

Teaching Portfolio

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Contents

I. Teaching Statement	2
II. Teaching Experience and Courses Prepared to Teach	4
III. Quantitative and Qualitative Feedback on My Teaching.....	5
IV. Other Experiences Related to Teaching	10
V. Sample Syllabi	11

I. Teaching Statement

I love teaching philosophy. I want students to engage with philosophy in ways that reflect their concern for the topic and its role in their lives. I converse with and learn philosophy from and with my students. I love helping them progress with philosophical and logical skills. My approach to teaching reflects these motivations.

Helping students see that philosophy is important to their lives. I want my students to leave my courses with a sense of philosophy's importance to their lives. I often begin my classes by stressing that, insofar as philosophy is the critical evaluation of one's fundamental concepts and values, and since one's fundamental concepts and values inform everything one believes and does, philosophy is a way to become more fully oneself. It's the way to find and endorse certain beliefs and values as truly one's own.

To instill that very personal conception of philosophy, I use initial and final reflection papers where students respond to course questions at the semester's beginning and end. Students can see how learning philosophy has changed their beliefs and, more often, their reasons. This comparison helps them appreciate their intellectual growth.

I also try to encourage the thought in my students that philosophy can be done well by anyone and has been done well by people from all cultural and demographic backgrounds. It's easy, especially for beginning philosophy students, to think that philosophy is the exclusive domain of long-dead European men. I counteract this attitude through thoroughly diversified course content and visual representation of all the philosophers we study. Almost all my courses are multicultural: in Introduction to Philosophy I cover American Indian and African philosophy alongside Western philosophy; in Death and the Meaning of Life I include Advaita Vedanta Hinduism and Buddhism; in my logic courses I cover Ezumezu African logic; in ethics courses I include Confucianism. I constantly remind my students that philosophy is done by everyone—necessarily—and that every culture and place has done philosophy. I show students what the philosophers we are studying look like because visual representation matters. If students see that philosophy is something done by every conceivable culture and demographic, they will be more inclined to think philosophy is something they can be personally connected and invested in.

Putting conversation at the center of my classroom. Another aspect of philosophy that I try to stress is philosophy as a conversation. When conceived of as a conversation, students find philosophy more approachable and easier to engage with.

I make room for small group discussion so students can try out philosophical ideas in low-stakes contexts. I also begin class with icebreaker questions. These discussions are low-stakes, fun ways of getting conversation going. If students get to know each other by discussing their favorite songs and movies, they develop social bonds that allow them to more freely discuss the existence of God or the immortality of the soul later.

Helping my students develop their philosophical skills. A lot of what I've discussed above certainly helps my students hone various philosophical skills: skills having to do with philosophical

conversation and reflection. But I want to stress here some other methods I use to help them hone their critical thinking, analytical writing, and persuasive writing skills.

One fundamental philosophical skill is the ability to evaluate arguments. While I assign primary source readings, I also think it's important that students develop critical thinking skills with non-print media. There's considerable argumentation on YouTube, TikTok, television news, and other platforms, and I think it is increasingly important that we help our students develop their philosophical and logical skills in ways that apply to these media forms. To that extent, I assign philosophical YouTube videos, podcast episodes, and sometimes films, in addition to reading. This helps students develop logical and philosophical skills in useful ways while emphasizing how these skills apply to everyday life.

I've also developed scaffolded writing assignments that help students write persuasive, analytical papers. Starting with low-stakes summary-and-critique papers, students progress to mid-term papers adding response sections, then repeat the process with higher stakes in the second half. This structure provides ample opportunity to practice and improve the same skills while building confidence.

These motivations and practices mutually reinforce each other. Practicing philosophical conversation helps refine philosophical skills, seeing how philosophy personally affects oneself increases the quality and depth of conversation, and evaluating arguments across various media helps instill that students will employ these skills throughout everyday life. When these practices and goals are implemented together, I've been able, with indispensable aid from my wonderful students, to achieve a classroom of engaged and skilled participants in the great conversation that is philosophy.

