

Spring 2021  
Introduction to Philosophy  
Philosophy 100—03

**Professor:**

Charles Joshua Horn, Ph.D.

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Individual Office Hours: Tuesday, 10:00am—11:00am, Friday, 9:00am—10:00am; By Appointment  
<http://charlesjhorn.webstarts.com/index.html>

**Course Information:**

Asynchronous and Fully Online, Administered on Canvas

**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 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?

**Text:****Rental:**

1. *Introduction to Philosophy: Classical and Contemporary Readings, 8<sup>th</sup> Ed.*  
Oxford University Press  
ISBN: 978-0-19-069872-0

**Expectations:**

Students are expected to check into Canvas daily in order to check for class announcements, complete assignments, use the discussion board, etc. Please follow the checklist to best increase the chances for success in the class.

1. All assignments are set on a weekly schedule. Be sure to complete the reading assignment, quizzes, essays, and exams during the week specified on the course schedule.
2. In order to provide maximum flexibility to student schedules, all lectures have been pre-recorded and uploaded to Canvas. Please do not share these with anyone outside of the class. See the “Intellectual Property Notice” in the syllabus.
3. Take advantage of individual office hours. 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/RightsRespons/SRR-2010/rightsChap14.pdf>

**Grading Criteria:**

Late work will never be accepted unless an extension has been granted by Dr. Horn prior to the due date or a university approved excuse is given. Late work must be complete within one week of returning to the class. Extensions will only be granted in extreme circumstances. Additionally, this course will utilize the Canvas online system to facilitate certain aspects of the class.

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. 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. Assignments can be completed at any point during the week they are assigned (Sunday—Saturday).

- 1) ‘Getting Started’ Quiz: 5 Points Total (5 Points Each)
  - a) There will be a short quiz on material from the syllabus. Review the syllabus carefully and answer the questions.
- 2) Two Exams: 50 Points Total (25 Points Each)
  - a) Exams will be composed of 50 multiple-choice questions to be completed in 75 minutes. Exam I will cover Unit I and II. The Final Exam (Exam II) will cover Units III, IV, and V. Exams are open book/open note, but do not use the internet as a resource.
- 3) Fifteen Reading Quizzes 30 Points Total (2 Points Each)
  - 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!
- 4) Two Essays: 20 Points Total (10 Points Each)
  - a) There are four films on the syllabus: *The Dark Knight*, *Inception*, *The Life of Pi*, and *Ex Machina*. Students must write *one* essay answering the prompt associated with *The Dark Knight*, *Inception*, or *The Life of Pi*. Every student must also write an essay on *Ex Machina*. 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.
- 5) One “Philosophy at UWSP” Quiz 5 Points Total (5 Points Each)
  - a) There will be a short quiz on the advantages of studying philosophy at UWSP!

“Pass” Range			“Fail” Range	
(70—100 Points)			(<70 Points)	
“A” Range	“B” Range	“C” Range	“D” Range	“F” Range
	B+ (87—89)	C+ (77—79)	D+ (67—69)	F (<60)
A (94—100)	B (84—86)	C (74—76)	D (60—66)	
A- (90—93)	B- (80—83)	C- (70—73)		

**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/RightsRespons/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.

**Course Schedule:****Unit I: Basics of Philosophy****Week 1****(January 24—January 30)**

Syllabus/Course Introduction

What is Philosophy?

Hearts and Heads

Canvas

Living in a Vat

Canvas

The Problem of Evil

Canvas

Total Lack of Recall

Canvas

**Week 2****(January 31—February 6)**

Academic Holiday

Logical Toolkit

Pg. 8—13

Writing Philosophy Papers

Pg. 14—16

Essay Construction Handout

Tips for Writing

**Unit II: Ethics and Society****Week 3****(February 7—February 13)**

Q1 Herodotus, “Morality as Custom”

Canvas

Pojman, “Who’s To Judge?”

Canvas

Q2 Mortimer, “Morality is Based on God’s Commands”

Canvas

Arthur, “Why Morality Does Not Depend on God’s Commands”

Canvas

**Week 4****(February 14—February 20)**

Q3 Bentham, “The Principle of Utility”

Pg. 528—531

Mill, “Utilitarianism”

Pg. 532—548

Q4 Williams, “Utilitarianism and Integrity”

Pg. 559—567

Nozick, “The Experience Machine”

Canvas

**Week 5****(February 21—February 27)**

Q5 Kant, “Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals”

Pg. 583—599

**Week 6****(February 28—March 6)**

Q6 Aristotle, “Nicomachean Ethics”

Pg. 607—622

Q7 Nietzsche, “Excerpts from Beyond Good and Evil”

Canvas

**Week 7****(March 7—March 13)**

Q8 “The Prisoner’s Dilemma”

Pg. 846

“The Trolley Problem”

Pg. 851—852

Film: *The Dark Knight**The Dark Knight* Essay Due**Week 8****(March 14—March 20)**

Exam I (On Units I—II)

**Week 9****(March 21—March 27)**

Spring Break

**Unit III: Knowledge and Reality**

<b>Week 10</b>	<b>(March 28—April 3)</b>	
	Q9	Plato, “Allegory of the Cave” Pg. 165—169
	Q10	Descartes, “Meditations on First Philosophy (1 and 2)” Pg. 170—175
	Q11	Hume, “Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding” Pg. 222—248

<b>Week 11</b>	<b>(April 4—April 10)</b>
	Film: <i>Inception</i>
	<i>Inception</i> Essay Due

**Unit IV: God and Evil**

<b>Week 12</b>	<b>(April 11—April 17)</b>	
	Q12	Anselm, “The Ontological Argument” Pg. 40—42
	Q13	Aquinas, “The Existence of God” Pg. 42—44
	Q14	Hume, “Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion” Pg. 54—88
		Hume, “Of Miracles” Canvas

<b>Week 13</b>	<b>(April 18—April 24)</b>	
	Q15	Leibniz, “God, Evil, and the Best of All Possible Worlds” Pg. 89—91
		Film: <i>Life of Pi</i>
		<i>Life of Pi</i> Essay Due

**Unit V: Minds, Brains, and Identity**

<b>Week 14</b>	<b>(April 25—May 1)</b>	
	Q16	Descartes, “Meditations on First Philosophy (6)” Pg. 187—193
	Q17	Jackson, “What Mary Didn’t Know” Pg. 303—306

<b>Week 15</b>	<b>(May 2—May 8)</b>	
	Q18	Turing, “Computing Machinery and Intelligence” Pg. 322—335
	Q19	Searle, “Minds, Brains, and Programs” Pg. 335—348

<b>Week 16</b>	<b>(May 9—May 15)</b>	
	Q20	Dennett, “Where am I?” Pg. 406—414
		Film: <i>Ex Machina</i>
		<i>Ex Machina</i> Essay Due

<b>Week 17</b>	<b>(May 16—May 22)</b>
	Final Exam (Exam II on Units III—V)
	“Philosophy at UWSP” Quiz
	Course Evaluations