Course Syllabus for Philosophy 1-54740 - Sp 2021

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| **Semester/Year: Sp 2021**  **Units: 3** | **Instructor** : Dr. Chris Curry  **Office Hours:** TBA  **Office Location:** TBA  **Phone number:**  **Email** : [chris.curry@cloviscollege.edu](mailto:chris.curry@cloviscollege.edu) |
| **Length:**  16 weeks (Jan. 11 - May 21)  **Finals Week**:. May 17 - 21  **Schedule: TBA**  **Time**: TBA |  |

**Textbook**: Louis Pojman. Philosophy: The Pursuit of Wisdom. Fifth Edition. 2006.

**Course Description from the Catalogue:**

This course introduces students to traditional and contemporary views in metaphysics, epistemology, and value- theory. Topics may include the sources and limits of knowledge, the nature of reality, the relationship between mind and body, free will and determinism, the existence of God, and the nature of morally right action. Readings will include selections drawn from the primary texts of Plato, Aristotle, Aquinas, Descartes, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, or Kant, as well as various twentieth century philosophers. (A, CSU-GE, UC, I) (C-ID PHIL 100)

**Introductory Comment on the Course:**

**Philosophy** comes from the Greek words: philo (love) and sophia (wisdom), hence philosophy “love of wisdom.” Plato and the Classical Realist Tradition interpret a truly wise person to be the person who has an understanding of “the ultimate explanatory principle(s)” of all existence, meaning, and value. So, if we truly love wisdom, we will want to know the ultimate explanatory principle(s). (The study of the meaning of wisdom is called Sophiology). There are four major areas of Philosophy: Ontology (the science of the existence or reality), Epistemology (the science of knowledge), Axiology (the science of values such as truth, goodness, and beauty), and Logic (the science of correct thinking) (See pp. 6-7 in Pojman.) Plato teaches that Philosophy begins with **wonder**, which is to feel a sort of awe about existence combined with a desire to really know why there is existence (i.e., why anything exists at all) — to know “the ultimate explanation” of existence and all that is involved in existence. We are drawn to Philosophy by wondering about existence along with the Great Questions, the Great Philosophy, and the Great Explanations — since all of these pertain to existence in some way. Philosophy, more than any other discipline/science, asks the deepest, most ultimate questions about reality in general and human nature in particular. Most Philosophical topics are controversial but are all worthy of critical investigation. The study of Philosophy also involves training the mind to give good reasons for one’s own position on the Great Topics in Philosophy.

**Student Learning Objectives**

Students should acquire the skills for how to think critically about issues pertaining to Philosophy. This would include the following.

The ability to recognize good and bad arguments.

The ability to construct good arguments.

The ability to recognize the presuppositions and implications of all the theories and positions covered.

A familiarity with a wide range of philosophical theories and standards that are used in Philosophy for the purpose of constructing rationally and morally justifiable viewpoints and positions.

A familiarity with a wide range of issues in philosophy generally.

A familiarity with a wide range of issues in philosophy specifically that are dealt with uniquely.

**Course Schedule**

* **Week 1 Jan 11.**

Introductory Issues. The Role of Logical Thinking in Philosophy. Some Logical Issues relevant to recognizing and constructing good arguments in the field of Modern Philosophy. Why is rationality better than irrationality? The Correspondence Theory vs. the Relativist Theory.

**Read Part I ch.2**. — **This Logic section is crucial for getting a good grade in this course!!**

* **Week 2 Jan. 18.**

Some historical Background for Modern Philosophy.

**Read Part I ch. 1**

* **Week 3 Jan 25.**

Brief bio’s and theories of the first philosophers. Philosophy was first developed in Greece, so the first philosophers are Greek. **Read Part I ch. 3**.

* **Week 4 Feb. 1.**

Cont. with bio’s and theories of the first philosophers. **Read part I ch.4.**

* **Week 5 Feb 8.**

Theory of Knowledge.  **Read Part II ch.12.**

What can we know? What is the range of knowledge and reason?

* **Week 6 Feb. 15.**

Continue Theory of Knowledge.

