

PHI 2010: Introduction to Philosophy
Summer B 2023 Class #12519

Time: M,T,W,R,F Period 2 9:30am-10:45am

Instructor: David D. Ortiz M.A.

Location: AND 0019

Office Hours: M,W,F 11am-12pm; OBA

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Course Description:

‘Philosophy’ derives from the Greek words *philos* and *sophia*, ‘love’ and ‘wisdom’ respectively. However, that tells us very little about what philosophy is and what philosophy studies. Toward that end, philosophy is concerned with systematic theory building. Philosophers study everything from mathematics to ethics. Despite the broad range of topics that are subject to philosophical inquiry, what unites philosophy as a practice is a commitment to developing systematic accounts that can be used to both understand and explain phenomena. In this course, we will be concerned with three questions. First, we will engage ourselves with well-being and happiness, where our central question will be “what does it mean to live a good human life?” Second, we will look at moral theory, where we will be concerned with the question “what makes actions good or bad?”. Third, we will take a look at philosophy of religion, where our focal question is “are there rational reasons to believe in the existence of God”. In examining these questions, we will engage with readings from Antiquity to the contemporary era. It is the aim of this course to familiarize students with arguments regarding these three guiding questions. It is not the aim of this course to convince students that one particular account is correct. Students are encouraged to challenge the accounts that they are presented with and to engage in polite and constructive discussion with their peers and instructor.

General Education Requirement and Objective:

PHI 2010 is a Humanities (H) subject area course in the UF General Education Program, a General Education Core Course in Humanities, and a UF Writing Requirement 4000 Course. 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. <http://gened.aa.ufl.edu/program-area-objectives.aspx>

Humanities Gen Ed SLOs:

| | Content | Critical Thinking | Communication |
|------------|--|---|--|
| Humanities | Identify, describe, and explain the history, underlying theory and methodologies used. | Identify and analyze key elements, biases and influences that shape thought within the subject area. Approach issues and problems within the discipline from multiple perspectives. | Communicate knowledge, thoughts and reasoning clearly and effectively. |

Content Critical Thinking Communication:

Humanities Identify, describe, and explain the history, underlying theory and methodologies used. Identify and analyze key elements, biases and influences that shape thought within the subject area. Approach issues and problems within the discipline from multiple perspectives. Communicate knowledge, thoughts and reasoning clearly and effectively.

Writing Requirement and Objective:

This course confers 4000 words towards the Writing Requirement (WR), which ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. While helping students meet the broad learning outcomes of content, communication, and critical thinking, the instructor will evaluate and provide feedback on students' written assignments with respect to grammar, punctuation, clarity, coherence, and organization. To receive Writing Requirement credit, a student must receive an overall course grade of C or higher, a satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course.

Course Goals:

This course is designed to introduce students to the practice of philosophy through the study of central philosophical questions and arguments, as represented by a selection of historical and/or contemporary readings. Students will learn some of the basic principles of good reasoning, including how to understand arguments, represent them clearly and fairly, and evaluate them for cogency. Students will also learn to develop their own arguments and views regarding the philosophical questions studied in the course in a compelling fashion. In these ways the course aims to develop students' own reasoning and communication skills in ways that will be useful in any further study of philosophy they undertake and beyond the bounds of philosophy itself.

Course Objectives:

Students will demonstrate their competencies in understanding and assessing the philosophical theories studied in the course primarily via a set of assigned papers, in which they will be assessed for their abilities to: (i) understand and apply basic concepts of good reasoning, (ii) accurately and fairly describe and explain philosophical views represented in works assigned for the course, (iii) formulate arguments of

their own while anticipating possible lines of objections and responding in a conscientious fashion, and (iv) speak and write clearly and persuasively about abstract and challenging matters of the sort raised by the philosophical material in the course.

Required Texts:

1. Alter, Torin Andrew, and Robert J. Howell. *The God Dialogues: A Philosophical Journey*. Oxford University Press, 2011.
2. All other texts will be made available via Canvas. All posted readings are required, unless otherwise specified.

Schedule of Readings:**Week 1: Well-Being**

M 7/3 Syllabus Review and Course Overview

T 7/4 No Class Independence Day

W 7/5 Aristotle *Nicomachean Ethics* Book I

R 7/6 Aristotle *Nicomachean Ethics* Book II

F 7/7 Aristotle *Nicomachean Ethics* Book III

Week 2: Well-Being

M 7/10 Aristotle *Nicomachean Ethics* Book VI

T 7/11 Aristotle *Nicomachean Ethics* Book VII

W 7/12 Aristotle *Nicomachean Ethics* Book VIII

R 7/13 Aristotle *Nicomachean Ethics* Book IX

F 7/14 Aristotle *Nicomachean Ethics* Book X **Paper 1 Due**

Week 3: Moral Theory

M 7/17 Mill "Utilitarianism"

T 7/18 Mill *On Liberty* Chapter 2

W 7/19 Mill *On Liberty* Chapter 2

R 7/20 Feldman "What is Act Utilitarianism?"

