

Spring 2023
Introduction to Philosophy
Philosophy 100—01

Professor:

Charles Joshua Horn, Ph.D.

Joshua.Horn@uwsp.edu

Office Location: CCC 418

Drop-In Hours: TR, 9:00am—9:30am; MW, 11:00am—12:00pm; By Appointment

<http://charlesjhorn.webstarts.com/index.html>

Course Information:

Class Time: MWF, 9:00am—9:50am

Class Location: CCC 303

Course Description:

One of the typical misconceptions of philosophy is that it is often understood merely as the study of old books that have no bearing or practical beneficial consequences for those who study it. While philosophy does sometimes involve the study of old books, the thought that philosophy cannot benefit us is simply false. Studying philosophy correctly can cultivate skills that can be used in a wide variety of settings—both academic and otherwise. Philosophy is also sometimes understood as a discipline that deals with “the big questions”, those which have no easy answers and which empirical study might not be able to answer. Our focus in this class will be on some of these big questions:

1. What does it mean to be a “good” person?
2. What is the nature of justice?
3. What does it mean for something to be true?
4. How do we know that our beliefs are true?
5. Does God exist? Is there a way that we could *prove* this one way or the other?
6. If God exists, how do we explain the existence of suffering in the world?
7. What is a mind? What kinds of things have minds?
8. What does it mean for something to be conscious?
9. What kinds of things can be conscious? Humans? Animals? Plants? Computers?

Reading in the Discipline:

This section of PHIL 100 will have an *optional* course where students can earn an additional 1 credit hour. PSL is primarily a discussion-based course led by one of my advanced students in the Philosophy program here at UWSP. The discussion course is Pass/Fail and in the past, students enrolled in the discussion section of the course have, on average, a full letter grade higher in my course. [See here for more information on Reading in the Disciplines.](#)

Text:**Rental:**

1. *Introduction to Philosophy: Classical and Contemporary Readings, 9th Ed.*
Oxford University Press
ISBN: 9780197543825

Expectations:

Students are expected to check into Canvas daily to check for class announcements, complete assignments, use the discussion board, etc. Students are expected to attend every class and remain for the entire time. Do not come late or leave early. Students must complete the necessary readings prior to class and be prepared for discussion and participation. Students will treat other students with respect. This means, turning off all electrical equipment, including cell phones, laptops, and tablets. Students must also address their peers in a respectful tone. It is important to note that the nature of this class will inevitably result in disagreements among colleagues; however, it is essential to maintain respect toward one another despite disagreement.

Please follow the checklist to best increase the chances for success in the class.

1. All assignments are set on a weekly schedule (Sunday—Saturday) and they can be submitted at any point during this period. Be sure to complete the reading assignment, quizzes, essays, and exams during the week specified on the course schedule.
2. Take advantage of office hours. There are in-person office hours, as well as virtual office hours on Zoom. See Canvas “Announcements” tab for full invitation URL and password to join. Please note that a waiting room is enabled so you may have to wait to join in case I am with another student.

Course Goals:

- Demonstrate an ability to read carefully, speak clearly, think critically, or write persuasively about cultures and cultural works/artifacts (including texts, images, performances, and technologies, as well as other expressions of the human condition).
- Identify and analyze how beliefs, values, languages, theories, or laws shape cultures and cultural works/artifacts.
- Engage a variety of ideas and worldviews critically by formulating reflective and informed moral, ethical, or aesthetic evaluations of cultures and cultural works/artifacts.

Academic Integrity:

Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism or helping others to commit these acts will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty will result in severe disciplinary action including, but not limited to, failure of the student assessment item or course, and/or dismissal from the University.

Academic integrity violations include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Cheating: Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, notes, study aids, or other devices in any academic exercise. This definition includes unauthorized communication of information during an academic exercise.
- 2) Fabrication and Falsification: Intentional and unauthorized alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise. Falsification is a matter of inventing or counterfeiting information for use in any academic exercise.
- 3) Multiple Submissions: The submission of substantial portions of the same academic work for credit (including oral reports) more than once without authorization.
- 4) Plagiarism: Intentionally or knowingly presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., without proper acknowledgment of the source). The sole exception to the requirement is when the ideas, information, etc., is common knowledge.
- 5) Complicity in Academic Dishonesty: Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic dishonesty.