Skepticism **Read part III ch.13.**

Perception. Can we have direct knowledge of the external world? **Read part III ch.14**

The anti-realism vs. realism debate.

**Week 7 Feb. 22.**

Human nature and the self.

The mind-body problem. **Read part IV ch. 15**

Materialism. **Read part IV ch.16**

Is there a self? **Read part IV ch.18**

**Week 8 March 1.**

Cont. Human Nature and the self.

The Mortalism vs. Immortalism debate. **Read part IV ch. 19.**

**Week 9 March 8.**  \*\* REVIEW \*\*\*\*\*\* **FIRST EXAM.** \*\*\*\*\*\*

Ethics.  
The ethical relativist vs. ethical objectivist debate. **Read part VI ch.23,24.**

Virtue Ethics. **Read Part VI ch.28**

**Week 10 March 15.**

The Determinism vs. Free Will debate.

Determinism. **Read part V ch. 20**

Determinism. **Read part V ch. 21.**

**Week 11 March. 22.**

Cont. with the Determinism vs. Free Will debate.

Compatibilism. **Read Part V ch.22.**

Natural Freedom and how acquired freedom and circumstantial freedom are parts of Natural Freedom.

The Absolute freedom theory of JP Sartre.

**Week 12 March 29.**

Metaphysics.

The relevance of the Religion question. **Read part II ch. 5.**

The role of God in Philosophy. The Teleological and experiential arguments. **Read part II ch.7,9.**

**Week 13 April 5.**

Cont. Metaphysics.

Cont. The role of God in philosophy. Cosmological and Ontological arguments. **Read part II ch. 6,8.**

**Week 14 April 12.**

Cont. Metaphysics.

Cont. The Role of God in Philosophy.

The problem of evil. **Read part II ch. 10**

Faith and Reason. **Read part II ch. 11** and **part IV ch.29.**

**Week 15 April 19.**

The Meaning of Life.

Psychological Existentialism. **Read part VII ch.30.**

Fear of death. **Read part VII ch. 31.**

The self-inclosure vs. the self-transcendence debate.

**Week 16 April 26**

Review.

**Final exam.**

**COURSE MECHANICS.**

This class requires a Midterm, a Final, and a term paper.

Your participation is acquired through Zoom attendance and Participation Question Assignment submissions.

Midterm = 30 points

Final = 30 points

Term Paper = 20 points

PQA = 15 points

Zoom = 5 points

For a total of 100 points.

Grading policies: As a rule, there will be no make-up tests.

To earn a grade in the “ A” range, the student must score an average of at least 90% on the exams, assignments, and participation. This will show that the student has a very good and demonstrable understanding of the implications and presuppositions involved in each of the theories and positions that we cover and is able to critically evaluate them correctly. **To do this, one must adhere to the 7 standards as listed below.**

To earn a grade in the “B” range, the student must score an average of at least 80%.

To earn a grade in the “C” range, the student must score an average of at least 70 %.

To earn a grade in the D range, the student must score an average of at least 60 %.

**The 7 grading standards will be the logical standards of clarity, precision, logical correctness, completeness, conciseness, relevance, and accuracy.**

**DISCLAIMER:**

All readings, assignments, test dates, due dates for papers, and Zoom dates are subject to change during the semester at the discretion of the professor.

**ZOOM MEETINGS:**

The tentative plan is to have Zoom meetings every other week. I will send out an email concerning scheduling the first Zoom meeting.

**Course/classroom policies**

All course discussion, reading assignments, other assignments, and test dates are approximate and subject to change during the semester at the discretion of the professor.

Students are expected to attend all class sessions and bring their relevant notes and textbook with them for the purpose of review and discussion. If the student misses more than three sessions, he/she should contact the professor. Too many absences always leads to a lower, or even failing, grade. Each student is an important part of the university community and an important part of the class room community. So the student should not engage in any annoying behaviors that would cause him/her to break himself/herself off from these communities. We are all expected to show respect to one another.

**Please** avoid all unnecessary private conversations during the class sessions because this is considered to be rude, annoying, and insulting to the professor and to fellow students.

