

Syllabus for PHI 2010: Intro to Philosophy
Dr. Molly Gardner
University of Florida, Spring 2022

<p><u>Lecture:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mondays and Wednesdays, 10:40 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. in Rinker 110. 	<p><u>Friday Discussions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9:35 – 10:25 a.m., Matherly 102 • 11:45 – 12:35 a.m., Matherly 112 • 12:50 – 1:40 p.m., Matherly 119
<p><u>Contacting Professor Molly Gardner:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office: 313 Griffin-Floyd Hall • Office Phone: 352-294-0426 • Email: mollygardner@ufl.edu • Zoom Office Hours: Thursdays 3 – 4 p.m. • Zoom Office Hour Link: https://ufl.zoom.us/j/5413165558 • In-Person Office Hours: Wednesdays 12:30 – 2:30 p.m. • Office Hour Sign-Up Sheet: http://bit.ly/2vYpCml 	<p><u>Contacting Teaching Assistant Julianna Costanzo:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email: jsc1998@ufl.edu • Information about Julianna’s office hours will be posted on our Canvas website.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Is it rational to believe in God? Do you really know what you think you know? How is your mind related to your brain? What is the right thing to do? This course will equip you with some philosophical methodology and some background information you can use to try to answer these and similar questions. We will survey some of the main topics in philosophy, including topics in metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, and the philosophy of mind. Through class discussions and writing assignments, we will also practice using philosophical methods like logical argumentation and thought experiments. Students in this course can earn 4000 words towards the UF writing requirement (WR). This course also provides 3 credits towards the philosophy major or minor and is a general education – humanities (H) course. Since this is an introductory course, it presumes no background in philosophy.

REQUIREMENTS SATISFIED BY SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THE COURSE:

Students in this course can earn 4000 words towards the UF Writing Requirement (WR). 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. See the rubric at the end of this syllabus for information on what constitutes “satisfactory completion.” The writing component of the course consists of the two papers and the two take-home exams. By the end of the semester, we will evaluate and

provide feedback on all of your written assignments (including both papers and both exams) with respect to grammar, punctuation, clarity, coherence, and organization. For additional feedback and help with your writing, you may wish to consult the writing studio at www.writing.ufl.edu.

PHI 2010 also provides 3 credits towards the Philosophy major or minor and is a General Education – Humanities (H) course.

COURSE MATERIALS:

- **(D):** Rene Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*. (Hackett Classics, 3rd ed., 1993). Donald A. Cress, Translator. ISBN-10: 0872201929, available at UF bookstore.
- **(P):** Plato, *Five Dialogues: Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Meno, Phaedo*. (Hackett Classics, 2nd ed., 2002). John M. Cooper, Editor., G.M.A. Grube, Translator. ISBN-10: 0872206335, available at UF bookstore.
- **(Canvas):** All other readings will be uploaded to our Canvas website.

COURSE GOALS:

This course is designed to increase your “knowledge how,” which is acquired through practice; and your “knowledge that,” which is acquired through exposure to information.

Knowledge how:

- To read for, charitably understand, and reconstruct arguments
- To critically evaluate your own and other people’s views
- To express yourself in speech and writing with clarity, depth, and precision

Knowledge that:

- Knowledge of some of the major contributions that philosophy has made, both to culture and to the store of human knowledge

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

4 Quizzes: 10 points each, lowest grade dropped (30 points total) <i>Each quiz will consist of 4 multiple-choice questions and 3 short-answer questions.</i>	Attendance and Participation: 10 points <i>(See chart on next page.)</i>
2 Papers: 50 points each (100 points total) <i>Each paper should be between 1200 and 1400 words long.</i>	2 Take-Home Exams: 30 points each (60 points total) <i>Each open-book, take-home exam will consist of 2 short essay questions. Your response to each question should be between 400 and 600 words.</i>

Total: 200 points

- **Lowest Quiz Grade Dropped:** Your lowest quiz grade will be dropped.
- **Extra Credit:** You will have the opportunity to get up to 3 extra credit points over the course of the semester. Information about extra credit opportunities will be posted periodically on Canvas.
- **Attendance and Participation:** See chart on next page

DETERMINING YOUR SEMESTER GRADE:

A	186 to 200 points
A-	180 to 185 points
B+	172 to 179 points
B	164 to 171 points
B-	160 to 163 points
C+	152 to 159 points
C	144 to 151 points
C-	140 to 143 points
D+	132 to 139 points
D	124 to 131 points
D-	120 to 123 points
E	0 to 119 points

Please note that your course grade is determined by points, not percentages, and that all points have equal weight, regardless of the assignment. Canvas is sometimes misleading when it tells you what “percentage grade” it thinks you have; if you are in doubt about what your true course grade is going to be, ***ignore the percentage that Canvas gives you*** and simply calculate the number of points you have earned and the number of points you can still earn, keeping in mind that we will drop your lowest quiz grade.