Additional information can be found at:

<http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespos/SRR-2010/rightsChap14.pdf>

Disability Information:

Students with disabilities should register with the ADA coordinator on campus and let me know at the beginning of the semester. I would be happy to accommodate you in any way that I can. Just let me know. More information can be found at:

<http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespos/ADA/rightsADAPolicyInfo.pdf>

Intellectual Property Notice:

Lecture materials and recordings for Philosophy 100 are protected intellectual property at UW-Stevens Point. Students in this course may use the materials and recordings for their personal use related to participation in this class. Students may also take notes solely for their personal use. If a lecture is not already recorded, you are not authorized to record my lectures without my permission unless you are considered by the university to be a qualified student with a disability requiring accommodation. [Regent Policy Document 4-1] Students may not copy or share lecture materials and recordings outside of class, including posting on internet sites or selling to commercial entities. Students are also prohibited from providing or selling their personal notes to anyone else or being paid for taking notes by any person or commercial firm without the instructor's express written permission. Unauthorized use of these copyrighted lecture materials and recordings constitutes copyright infringement and may be addressed under the university's policies, UWS Chapters 14 and 17, governing student academic and non-academic misconduct.

Grading Criteria:

To provide a great deal of flexibility for students, assignments can be submitted at any point during the week that they are due (Sunday—Saturday). Assignments can be made up beyond the due dates for both unexcused and excused absences. For unexcused absences, a late penalty may be imposed. Late work must be complete within one week of the assignment due date.

Canvas will automatically calculate and update grades as the semester progresses. To determine your current grade in the class, take the score in the “Total” column and divide by 100. If there are still remaining assignments left, add the remaining points possible to your points earned to see the best-case scenario for your grade. Then use the grading scale below. The goal for the class is to try to earn as many points as possible. Any points earned over these 100 points will count as extra credit. Final grades will be calculated based upon the following.

- 1) Four Exams: 40 Points Total
 - a) Exams will be composed of multiple-choice questions to be completed in 50 minutes. Exams are open book/open note, but do not use the internet as a resource.
- 2) Fifteen Reading Quizzes 30 Points Total
 - a) There are quizzes associated with most of the readings in the class. Students will have 5 minutes to answer questions on the readings designated on the course schedule (look for Q# on the schedule to see which quiz is associated with each reading). Because there are 20 quizzes on the course schedule, students may earn up to 10 *bonus* points in extra credit for the semester. This also means that you can skip up to 5 quizzes and still earn the full 30 points for this part of your grade!
- 3) One Essay 10 Points Total
 - a) There are four films on the syllabus: *The Dark Knight*, *Inception*, *The Life of Pi*, and *Ex Machina*. Students may select any **one** of those prompts to work through the process of writing a philosophical essay. The first step of this process is to *outline* the essay by clearly stating your thesis, providing one argument (with evidence and a conclusion that follows from that evidence), and addressing one objection to your own argument. In the event that students complete more than one outline, only the first will be graded.
 - b) The second step of this process is to take the outline and write an *essay*. In grading your essays, I will consider whether you have a sufficient understanding of the relevant texts, have answered the questions *clearly, concisely, and thoroughly*, and have argued your position persuasively. A full rubric will be provided with each prompt. If students complete more than one prompt, then only the first will be graded. Writing additional essays is not permitted and they will not be graded. Each essay should be one single-spaced page (500 words). Students should consult the “Tips for Writing” on Canvas and “Writing Philosophy Papers” on pg. 14 of the textbook for help with writing their persuasive essay. It would also be helpful to complete an outline of your paper before starting. Look at the “Essay Construction Handout” for a blueprint. Essays should be uploaded to Canvas as PDFs.
- 4) One Group Presentation 20 Points Total
 - a) During the last two weeks of the semester, students will work in small groups to present on philosophical topics, concepts, and arguments, chosen in consultation with Dr. Horn, that we did not cover in the class.
- 5) One “Philosophy at UWSP” Bonus Quiz 5 Points Total
 - a) There will be a short quiz on the advantages of studying philosophy at UWSP!
- 6) Engagement

Engagement comes in many forms. I reserve the right to raise or lower final grades up to 10 points based on engagement, meaning that it is also possible for engagement points to remain at 0. There is no hard and fast rule for raising or lowering the 10 points. While the grade is subjective, it is not arbitrary. Taken together, engagement includes, but is not limited to:

- a) Preparation: reviewing readings and materials before class.
- b) Focus: avoiding distractions during class.
- c) Presence: responsive during class.
- d) Asking Questions: in class, out of class, on the discussion board, through email, etc.
- e) Listening: hearing what others say, and what they are not saying.
- f) Specificity: referring to specific ideas from readings and discussions.
- g) Synthesis: making connections between readings and discussions.