The student should also be familiar with the university standards and academic integrity standards as stated in the undergraduate catalogue, since the student will be held to these standards. Any form of cheating will result, at minimum, in an “F” for the exam/project in question, and possibly expulsion.

**University policy summaries**

**UNIVERSITY POLICY SUMMARIES**

For complete policy details check the current Academic Catalog.

**Attendance Policy**

The university expects regular class attendance by all students. Those students who will be absent for an extended period of time should contact their program director or advisor who will discuss the options available, such as a leave of absence. Students may view their attendance records on CampusCruiser.

**Registration**

Only individuals who are registered may attend classes. Non-registered students may not turn in assignments, take tests or receive grades.

**Course Drop Policy**

Refunds and grades for dropped courses are based on the last day of attendance. Each week the refund amount decreases. Students who do not attend at least one class during the first week of a course will be administratively dropped from the course by the Registrar’s Office. After the first week of class, failure to drop courses in a timely manner will result in failed grades and financial responsibility for payment.

**Academic Honesty/Integrity**

Everyone who participates in the educational process at FPU is expected to pursue honesty and integrity in all aspects of their academic work. Cases of academic dishonesty are first handled between instructors and students. Depending upon the severity of the case, consequences may range from partial credit after work is redone to expulsion from the university. As in all situations where a member of the university violates the behavioral and academic expectations of the community, opportunity for restoration and restitution will be extended to those willing to work to correct the situation and reconcile with the university community

**Behavioral Standards**

Student behaviors disruptive to the educational process may result in the student being dismissed from a class or a program.

**Sexual Harassment Policy**

Harassment of a student or an employee of the University by other students, employees, supervisors, or agents of Fresno Pacific University will not be tolerated. All reports of harassment will be taken seriously, promptly investigated and addressed by FPU in accordance with university policies and procedures.

**Responsible Use of Technology**

The use of campus computing resources at Fresno Pacific University is a privilege, not a right. Violations of university guidelines on computer use will result in disciplinary action, which may include any of the following: warnings, loss of computer privileges, suspension, or legal prosecution.

**Disability**

Students with disabilities are eligible for reasonable accommodations in their academic work in all classes. In order to receive assistance, the student with a disability must provide the Academic Support Center with documentation which describes the specific disability. The documentation must be from a qualified professional in the area of the disability (i.e. psychologist, physician or educational diagnostician). Students with disabilities should contact the Academic Support Center to discuss academic and other needs as soon as they are diagnosed with a disability. Once documentation is on file, arrangements for reasonable accommodations can be made.

**Incompletes**

Incomplete grades are to be issued only in the case of absence from classes due to unexpected and unavoidable circumstances, such as illness, accident or death in the immediate family, which have made it impossible for the student to complete all course requirements as scheduled. A grade of incomplete is not to be issued for unsatisfactory work or failure to submit work through negligence. Student must submit the appropriate form, available online from Registrar’s Office.

**Satisfactory Academic Progress**

Students are expected to make satisfactory progress toward completion of their program by maintaining a cumulative grade-point average of 2.0 or higher for associate/baccalaureate students, 3.0 or higher for graduate students and 2.5 or 3.0 (for seminary students, depending on the program). Cumulative grade-point average is based on FPU coursework only.

**Student and Faculty Dispute Resolution**

Occasionally a student may find cause to question the action of a professor regarding requirements of a course, teaching effectiveness, comments made in a class that seem derogatory or inflammatory, criticism of the student, general performance or sanctions given for academic dishonesty. Students should first discuss their concerns with the instructor. If the student and faculty member cannot resolve the issue satisfactorily or if the student does not feel comfortable speaking directly with the instructor the student should consult with the chair of the division in which the course is lodged, who will attempt to resolve the issue. Decisions may be appealed to the dean of the appropriate school for a final resolution.

**Right to Petition**

Request for exception to academic policies may be made when there are extenuating circumstances such as a serious medical condition, a death in the immediate family or other traumatic, unforeseen events. Students should complete a petition form, along with the nonrefundable fee, and submit it to the Registrar’s Office. Petitions will be forwarded to the appropriate academic official or committee for consideration and decision.

**Privacy**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords students certain rights with respect to their education records. Check the university website for details.