II. Teaching Experience and Courses Prepared to Teach

As Instructor of Record:

I have taught the following courses as instructor of record at Ohio State University. Sample syllabi for several appear at the end of the portfolio, and I am prepared to continue teaching any of them.

- Philosophy of Science (Spring 2025)
- Introduction to Philosophy (Fall 2022, Spring 2024)
- Introduction to Logic (Summer 2024)
- Logic and Legal Reasoning (Fall 2023)
- Contemporary Social and Moral Problems (Summer 2025)
- Death and the Meaning of Life (2 sections in Fall 2025)
- Engineering Ethics (Summer 2022, Spring 2023, Summer 2023, and 2 sections in Spring 2026)
- Engineering Ethics for a Just and Diverse World (Fall 2024, Fall 2025, Spring 2026 and 3 sections forthcoming in Fall 2026)

Further courses I'm prepared to teach:

- Metaphysics
- Symbolic Logic
- History of Analytic Philosophy
- Professional Ethics

As Teaching Assistant:

- Introduction to Symbolic Logic (Fall 2020, Spring 2021, Spring 2022)
- Introduction to Philosophy (Fall 2021)
- Philosophical Problems in the Arts (Spring 2020)
- History of Ancient Philosophy (Fall 2019)
- Metaphysics (Spring 2019)
- Philosophy of Mind (Fall 2018)
- Introduction to Asian Religions (Fall 2017, Spring 2018)

III. Quantitative and Qualitative Feedback on My Teaching

Quantitative Feedback

The tables below include all the quantitative feedback, gathered from Ohio State's anonymized student survey system, regarding my performance as an instructor.

The numbered columns in the table correspond to ten survey prompts. For each prompt, students are asked to report their agreement on a five-point scale (with higher points indicating higher agreement). These are the ten prompts:

1. The subject matter of this course was well-organized.
2. This course was intellectually stimulating.
3. This instructor was genuinely interested in teaching.
4. The instructor encouraged students to think for themselves.
5. The instructor was well prepared.
6. The instructor was genuinely interested in helping students.
7. I learned a great deal from this instructor.
8. The instructor created an atmosphere conducive to learning.
9. The instructor communicated the subject matter clearly.
10. Overall, I would rate this instructor as... (1 = poor, 2 = fair, 3 = neutral, 4 = good, 5 = excellent)

The column indicating "Comparison Group Mean" represents the mean score for similar classes, based on class size and other course characteristics at Ohio State.

Here is the table for the courses for which I was the primary instructor (Summer 2022 to Summer 2025). Each of the three occurrences of Engineering Ethics was taught asynchronously online.

Course	Resp.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Comp.
Eng. Ethics (SU 22)	68%	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.5	4.6	4.4	4.6	4.5	4.7	4.39
Intro Phil. (AU 22)	84%	4.5	4.7	4.9	4.8	4.6	4.8	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.40
Eng. Ethics (SP 23)	50%	4.6	4.3	4.5	4.6	4.5	4.4	4.4	4.5	4.5	4.7	4.41
Eng. Ethics (SU 23)	21%	4.3	4.3	4.0	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.0	4.1	4.0	4.3	4.43
Logic & Legal (AU 23)	48%	4.8	4.7	4.9	4.7	4.4	4.8	4.8	4.9	4.9	4.8	4.39
Intro Phil. (SP 24)	50%	4.2	4.5	4.7	4.5	4.3	4.6	4.3	4.5	4.3	4.8	4.41
Intro Logic (SU 24)	79%	4.6	4.6	4.9	4.8	4.6	4.9	4.6	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.49
Eng. Ethics JEDW (AU 24)	18%	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	4.9	5.0	5.0	4.39
Phil. of Sci. (SP 25)	76%	4.6	4.6	4.9	4.8	4.6	4.9	4.6	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.42
Contemp. Problems (SU 25)	33%	5.0	5.0	5.0	4.7	4.7	4.7	5.0	5.0	4.7	4.7	4.34

Beginning in Autumn 2025, the University replaced its evaluation instrument. The results below use the current instrument, whose seven prompts differ from those above; scores remain on a five-point scale (5 = strongly agree).

