

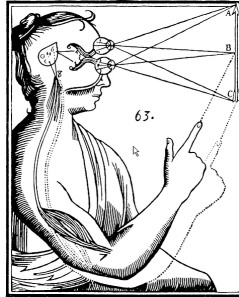
PHI 100–W01: Introduction to Philosophy

University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point, Fall Semester 2021

M/W 2:00 – 3:15; Room 193

Dr. Jason Zinser; Email: jzins@uwsp.edu

Office: Room 325 Office Hours: M/W 3:15-3:45 and by appointment



From Rene Descartes (1677)

Course Description

This course will survey many of the seminal problems of Western philosophy in a structured, analytic fashion. We will read both historically influential philosophers as well as contemporary contributions to a variety of philosophical problems.

Essential Questions

- What makes a question “philosophical”? How do philosophers make progress on particular issues?
- What is the relationship between mind and the world?
- What makes an action right or wrong?
- What are arguments for (or against) God’s existence?

Enduring Understandings

You will come to understand that:

- There are objective criteria to evaluate philosophical arguments.
- Opinions differ from beliefs.
- The appearance of the world may not accurately reflect reality.
- With diligent effort on their part, students will recognize critical thinking as a process of identifying, analyzing, evaluating, and constructing reasoning in deciding what conclusions to draw or actions to take.

Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions

You should be able to:

- Apply critical thinking skills to other professional and personal pursuits.
- Understand a variety of philosophical concepts, questions, and positions.
- Defend your own philosophical positions against criticisms.
- Read and comprehend challenging philosophical works.
- Appreciate and respect differing points of views.

Required Texts

Perry, Bratman and Fischer, *Introduction to Philosophy: Classical and Contemporary Readings*, Eighth Edition. Oxford University Press.

Readings will also be posted on our D2L site.

Graded Assignments

1. Ten Quizzes/Short Assignments (20% total)
2. Two Papers (10% each – 20% total)
3. Three Exams (20% each – 60% total)

Quizzes: Quizzes will be “pop” and can occur anytime during class. I promise to give at least (12) quizzes or assignments and only the best (10) will count. As a result of this policy, quizzes cannot be made-up for any reason (including sickness, etc.). Please do not ask if there will be a quiz on any particular day.

Papers: Papers (1000-word minimum) will summarize a debate or respond to a particular question. Prompts for papers will be provided. Papers are to be turned in electronically to Canvas, which will be checked for “originality” via “Turnitin.com.” Details and suggestions on writing papers, as well as grading criteria, will be distributed in class.

Exams: There will be three exams. Exams will consist of multiple-choice, true/false, short-answer and essay questions. Exam dates are listed on the schedule.

Final grades will be determined on the following scale:

100-93 A	<87-83 B	<77-73 C	<67-60 D
<93-90 A-	<83-80 B-	<73-70 C-	<60 F
<90-87 B+	<80-77 C+	<70-67 D+	

Late Policy: Quizzes cannot be made-up. Short assignments will be docked 10% off per day late. Exams cannot be made-up without a university approved absence notification (e.g. a note from a health care provider explaining why the student couldn't be there). Furthermore, you need to contact me immediately in order to reschedule the exam as early as possible. If this condition is not met, you may not be able to re-take the exam.

Academic Honesty: If you commit any acts of academic dishonesty (such as plagiarism on written work or cheating on an exam) you will earn a zero for that work (and possibly other disciplinary actions). Please refer to the Student Academic Standards and Disciplinary Procedures for more information (<https://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Documents/CommunityRights.pdf#page=11>).

Attendance: Attendance is not mandatory and will not be recorded (with the exception of the first few classes, which is mandatory). With that said, if you do not attend class on a regular basis, you will do poorly. Furthermore, quizzes and assignments will be administered on a regular basis and schedule changes will be announced in class. If you have an excused absence (illness, family emergency, quarantine), please email me as soon as you can, and we can develop reasonable accommodations. Finally, there will be a seating chart that we will have to adhere to.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Statement: The ADA is a federal law requiring educational institutions to provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information about UWSP's policies, see: <http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/ADA/rightsADAPolicyInfo.pdf>.

