

**Introduction to Philosophy (PHIL 1000-910)**  
**Summer 2022: 5.23.22-6.29.22**

**Instructor: Matthew Solomon**

Meeting Place: Zoom link

Meeting Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 5:15-9:05 PM

Email: somatt@sas.upenn.edu

**Office Hours:**

Location: Zoom Link (no in-person office-hours)

Time: TBD (and by appointment)

**Class Description:**

This course is a brief introduction to the academic field of philosophy and its central questions. Philosophy is often described as being more about its methods and analysis than being about certain topics, and for this reason philosophy is a diverse and ever-expanding field. In this course we will explore some of the diversity of this field, from Ancient Greek and Chinese Philosophy to Africana and Feminist Philosophy. Nonetheless, a loose theme of the class is “Understanding Humans and the Good Life.” As we survey, if you aren’t into a certain topic, that’s fine – there is something for everyone in philosophy, and one goal of this course is to exemplify this. Moreover, it is important to me that this class includes people and topics that are often left out of philosophy classes in general and introductory classes in specific.

Here is a rundown of the topics:

*Class 1: Logic and the Areas of Philosophy*

*Classes 2-3: Ancient Greek Philosophy*

*Class 4: Classical Chinese Philosophy*

*Class 5: Early Modern Philosophy*

*Class 6: Ethics & Bioethics*

*Class 7: Feminist Philosophy*

*Class 8: Philosophy of Race*

*Class 9: Africana Philosophy*

*Class 10: Indigenous Philosophy*

*Class 11: Philosophy of Mind*

**Important Dates:**

**May 27th:** Write Anything Due 10:00PM

**June 3rd:** Argument Reconstruction Due 10:00PM

**June 17th:** Grades Returned (Argument Reconstruction)

**June 29th:** Term Paper Due 10:00PM

**Course Requirements and Grading:**

**In Class Quizzes:** 35%

These are quizzes that occur each class period that will be done online for 15 minutes during class. There are 10 quizzes, but the lowest 3 will be dropped. Thus, each quiz is 5%. Quizzes are about the assigned reading for the day, except for the first quiz, which is over logic that we learn in class in addition to the readings.

**Write-Anything:** Required, but not graded.

Write and submit ~2 pages about literally anything. It has to be your original writing for this assignment.

**Argument Reconstruction:** 25%

Argument options will be given, and you will choose one.

**Term Paper:** 40%

Paper topics will be given, and you will choose one.

**Readings will all be available on Canvas. There is no required text that is not free and provided!**

### **Email:**

Please make the emails that you send me something I can answer with a yes or no. This is because it is nearly impossible to have a good philosophical conversation by email. Nonetheless, I would love to have longer philosophical discussions with you or talk about the course ~~in person~~ or on Zoom. In addition, please allow 24 hours for me to respond to any given email.

### **Feedback:**

\_\_\_\_\_ I want to be a good teacher, and you all can help me improve. You can give me personal feedback, fill out an anonymous feedback form I make, and thoroughly fill out the end-of-semester course evaluation.

### **Grading and Appeals:**

Please give me two weeks to return any assignment - I want to take time to grade well. That being said, I can make mistakes. If you think I have made a grading mistake and would like to appeal for a grade revision, please email me a paragraph explaining the situation. I will then contact you and work with you through the appeal process.

### **Office Hours:**

I hold office hours on Zoom from TBD every TBD. Office hours are a great way to discuss the class and its content. If this time does not work for you, please email me and I will gladly set up another time to meet with you. While I do want to help you succeed in the class, I do not read drafts of papers. Reading drafts is not very helpful for you. Instead, we can talk about the content of the paper in office hours. During such a meeting I will also read up to one paragraph if you have a writing question.

### **Resources:**

College life can be hard. Thankfully, the University has numerous people ready and willing to help support you throughout your academic career. As your instructor, I am a resource for this class, but I am quite limited in my ability to help in other areas. If there is any sort of accommodation you might need, please let me know. However, for the sake of getting better support for more of life's challenges, please note these useful campus resources:

1. **Student Disability Services (SDS):** If you have any disability that may hinder learning here at UPenn, SDS is there to help.
2. **The Tutoring Center:** If you would like a professional UPenn tutor to help you in any subject or class, The Tutoring Center can match you with a tutor.
3. **Advisors:** If you need guidance in your academic career at UPenn, numerous advisors are there to help.