F 7/21 Feldman "Problems for Act Utilitarianism"

Week 4: Moral Theory

M 7/24 Kant *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*

T 7/25 Kant *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*

W 7/26 Kant *On a Supposed Right to Lie from Benevolent Motives*/Kant "Duties to Animals and Spirits"

R 7/27 Feldman "Kant I"

F 7/28 Feldman "Kant II" **Paper 2 Due**

Week 5: Philosophy of Religion

M 7/31 Alter and Howell *The God Dialogues* Chapter 1

T 8/1 Alter and Howell *The God Dialogues* Chapter 2

W 8/2 Alter and Howell *The God Dialogues* Chapter 3

R 8/3 Alter and Howell *The God Dialogues* Chapter 4

F 8/4 Alter and Howell *The God Dialogues* Chapter 5

Week 6: Philosophy of Religion

M 8/7 Alter and Howell *The God Dialogues* Chapter 6

T 8/8 Alter and Howell *The God Dialogues* Chapter 7

W 8/9 Alter and Howell *The God Dialogues* Chapter 8

R 8/10 Alter and Howell *The God Dialogues* Chapter 9

F 8/5 Discussion and Course Wrap-Up **Paper 3 Due**

Evaluation and Expectations: There are five (5) evaluated components of this course. First, students will write three (3) 1,500 word papers, which will be due on: **7/14, 7/28, & 8/5**. Each paper will be worth **20%** of the total grade. Late papers will not be accepted, and will receive an automatic 0, unless the student has received prior approval from the instructor 48 hours in advance. Papers will be evaluated in accordance with the Writing Assignment Rubric after the Grade Scale on this syllabus. Second, students will be evaluated on their class attendance. Students are expected to both attend every meeting and remain for the duration of the meeting. Attendance will be taken daily at the end of class, via participation in a brief quiz. Attendance will constitute **20%** of the course grade. Should a conflict arise with our scheduled meeting, it is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor of the conflict, at least 24 hours in advance. Third, students will be evaluated on their participation. Participation is worth **20%** of the course grade, and will be based on meaningful contribution during lecture and/or discussion. Meaningful contribution entails asking questions that demonstrate that one has done – and thought about – the assigned reading, interacting with the theses in the assigned readings in a manner that shows one's understanding of the position, and respectfully engaging with fellow students during Friday discussion sections. Students will also find a number of resources for improving their writing at the university's Writing Studio page (<http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>), including a link to an electronic version of Strunk and White's *The Elements of Style* (<http://www.bartleby.com/141/>), the recommended style manual for this course.

Grading Scale:

| | | | | |
|----|-----------|--|----|----------|
| A | 94 – 100% | | C | 74 – 76% |
| A- | 90 – 93% | | C- | 70 – 73% |
| B+ | 87 – 89% | | D+ | 67 – 69% |
| B | 84 – 86% | | D | 64 – 66% |
| B- | 80 – 83% | | D- | 60 – 63% |
| C+ | 77 – 79% | | E | <60 |

For information on how UF assigns grade points, visit: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/> 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.

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>

Students Requiring Accommodation:

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, 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.

UF Evaluations Process:

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>

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 Conduct Code (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

In-Class Recording: Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole

or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

Campus Resources:

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit U Matter, We Care website to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the Student Health Care Center website.

University Police Department: Visit UF Police Department website 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; Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website.

Academic Resources:

E-learning technical support: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk 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.

Library Support: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Student Complaints On-Campus: Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information.

On-Line Students Complaints: View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process.

WRITING ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

| A | B | C | D | E |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall, the paper does an excellent job of responding to the topic question and reflects a more than competent command of the relevant texts and material discussed in class. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall, the paper responds well to the topic question and reflects a competent command of the relevant texts and material discussed in class. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall, the paper provides a merely sufficient response to the topic question and reflects a less than competent command of the relevant texts and material discussed in class. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall, the paper only partially responds to the topic and reflects an incompetent command of the relevant texts and materials discussed in class. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall, the paper does not respond to the topic and fails to draw upon relevant texts and materials discussed in class. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The introduction does an excellent job of identifying the issues raised by the topic to be discussed in the rest of the paper. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The introduction does a good enough job of identifying the issues raised by the topic to be discussed in the rest of the paper. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The introduction does not adequately identify the issues raised by the topic to be discussed in the rest of the paper. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The introduction does not identify the issues raised by the topic to be discussed in the rest of the paper. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The introduction does not identify the issues raised by the topic to be discussed in the rest of the paper. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main ideas of the paper are clear and convincing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main ideas of the paper are for the most part clear and convincing. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main ideas of the paper are only partially clear and convincing. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main ideas of the paper are only marginally clear and convincing. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is unclear what the paper's main ideas are supposed to be. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All the content of the paper supports its main ideas with no irrelevant material. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almost all the content of the paper supports its main ideas with no irrelevant material. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The content of the paper generally supports its main ideas, though there is some irrelevant material. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The content of the paper tends not to support its main ideas, and there is a good deal of irrelevant material. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the content of the paper is supposed to support its main ideas is unclear, and there is far too much irrelevant material. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The paper's claims are all well-grounded in cogent interpretations of the relevant textual evidence. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The paper's claims are generally well-grounded in cogent interpretations of the relevant textual evidence. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only some of the paper's claims are well-grounded in cogent interpretations of the relevant textual | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None of the interpretations on which the paper's claims are based are cogent. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None of the paper's claims are based on interpretations of |

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|---|---|--|---|
| | | evidence. | the relevant textual evidence. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The argument advances in a manner that is easy to follow. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The argument advances in a manner that is for the most part easy to follow. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The argument is difficult to follow in places. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The argument is difficult to follow or incomplete. • The argument is very difficult to follow. |

Grammar: The document Basic Grammar for Writing Assignments posted under the "Resources" tab discusses some common grammatical errors you must avoid. Grammatical errors will incur deductions as follows:

- Improper formation of plurals and possessives (- 2 points)
- Confusion of it's and its (- 2 points)
- Failure of agreement between subject and verb (- 2 points)
- Sentence fragment (Basic Grammar §1) (- 4 points)
- Run-on sentence (Basic Grammar §2) (- 4 points)
- Faulty Modification (Basic Grammar §3) (- 2 points)
- Unclear Pronoun Reference (Basic Grammar §4) (- 2 points)
- Faulty Parallelism (Basic Grammar §5) (- 2 points)