Under the current instrument, students respond to the following seven prompts:

1. Available to answer questions / provide help
2. Provided constructive feedback that helped me learn
3. Used teaching methods that encouraged my learning
4. Course design/instruction helped me actively engage
5. Demonstrated genuine interest in teaching
6. I felt welcomed in the course
7. Created an environment that valued diverse perspectives

Results by course (Autumn 2025 – Spring 2026):

Course	Term	Mode	Resp.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8–10
Eng. Ethics (JEDW)	Sp 2026	In-person	83%	4.75	4.75	4.67	4.46	4.92	4.92	4.92	100%
Engineering Ethics	Sp 2026	Online	29%	4.30	4.11	3.80	3.90	4.20	4.20	4.22	60%
Engineering Ethics	Sp 2026	Online	17%	4.14	4.00	4.29	4.29	4.29	4.29	4.43	100%
Eng. Ethics (JEDW)	Au 2025	In-person	76%	4.76	4.47	4.74	4.44	4.91	4.74	4.82	91%
Death & Meaning of Life	Au 2025	In-person	91%	4.85	4.60	4.85	4.78	4.98	4.88	4.90	96%
Death & Meaning of Life	Au 2025	In-person	79%	4.76	4.41	4.71	4.65	4.91	4.68	4.82	97%

Columns 1–7 report mean agreement for each prompt above. “8–10” reports the share of respondents rating overall teaching effectiveness 8, 9, or 10 out of 10 (a question required of all public institutions in Ohio). Sections marked “Online” were taught asynchronously.

Qualitative Feedback

Ohio State's anonymized student survey system invites students to submit comments. Below, I have included some of these comments from the courses I have taught. The reports from which these comments are taken are available upon request.

I've organized the comments into groups by theme. Each group concerns an aspect of my teaching that has been noticed by multiple students across my courses.

Communicating complex ideas:

- "Jason was a very good teacher, he communicated complex ideas to the best of his ability and was an engaging and entertaining instructor. I enjoyed going to class!"
- "I really enjoyed this course. I appreciated Jason's attitude toward teaching serious topics such as religion and death. Jason was very good at explaining ancient arguments with language we would better understand and using relatable examples."
- "Super fun guy who is really easy to talk to. Tells you exactly what you need to know and how to think about it without bogging you down with unnecessary details. Class is always a fun time and Jason always finds a way to communicate the material."
- "This class overall was well thought out and we discussed many different interesting topics. It was very easy to participate in class. He did a great job of explaining hard topics and was very good at answering all of our questions."
- "One my favorite classes I've taken so far. Class was very engaging and interesting. I never found a class confusing or too difficult to grasp, as topics were explained really well. Thank you for such a great class – I'm considering a philosophy minor now!"
- "Jason explained the material in plain words that helped make the ethical theories understandable."
- "Everything was explained very clearly, and despite being recorded lectures it very efficiently encouraged viewers to think about the depth of the content."

Providing students with a welcoming learning environment:

- "This guy was clearly passionate about what he was teaching and did a good job of fostering relationships with his students throughout the entire course."
- "I loved professor DeWitt. You can tell that he really cares about philosophy and about his students. He made an effort to learn all of our names even though it was a pretty big class and he always remembered things that we had mentioned about our lives which was really nice. His assignments were always intellectually stimulating and I thought the instructions were very clear and easy to understand. I really enjoyed his class, he's a great lecturer. He is easily distracted at times but sometimes the distractedness would lead to the best conversations. The class atmosphere was very relaxed and I felt like he really cared about what we thought as a class."
- "You did very well and got me more interested in learning philosophy to the point that I would like to minor in it. This course was very encouraging and engaging."