4. **Mark's Family Writing Center:** Writing well is difficult. The Writing Center can help you learn how to write better by helping examine your drafts and giving advice. If English is not your first language or on par with your first language I further encourage you to visit the Writing Center for your papers.
5. **Weingarten Learning Resources Center:** If you find yourself struggling in time management or reading/studying skills, Weingarten is there to help.
6. **Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS):** Studying is hard enough without the non-academic struggles in life. CAPS can help in many ways, and the issue need not be severe before visiting CAPS.

Please note that this syllabus is subject to change. Any changes or additions to the will be announced in Class and/or on Canvas.

### Class Schedule

Week #	Date	Reading/Topic	Assignments
1	May 24	Topic 1: Syllabus and Introduction to Philosophy  Topic 2: Fundamentals of Logic  Topic 3: Argument Reconstructions	
	May 26	Topic 1: A Quick Introduction to Ancient Western Philosophy  Topic 2: Euthydemus - Bad Arguments and the Good Life Reading: Primer on the Euthydemus Reading: Euthydemus (Beg-283a1)  Topic 3: Topic 1: Euthydemus - Relativism and the Project of Philosophy Reading: (283a1-288b1 ; 304c5-end)	Quiz 1
	May 27	<b>***NO CLASS***</b>	<b>WRITE ANYTHING DUE 10:00 PM</b>
2	May 31	Topic 1: Plato, <i>Republic</i> Book I, excerpts	

		<p>from Book II - Justice, Goodness, and the Ring of Gyges</p> <p>Topic 2: Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> Book I (excerpts)</p> <p>Topic 3: The Ring of Gyges and the Good Life</p>	Quiz 2
	June 2	<p>Topic 1: A Quick Introduction to Classical Chinese Philosophy</p> <p>Topic 2: Kongzi, excerpts</p> <p>Topic 3: Mozi, excerpts</p>	Quiz 3
	June 3	<b>***NO CLASS***</b>	<b>ARGUMENT RECONSTRUCTION DUE 10:00 PM</b>
3	June 7	<p>Topic 1: A Quick Introduction to Early Modern Western Philosophy</p> <p>Topic 2: Descartes, "Meditations", excerpts</p> <p>Topic 3: Early Modern Reading: Princess Elizabeth, "Correspondences with Descartes", excerpts</p>	Quiz 4
	June 9	<p>Topic 1: A Quick Introduction to Ethics</p> <p>Topic 2: Norcross, "Great Harms from Small Benefits Grow: How Death Can Be Outweighed by Headaches"</p> <p>Topic 3: Topic 2: Reading: J. David Velleman, "Against the Right to Die"</p>	Quiz 5
4	June 14	<p>Topic 1: Paper Writing</p> <p>Topic 2: A Quick Introduction to Feminist Philosophy</p> <p>Topic 3: Haslanger, "Gender and race:</p>	Quiz 6

		(what) are they? (What) do we want them to be?"	
	June 16	Topic 1: A Quick Introduction to the Philosophy of Race  Topic 2: Tommie Shelby, "Is Racism in the "Heart"?"  Topic 3: Racisms and Racialisms	Quiz 7
	June 17	<b>***NO CLASS***</b>	Grades Returned
5	June 21	Topic 1: A Quick Introduction to Africana Philosophy  Topic 2: Charles Mills "Non-Cartesian Sums: Philosophy and the African-American Experience"  Topic 3: bell hooks, "Black Women: Shaping Feminist Theory" in <i>Feminist Theory: from margin to center</i>	Quiz 8
	June 23	Topic 1: A Quick Introduction to Indigenous Philosophy  Topic 2: V.F. Cordova, "Ethics: The We and the I"  Topic 3: Laurie Anne Whitt, "Biocolonialism and the Commodification of Knowledge"	Quiz 9
6	June 28	Topic 1: A Quick Introduction to the Philosophy of Mind  Topic 2: Chalmers, "The Hard Problem of Consciousness"	Quiz 10
	June 29th	<b>***NO CLASS***</b>	<b>TERM PAPER DUE 10:00 PM</b>