UNIVERSITY GRADING POLICIES:

For information on how your grade for this course will be averaged with your grades in other courses at the University of Florida, see the following: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx> . Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION GRADE:

This semester you will be expected to attend 28 Monday/Wednesday lectures and 14 Friday discussions. This means there are 42 classes total. Four absences (from either lecture, discussion, or both) will be ***automatically excused***, but any additional absences will lower your attendance and participation grade according to the following chart: (Remember that attendance and participation are worth 10 points out of 200 for the semester.)

	Poor participation	Excellent participation
0 absences	8	10
1 absence	8	10
2 absences	8	10
3 absences	8	10
4 absences	8	10
5 absences	7	9
6 absences	6	8
7 absences	5	7
8 absences	4	6
9 absences	3	5
10 or more absences	0 to 2	4

There is almost never a need to email either me or your teaching assistant to have your absences excused. We do not need to know why you were gone. As the chart above illustrates, 4 absences are *automatically* excused no matter what reason you had to be absent, and any additional absences will lower your attendance and participation grade *regardless of your reason for being absent*.

There is one exception to this policy: in a case where at least **five** of your absences are justified by what the university deems to be “acceptable reasons,” please email me, and I will consider evaluating you on participation only. Please see the University of Florida’s policy for a list of acceptable reasons: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>. **This exception does not apply when fewer than five of your absences are for good reasons.** For example, if you had good reasons for being absent 4 times but were absent a total of 6 times, then the exception does not apply to you, and your maximum attendance/participation grade is 8 out of 10, as the chart above indicates.

LATE PAPERS OR MISSED QUIZZES:

- If you miss a quiz deadline, you will receive a 0 for that quiz; there will be no make-up quizzes this semester. (But remember that your lowest quiz grade will be dropped.)
- If you miss the deadline or anticipate that you *will* miss the deadline for a paper, please send me an email at mollygardner@ufl.edu *as soon as possible*, and I will consider whether to grant you an extension. I reserve the right to deduct between 0 and 10 points from a paper grade for lateness.

WORKING WITH OTHERS:

Although you are free to study for quizzes and the exams with other students, your work on the quizzes and exams must be your own. You may also discuss your paper ideas with me, your teaching assistant, or other students. For help brainstorming, formatting, and writing your papers, you are welcome to take drafts of your papers us or to the writing studio.

However, you must ultimately write your papers on your own, and you must cite your sources.

Any citation style—MLA, Chicago, APA, or some variation—is acceptable, but because I find it easiest to follow, I generally recommend using the APA style: <https://apastyle.apa.org/>. For information about how to avoid plagiarism, see the handouts I have uploaded to the non-required readings folder on Canvas.

Please note that you can bring me and your TA as many drafts of your papers as you like. However, we do not give *written* feedback on drafts—instead, we will provide you with *oral feedback* only, which means that you must set up an office hours appointment with us to get feedback.

HONOR CODE:

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 specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions; for more information see this page: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>. You are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with me or your TA.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center: <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs as early as possible in the semester.

COURSE EVALUATIONS:

You will be asked twice to evaluate the course: once midway through the semester (this is the “midterm” evaluation) and once at the end of the semester (this is the “end-of-semester” evaluation). The midterm evaluation is designed to help me and your teaching assistant address any problems with the course while there is still time for you to benefit from your suggestions; thus, the evaluations will not be shared publicly. The evaluation at the end of the semester will be used for additional purposes and the data will be shared on the University website.

For the official evaluation, you 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 is here: <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. You will be notified when the official evaluation period opens, and you can complete evaluations through the email you receive from GatorEvals, in your Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are

available to you here: <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

ACADEMIC RESOURCES:

- **E-Learning Technical Support:** <http://helpdesk.ufl.edu/> . Contact them via phone at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.
- **Career Connections Center:** Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services, <https://career.ufl.edu/>
- **Library Support:** See <https://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>.
- **Teaching Center:** Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. <https://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>
- **Writing Studio:** 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>
- **Student Complaints On-Campus:** <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-%20code-student-conduct-code/>
- **On-Line Students Complaints:** <https://distance.ufl.edu/getting-help/student-complaint-process/>

HEALTH AND WELLNESS RESOURCES:

- **U Matter, We Care:** If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit <https://umatter.ufl.edu/> to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- **Counseling and Wellness Center:** Call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis and non-crisis services or visit <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>.
- **Student Health Care Center:** Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit <https://shcc.ufl.edu/>.
- **University Police Department:** Go to <https://police.ufl.edu/> or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- **UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center:** For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608. <https://ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-center> .

COURSE SCHEDULE:

This schedule is tentative. Please check Canvas for updates.