- “I think this course was very engaging and that it was organized very well. He did a great job at trying to get everyone involved in the class and invested in both what he was teaching and their work.”
- “I really enjoyed this class, and Jason did a phenomenal job teaching it. One of the best if not the best grad student lecturers I have had. Was very good at engaging the entire class, took care to learn everyone’s names early on, encouraged small group and class discussion during every class period. I especially like that questions were welcome no matter how irrelevant, and taken serious to be responded to not with personal opinion, but within the context of what we were learning that day. I really enjoyed this class overall!”
- “Good engaged professor who actively participated in class and engaged students on a day-to-day basis.”
- “Group discussions helped me to participate without feeling too nervous. I was able to get different perspectives and evolve my outlook”

Helping students think through their own beliefs:

- “Having Jason as a professor was a bright spot in my week. He is my favorite professor and I always was ready to participate in class as the material was always interesting. His teaching and the class have changed my outlook on life and I am considering a philosophy minor because of professor Jason.”
- “I really enjoyed how this course is structured and how the instructor encourages his students to think about and absorb any of the new topics he is introducing. His way of teaching has allowed me to re-evaluate my beliefs and view of certain topics.”
- “Amazing professor! I was originally in another class (history), but I’m so glad I made the choice to take this one instead! Really opened up my eyes and I was interested in everything that was taught.”
- “[The] course truly did encourage diverse philosophical perspectives. Did not feel judged for having an opinion which differed from others.”

Helping students produce philosophy via crafted assignments and feedback:

- “Jason made philosophy very interesting to me. I loved the way he conducted his classes, and the essays I had to do were not a hassle but rather fun.”
- “Throughout the entire semester, Jason has served as a great teacher. The way he organized the course, in my opinion, is a perfect way to start learning about philosophy. He covered a large variety of topics without sacrificing any details or chance to give the subjects thought. I thought the prompts for all of the papers were engaging and enjoyed the fact that he always gave us options.”
- “I loved this professor and class. I was able to both learn a lot and remain interested in the material and I know a lot of the other students feel the same. Was super grateful he was willing to go over papers and give actual good feedback.”

- "The short response assignments each week... make me use the things we learned about in class to apply it and solidify it into memory."

Additional positive feedback:

- "This was the best professor I have had in my college career."
- "I honestly believe that Jason was one of the best instructors that I have had in college so far."
- "Best instructor I have ever had."
- "This professor took proactive steps to ensure students had these opportunities. Extremely engaging."
- "Jason was a fantastic instructor. I appreciate that he had a holistic approach to teaching and philosophy as a whole. We frequently chatted in small groups which promoted an inclusive learning atmosphere and improved everyone's comfortability in the class. He took the time to get to know each person individually, which made you feel like you belonged in that classroom. Jason also taught several focuses within philosophy rather than just one without jeopardizing the depth at which we learned. He also had us fill out notecards that he would use to review topics and answer any questions. I can tell Jason will be an excellent professor... will continue to be a great instructor. You'd think he has been teaching for 10+ years."

Excerpt from a Student Email:

- "This class started out as just a class I needed to take for the credit, but it ended up being so much more... you somehow made me excited to sit in a philosophy class and see what you were going to teach us each day. I've never had a professor do that for me before." — student, Death and the Meaning of Life, AU25

IV. Other Experiences Related to Teaching

Beyond my own courses, I've actively pursued training and opportunities that shape how I teach. I briefly describe those experiences here.

American Association of Philosophy Teachers' 2024 Seminar on Teaching and Learning: I participated in the American Association of Philosophy Teachers' 2024 seminar on Teaching and Learning in philosophy. It was an incredible experience where I got to meet and learn from people who are as passionate about improving their teaching as I am. The three-day seminar was centered around backwards course design: we began with Fink's taxonomy of significant learning outcomes, then practiced planning and running active learning activities, and finally discussed what makes for good assessment. The seminar helped me grow tremendously as a teacher.

Graduate course on Teaching Philosophy: In the fourth year of my PhD program, I took a course on teaching philosophy with Tristram McPherson. In this course, I learned about student engagement strategies, active learning activities, inclusive pedagogy, student metacognition, and lesson planning. I practiced these skills (and others) at the end of the course by teaching a lesson on the epistemology of mathematics to the wonderful high schoolers in the IB Theory of Knowledge course at Columbus Alternative High School.