If you require *classroom and/or exam accommodations*, please register with the Disability and Assistive Technology Center and then contact me at the beginning of the course. For more information, please visit the Disability Center's office, located at 604 LRC or their webpage at: <http://www.uwsp.edu/disability/Pages/default.aspx>.

Face Coverings: At all UW-Stevens Point campus locations, the wearing of face coverings is mandatory in all buildings, including classrooms, laboratories, studios, and other instructional spaces. Any student with a condition that impacts their use of a face covering should contact the Disability and Assistive Technology Center to discuss accommodations in classes. Please note that unless everyone is wearing a face covering, in-person classes cannot take place. This is university policy and not up to the discretion of individual instructors. Failure to adhere to this requirement could result in formal withdrawal from the course.

Other Guidance: Please monitor your own health each day using this [screening tool](#). If you are not feeling well or believe you have been exposed to COVID-19, do not come to class; email your instructor and contact Student Health Service (715-346-4646). As with any type of absence, students are expected to communicate their need to be absent and complete the course requirements as outlined in the syllabus.

- Maintain a minimum of 6 feet of physical distance from others whenever possible.
- Do not congregate in groups before or after class; stagger your arrival and departure from the classroom, lab, or meeting room.
- Wash your hands or use appropriate hand sanitizer regularly and avoid touching your face.
- Please maintain these same healthy practices outside the classroom.

Schedule: Please note that there may be slight modifications to the schedule throughout the semester. If changes occur, they will be announced in class. Also, be sure to complete the readings listed for a particular day **before class**, since we will be discussing them on the day they are listed. Readings in our text, "Introduction to Philosophy", are listed as (IP) and readings on Canvas are listed accordingly.

Date	Reading
	Introduction
W 9/8	Syllabus and Introduction
M 9/13	Plato, "Apology: Defense of Socrates"
W 9/15	Logical Toolkit (IP) and Reasoning and Critical Thinking Handout (CAN)
	Epistemology: The Theory of Knowledge
M 9/20	Hume, "Miracles" (CAN)
W 9/22	Keeley, "Of Conspiracy Theories" (CAN)
M 9/27	Descartes, <i>Meditations on First Philosophy</i> , *only read sections I and II (IP)
W 9/29	Film: <i>The Matrix</i>
M 10/4	Grau, "Bad Dreams, Evil Demons, and the Experience Machine" (IP) and Review
W 10/6	EXAM I
	Philosophy of Mind
M 10/11	Fodor, "The Mind-Body Problem" (CAN)
W 10/13	Turing, "Computer Machinery and Intelligence" (IP)
M 10/18	Searle, <i>Minds, Brains, and Programs</i> (IP)
W 10/20	Nagel, "What is it Like to be a Bat?" (CAN)
	Philosophy of Religion
M 10/25	Aquinas, "Five Arguments for God's Existence" (IP)
W 10/27	Paley, "Natural Theology" (IP)
M 11/1	Hume, "Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion" *only read sections X and XI (IP)
W 11/3	Swinburne, "Why God Allows Evil" (CAN) and Review
M 11/8	EXAM II
	Free Will
W 11/10	Hume, "Of Liberty and Necessity" (IP)
M 11/15	Chisholm, "Human Freedom and the Self" (IP)
W 11/17	Fried, "Beyond Blame" (CAN)
	Ethics
M 11/22	Rachels, "Cultural Relativism" (CAN)
W 11/24	Mill, "Utilitarianism" (IP)
M 11/29	Singer, "Famine, Affluence, and Morality" (IP)
W 12/1	Kant, "Groundwork For the Metaphysics of Morals" (IP)
M 12/6	Aristotle, <i>Nichomachean Ethics</i> (IP)
W 12/8	Film: <i>Groundhog Day</i> and REVIEW

Final Exam: Wednesday, Dec. 15, 10:15-12:15