75-72=C; 71-69=C-; 68-66=D+; 65-62=D; 61-60=D-; 59-0=E.





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## Expectations

- Read texts carefully before class and find your own questions for each session.
- Be present and focused during the lectures.
- Be active in group discussions.
- Be original in forming the paper topic and writing your final dialogue.

## Learning Objectives

- To become familiar with philosophical questions, texts, and methods.
- To develop critical thinking ability.
- To make progress in writing skills.
- To learn different ways of interpreting texts.
- To practice questioning everyday life's events.

## Humanities Credit

This course provides Humanities credit (H) for the purpose of general education requirements.

All such courses include the following objective:

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. A minimum grade of C is required for general education credit.

## Writing Requirement

Students who successfully complete the major writing assignments in this course will earn 4000 words toward the UF Writing Requirement. The Writing Requirement (WR) ensures student 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 order to earn the WR credit in this class, you must earn a grade of C+ or higher on at least three of our four graded assignments. In addition, you must also earn an overall course grade of C or higher.

## Diversity and Inclusivity Statement

I consider this classroom to be a place where you will be treated with respect, and I welcome individuals of all ages, backgrounds, beliefs, ethnicities, genders, gender identities, gender expressions, national origins, religious affiliations, sexual orientations, ability - and other visible and non-visible differences. All members of this class are expected to contribute to a respectful, welcoming and inclusive environment for every other member of the class.

## Accommodations for Students with Special Needs

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, contact the disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. It is important for you to share their accommodation letter with me and discuss your access needs, as early as possible in the semester.





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## Academic Integrity

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."

Plagiarism on any assignment will automatically result in a grade of "E" for the course. Plagiarism is defined in the University of Florida's Student Honor Code as follows:

"A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes (but is not limited to): a. Quoting oral or written materials, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution. b. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student."

Students found guilty of academic misconduct will be prosecuted in accordance with the procedures specified in the UF honesty policy.

## Mental Health

Diminished mental health, including significant stress, mood changes, excessive worry, or problems with eating and/or sleeping can interfere with optimal academic performance. The source of symptoms might be related to your course work; if so, please speak with me. However, problems with relationships, family worries, loss, or a personal struggle or crisis can also contribute to decreased academic performance. In that case, contact the Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies to help you manage personal challenges that threaten your personal or academic well-being.

In the event I suspect you need additional support, expect that I will express to you my concerns and the reasons for them. It is not my intent to know the details of what might be troubling you, but simply to let you know I am concerned and that help (e.g., Health Center), if needed, is available.

Remember, getting help is a smart and courageous thing to do – for yourself and for your loved ones.

## FAQ

- What is the late submission policy?
  - Under regular circumstances, you are expected to submit your short writings/papers within an hour after the deadline. If an extension is needed, you should let me know at least 72 hours before the deadline.
- What is counted as participation?
  - First, you should turn your camera on. If for some reasons you cannot, you should let me know. Moreover, regular attendances, discussing your viewpoints, sharing your questions from texts, doing group activities and in-class writings are all parts of your participation.
- Can I record the lecture?
  - Unless all students agree on, no.
- What is the policy of using electronic devices in the class?
  - This course is online. So, it is essential to use your computer/laptop only for the class' purpose. Using electronic devices in for other purposes will distract both you and your classmates.



## Class Schedule

### Week 1: The Pandemic

Day 1	Introduction & What is Philosophy?	
Day 2	Moral Responsibilities during the Pandemic	What Do We Do About a Neighbor Who Breaks Distancing Rules? – Kwame Anthony Appiah
Day 3	Vaccine Nationalism	Vaccine Nationalism Harms Everyone and Protects No One – Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus
Day 4	The Anxiety of Going Back to Normal	'I don't want to go back to normal': As pandemic fades, some find anxiety grows – Rheana Murray
Day 5	Mourning as Political Act	Interview: Mourning Is a Political Act Amid the Pandemic and Its Disparities (Republication) – Judith Butler & George Yancy

### Week 2: The Government

Day 1	Classical Liberalism & Neoliberalism & Ordoliberalism	Classical Liberalism, Neoliberalism, and Ordoliberalism – Elżbieta Mączyńska & Piotr Pysz
Day 2	Republicanism & Neorepublicanism	Republicanism – Cécile Laborde
Day 3	Socialism & Communism & Social Democracy	What Is the Difference Between Communism and Socialism? – David Floyd & Here's the difference between a 'socialist' and a 'democratic socialist' – John Haltiwanger
Day 4	Postcolonialism & Anti-colonialism & Nationalism	Postcolonialism, Anti-colonialism, Nationalism and History – Christine Doran
Day 5	Anarchism	Anarchism and Other Essays – Emma Goldman (Paper's topics)

### Week 3: The Minorities

Day 1	Race & Ethnic & Nationality	Race and Ethnicity – William Little
Day 2	Sex & Gender & Sexual Orientation	What Sexual Minority Means – Elizabeth Hartney & The invisible ones: Sexual minorities – Suresh Bada Math & Shekhar P. Seshadri
Day 3	Belief & Practice & Religion	Religious Liberty and Religious Minorities in the United States – Elizabeth A. Sewell
Day 4	Ability & Capability & Disability	6 Forms of Ableism We Need to Retire Immediately – Julie Zeilinger
Day 5	Youth & Age & Oldness	Ageism in America – The Anti-Ageism Taskforce at The International Longevity Center

### Week 4: Tolerance & Freedom of Speech

Day 1	National Holiday	Memorial Day
Day 2	What is Toleration?	Toleration and the Limits of Liberalism – Susan Mendus

Day 3	Toleration for Religious Practices	Official Republicanism, Equality, and the Hijab & Official Republicanism, Liberty, and the Hijab & Official Republicanism, Solidarity , and the Hijab – Cécile Laborde
Day 4	The Intolerable	The intolerable – D.D. Raphael
Day 5	Hate Speech & Political Correctness	Hard Questions: Who Should Decide What Is Hate Speech in an Online Global Community? – Richard Allen & What is Hate Speech? & 'Politically Correct': The Phrase Has Gone From Wisdom To Weapon – Kat Chow (Papers' Drafts)

### Week 5: Philosophers in History-The 18th Century

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Day 1	Mary Wollstonecraft & The Rights of Woman	The Vindication of the Rights of Woman – Mary Wollstonecraft
Day 2	Mary Astell & The Idea of Women Support Women	A Serious Proposal to the Ladies – Mary Astell
Day 3	Harriet Taylor Mill & The Value of Equal treatment	The Enfranchisement of Women: Essays on Equality, Law, and Education – Harriet Taylor Mill
Day 4	(Papers' Presentations)	
Day 5	(Papers' Presentations)	

### Week 6: Philosophers around the World

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Day 1	Ayn Rand & The Public Needs for Philosophizing	Philosophy: Who Needs It – Ayn Rand
Day 2	Fatema Mernissi & The Resistance of Muslim Women	Beyond the Veil: Male-Female Dynamics in a Muslim Society – Fatema Mernissi
Day 3	Omolara Ogundipe-Leslie & The Oppression of African Women	Moving Beyond Boundaries – Omolara Ogundipe-Leslie & Carole Boyce Davies
Day 4	Maria Lugones & The Coloniality of Gender	Heterosexualism in the Colonial/modern Gender system – Maria Lugones
Day 5	Chizuko Ueno & The Question of Family	The Modern Family in Japan – Chizuko Ueno & (Final Papers)