Departmental workshops: Over the years at OSU, I've participated in a variety of departmental workshops and panels intended to improve pedagogical skills. I've participated in workshops on "Using Backwards Design Principles to Create DEIJA Philosophy Courses," the "Basics of Effective Design for Asynchronous Online Courses," "Design Choices for Engineering Ethics," "Designing Assignments Worth Grading," the "Basics of Lesson Planning," "Active Learning in Discussion-Based Classes," "Writing in the Philosophy Classroom," "Syllabi," "Assignment Design," and a faculty panel on engineering ethics. I've also co-led our department workshop on lesson planning.

V. Sample Syllabi

The following pages present sample syllabi for courses I've taught previously or am prepared to teach.

PHIL 2650: INTRODUCTION TO THE PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE

Spring 2025
The Ohio State University

Instructor	Jason DeWitt
Office	337e University Hall
Contact	dewitt.197@osu.edu
Office Hours	Tuesdays 1-3PM and by appt.
Class Time	TuTh 9:35 - 10:55AM
Class Location	Lazenby Hall 001

Description Welcome! I'm very excited to do some philosophy with you all!

This course is an introduction to the philosophy of science. Philosophy of science has been around as long as philosophy and science have been around. We'll learn a little bit about the rich history of philosophy of science in this course. But our primary focus will be to introduce ourselves to the issues and debates within contemporary philosophy of science.

To that end, we will begin with what philosophers call the "puzzle of induction," before moving on to consider the question: "what is science?" This question of what science *is* is called the "demarcation problem" since answers to it propose to separate science from other things (like pseudoscience or non-scientific forms of inquiry). We'll then discuss scientific revolutions before turning to the famous debate between scientific realists and scientific anti-realists. This debate concerns whether we should believe that our best scientific theories are true (or close to true), or instead think those theories are just useful tools. We'll then think about the values people use in science, including the political and social values that influence science. We'll finish the course by discussing these questions: (i) can all the sciences can be unified with physics "at the bottom"? (ii) what makes for a good explanation? (iii) what is a law of nature? and (iv) why is mathematics so effective in science?

By the end of this course, students should be able to critically think, question, discuss, and write about the nature and methods of science.

General Education Information The Curriculum Committee of the College of Arts & Sciences requests that syllabi of all GE courses list the goals and learning objectives for the relevant category of the GEC.

The goals of the *Number, Nature, and Mind GE Theme* are:

1. Successful students will analyze the nature of mathematics and/or mathematical reasoning at a more advanced and in-depth level than in the Foundations component.
2. Successful students will integrate approaches to number, nature, and mind by making connections to their own experience of mathematical thinking and its application in the world, and by making connections to work they have done in previous classes and/or anticipate doing in the future.

3. Successful students will experience and examine mathematics as an abstract formal system accessible to mental manipulation and/or mathematics as a tool for describing and understanding the natural world.

Expected Learning Outcomes: Successful students are able to...

- Engage in critical and logical thinking about the nature and/or application of mathematical reasoning.
- Engage in an advanced, in-depth, scholarly exploration of the philosophical and/or cognitive foundations of mathematics and/or the application of mathematics in understanding the natural world.
- Identify, describe, and synthesize approaches to or experiences of the role of mathematics and mathematical reasoning in different academic and non-academic contexts.
- Demonstrate a developing sense of self as a learner through reflection, self-assessment, and creative work, building on prior experiences to respond to new and challenging contexts.
- Analyze and describe how mathematics functions as an idealized system that enables logical proof and/or as a tool for describing and understanding the natural world.

Class Conduct This class will be heavily discussion based. And we will sometimes discuss very sensitive political, moral, and religious topics. So even if we disagree with someone else, we must voice that disagreement in a respectful manner and treat all the members of class with human dignity. If we want to, as a class, we may develop a list of conversational ground rules for our discussions. Do not use cellphones once class starts and please do not email, Internet shop, or social media scroll during class.

Carmen All course content such as announcements, slides, assignments, grades and required readings will be made available on Carmen. You are expected to do the readings *before* the class for which the reading is assigned. Check Carmen regularly. What is assigned on Carmen takes precedence over the assignments/readings detailed on the syllabus.