Date	What we will do in class	Reading (to be done before class)
1/5/22	Overview of course	None
1/10/22	Philosophical Methodology Part 1: Deductive Arguments	John Perry, Michael Bratman, and John Martin Fischer, “Logical Toolkit” (Canvas)
1/12/22	Epistemology	Rene Descartes, <i>Meditations on First Philosophy</i> , Meditations 1 and 2 (pp. 13 – 24) (D)

1/17/22	<i>Martin Luther King, Jr. Day - No class</i>	
1/19/22	Quiz 1 due on Canvas at 10:40 a.m. Epistemology	John Pollock, “A Brain in a Vat” (Canvas)
1/24/22	Epistemology	G. E. Moore, “Proof of an External World” (Canvas)
1/26/22	Epistemology	Fred Dretske, “Is Knowledge Closed Under Known Entailment?” (Canvas)
1/31/22	Philosophical Methodology Part 2: Non-Deductive Arguments	None
2/2/22	The Teleological Argument for the Existence of God	William Paley, <i>Natural Theology</i> (excerpt) (Canvas)
2/7/22	The Ontological Argument for the Existence of God	Anselm of Canterbury, “The Ontological Argument” (Canvas)
2/9/22	Quiz 2 Due on Canvas at 10:40 a.m. The Ontological Argument for the Existence of God	Rene Descartes, <i>Meditations on First Philosophy</i> , Meditation 3 (pp. 24 – 35) (D)
2/14/22	The Problem of Evil	B. C. Johnson, “God and the Problem of Evil” (Canvas)
2/16/22	The Problem of Evil	Rene Descartes, <i>Meditations on First Philosophy</i> , Meditation 4 (pp. 35 – 42) (D)
	<i>Paper 1 due Friday, February 18 on Canvas at 11:59 p.m.</i>	
2/21/22	Philosophy of Mind	Rene Descartes, <i>Meditations on First Philosophy</i> , Meditations 5 & 6 (pp. 42 – 59) (D)
2/23/22	Philosophy of Mind	Excerpts of Writings from the Correspondence of Descartes and Elisabeth (Canvas)
2/28/22	Philosophy of Mind	Frank Jackson, “Epiphenomenal Qualia” (Canvas)
3/2/22	Philosophy of Mind	None
	Spring Break March 5 – 12	
3/14/22	Quiz 3 Due on Canvas at 10:40 a.m. Ethical Theory	Plato, <i>Euthyphro</i> (P)
3/16/22	Ethical Theory	James Rachels, “The Challenge of Cultural Relativism” (Canvas)
	<i>Midterm Take-Home Exam due Friday, March 18 on Canvas at 11:59 p.m.</i>	

3/21/22	Ethical Theory	Immanuel Kant, “The Categorical Imperative” (Canvas)
3/23/22		None
3/28/22	Ethical Theory	John Stuart Mill, “Utilitarianism” (Canvas)
3/30/22	Morality and the Law	Harriet Taylor Mill, “Enfranchisement of Women” (Canvas)
	<i>Paper 2 due Friday, April 1 on Canvas at 11:59 p.m.</i>	
4/4/22	Morality and the Law	Plato, <i>Crito</i> (P)
4/6/22	Morality and the Law	Plato, <i>Apology</i> (P)
4/11/22	Quiz 4 Due on Canvas at 10:40 a.m. To be determined by class interest	To be determined
4/13/22	To be determined by class interest	To be determined
4/18/22	To be determined by class interest	To be determined
4/20/22	Lessons from the course	None

The final take-home exam will be due on Canvas on April 28, 2022 at 5 p.m.

Writing Assessment Rubric

	SATISFACTORY (Y)	UNSATISFACTORY (N)
CONTENT	Papers exhibit at least some evidence of ideas that respond to the topic with complexity, critically evaluating and synthesizing sources, and provide at least an adequate discussion with basic understanding of sources.	Papers either include a central idea(s) that is unclear or off-topic or provide only minimal or inadequate discussion of ideas. Papers may also lack sufficient or appropriate sources.
ORGANIZATION AND COHERENCE	Documents and paragraphs exhibit at least some identifiable structure for topics, including a clear thesis statement but may require readers to work to follow progression of ideas.	Documents and paragraphs lack clearly identifiable organization, may lack any coherent sense of logic in associating and organizing ideas, and may also lack transitions and coherence to guide the reader.
ARGUMENT AND SUPPORT	Documents use persuasive and confident presentation of ideas, strongly supported with evidence. At the weak end of the Satisfactory range, documents may provide only generalized discussion of ideas or may provide adequate discussion but rely on weak support for arguments.	Documents make only weak generalizations, providing little or no support, as in summaries or narratives that fail to provide critical analysis.
STYLE	Documents use a writing style with word choice appropriate to the context, genre, and discipline. Sentences should display complexity and logical sentence structure. At a minimum, documents will display a less precise use of vocabulary and an uneven use of sentence structure or a writing style that occasionally veers away from word choice or tone appropriate to the context, genre, and discipline.	Documents rely on word usage that is inappropriate for the context, genre, or discipline. Sentences may be overly long or short with awkward construction. Documents may also use words incorrectly.
MECHANICS	Papers will feature correct or error-free presentation of ideas. At the weak end of the Satisfactory range, papers may contain some spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors that remain unobtrusive so they do not muddy the paper's argument or points.	Papers contain so many mechanical or grammatical errors that they impede the reader's understanding or severely undermine the writer's credibility.

1. The student must earn a grade of C or better in the course.
AND
2. The student must earn an S (satisfactory) evaluation on the writing requirements of the course.