“Pass” Range			“Fail” Range	
(70—100 Points)				

Course Schedule:**UNIT I: ETHICS AND SOCIETY**

Week 1		(January 22—January 28)		
January 23		Syllabus/Course Introduction		
January 25		Pig That Wants to be Eaten Exercise		
January 27	Q1	Logical Toolkit		Pg. 8—25
Online Tasks		Q1		
Week 2		(January 29—February 4)		
January 30	Q2	Herodotus, “Morality as Custom”		Canvas
		Pojman, “Who’s to Judge?”		Canvas
February 1	Q3	Mortimer, “Morality is Based on God’s Commands”		Canvas
		Arthur, “Why Morality Does Not Depend on God’s Commands”		Canvas
February 3	Q4	Bentham, “The Principle of Utility”		Pg. 481—484
		Mill, “Utilitarianism”		Pg. 485—501
Online Tasks		Q2, Q3, Q4		
Week 3		(February 5—February 11)		
February 6	Q5	Williams, “Utilitarianism and Integrity”		Canvas
		“The Trolley Problem”		Pg. 773—774
February 8		Kant, “Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals		Pg. 520—536
February 10	Q6	Kant, “Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals		Pg. 520—536
Online Tasks		Q5, Q6		
Week 4		(February 12—February 18)		
February 13	Q7	Aristotle, “Nicomachean Ethics”		Pg. 544—559
February 15	Q8	Nietzsche, “Excerpts from Beyond Good and Evil”		Canvas
February 17		Essay I Peer Review Workshop		
Online Tasks		Q7, Q8		
Week 5		(February 19—February 25)		
February 20		Review Day		
February 22		No Class		
February 24		Exam I (Complete on Canvas)—No Class		
Online Tasks		Outline I, Essay I, Exam I		

UNIT II: KNOWLEDGE AND REALITY

Week 6		(February 26—March 4)		
February 27	Q9	Plato, “Allegory of the Cave”		Pg. 157—161
March 1		Descartes, “Meditations on First Philosophy (1 and 2)”		Pg. 164—169
March 3	Q10	Descartes, “Meditations on First Philosophy (1 and 2)”		Pg. 164—169
Online Tasks		Q9, Q10		
Week 7		(March 5—March 11)		
March 6	Q11	Hume, “Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding”		Pg. 193—219
		Nozick, “The Experience Machine”		Pg. 162—163
March 8		Essay II Peer Review Workshop		
March 10		Exam II (Complete on Canvas)		
Online Tasks		Q11, Outline II, Essay II, Exam II		

UNIT III: GOD AND EVIL

Week 8		(March 12—March 18)	
March 13	Q12	Anselm, “The Ontological Argument”	Pg. 52—54
March 15	Q13	Aquinas, “The Existence of God”	Pg. 54—56
March 17		Pascal, “The Wager”	
Online Tasks		Q12, Q13	
		(March 19—March 25)	
		Spring Break	
Week 9		(March 26—April 1)	
March 27		Hume, “Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion”	Pg. 74—103
March 29		Hume, “Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion”	Pg. 74—103
March 31	Q14	Hume, “Of Miracles”	Canvas
Online Tasks		Q14	
Week 10		(April 2—April 8)	
April 3	Q15	Leibniz, “God, Evil, and the Best of All Possible Worlds”	Pg. 104—106
April 5		Essay III Peer Review Workshop	
April 7		Exam III (Complete on Canvas)	
Online Tasks		Q15, Outline III, Essay III, Exam III	

UNIT IV: MINDS, BRAINS, AND IDENTITY

Week 11		(April 9—April 15)	
April 10		Descartes, “Meditations on First Philosophy (6)”	Canvas
April 12	Q16	Descartes, “Meditations on First Philosophy (6)”	Canvas
April 14	Q17	Jackson, “What Mary Didn’t Know”	Pg. 263—266
Online Tasks		Q16, Q17	
Week 12		(April 16—April 22)	
April 17	Q18	Turing, “Computing Machinery and Intelligence”	Pg. 282—295
April 19	Q19	Searle, “Minds, Brains, and Programs”	Pg. 295—308
April 21	Q20	Dennett, “Where am I?”	Pg. 355—363
Online Tasks		Q18, Q19, Q20	
Week 13		(April 23—April 29)	
April 24		Large Language Models Exercise and Discussion	
April 26		Essay IV Peer Review Workshop	
April 28		Exam IV (Complete on Canvas)	
Online Tasks		Outline IV, Essay IV, Exam IV	

UNIT V: GROUP WORK

Week 14		(April 30—May 6)	
May 1		Group 1, 2	
May 3		Group 3, 4	
May 5		Group 5, 6	
Online Tasks		No Tasks	

Week 15

May 8

May 10

May 12

Online Tasks

(May 7—May 13)

Group 7, 8

Group 9, 10

Group 11, 12

“Philosophy at UWSP” Bonus Quiz, Course Evaluations

FINALS WEEK**Week 16**

Online Tasks

(May 14—May 20)

No Tasks