Please **contact me via *email, instead*** of via the Carmen messaging.

Materials There is no required textbook for this class. All of the assigned reading material will be available for free on Carmen.

Requirements and Grading Your overall course grade will be assigned based on the following components (with the corresponding percentage of overall grade for the assignment given in parenthesis):

- Participation and attendance (**20%**).
- Carmen discussions (**10%**).
- Initial reflection paper (**5%**).
- Midterm exam (**25%**).
- Final paper draft (**10%**).
- Final paper (**25%**).

- Final reflection (5%).

Detailed assignment sheets for the papers will be distributed closer to the time of assignment, though some minimal detail for each portion of your grade can be found in the next section of this syllabus. Tentative due dates will be given below. The only opportunity for extra credit in this class will be a small one at the very end of the course.

Descriptions of Major Course Assignments

There will be two **reflection papers**, one at the beginning of the semester and one at the end. Your initial reflection paper will be a very short paper in which you describe your personal philosophical beliefs regarding some of the topics of our class. I expect you to offer some reasoning for the beliefs you hold, but not much reasoning as we will have only just begun our introduction at this point in the semester. You will compare this paper with your final reflection paper at the course's end so that you can see how much you have grown as a philosopher. These will be short, low-stakes assignments.

The **midterm exam** will be a cumulative exam on the various concepts we've learned over the semester. It will consist of multiple question types: multiple choice, true or false, fill in the blank, and short essay. More detail will follow as we approach the midterm.

The **Carmen discussion posts** will be discussion board posts on our Carmen page. I will open 10 discussion boards throughout the semester with an open discussion question related to that week's topics. You do not have to post all 10 weeks. But you do have to post at least 6 weeks. When you post, for full credit, you must post your initial answer to the discussion board question prompt, *and then also* respond to one of your classmate's posts. Your response must be substantial.

The **final paper** will be done in two parts. First you will submit a draft of your final paper to me a few weeks before the final paper is due. I will grade this draft and give you substantive feedback for you to revise your paper before submitting the final version. This way you can practice your writing in a lower-stakes context first, before moving on to submitting the higher value final submission. You will get detailed assignment sheets for this assignment.

Participation and attendance. Please read the assigned reading material *before* class for the day that it was assigned. Everyone is expected to participate in the class in some capacity, whether it be in small group discussion, by asking questions, or by participating in whole-class discussions. A note will be made of participation in lectures, and your participation grade will rise the more one conscientiously participates. A conscientious participant is one who makes respectful contributions to the discussion, not one who tries to dominate it or change the subject. Conscientious participation also requires being familiar with the material before class begins. As for attendance, it will be recorded and kept up with via exit cards. Most class periods, I will distribute index cards where you are to write a question or comment that you had about the material for the day. Make sure to write your full name on them legibly as they will serve as the way I take attendance during lectures. You are allowed up to **four** absences, no questions asked. That is, you can miss four lectures, for any reason whatsoever, with no penalty to you. Starting with the fifth day missed, however, a point will be dropped from your participation and attendance grade for every further day missed. This means, for example, if you miss six lectures, the **maximum** participation and attendance grade you will be able to receive will be an 18 out of 20. Of course this attendance policy is up to negotiation on a one-on-one level if you are suffering from a more severe illness, facing some serious life event during the semester, or are a student-athlete with the University-approved travel documentation. If any of this applies to you or if you have any questions about the attendance policy (or any other grading policy), please just come see me or email me. I'm happy to discuss things with

any of you.

Late Assignments Extensions will only be granted in extraordinary circumstances (or, of course, if you have an accommodation from SDLS which involves an extension). That being said, please email me ASAP if you need an extension because of some emergency. Late submissions of assignments will lose 5 points per day. No credit will be given after 5 days.

Instructor Feedback and Response Time For every assignment, I will have grades returned to the students within 14 days of submission. If you need to contact me out of class, please email me at dewitt.197@osu.edu directly. I have technical difficulties getting Carmen messages, so if you message me via Carmen do not expect me to receive your message. I will respond to emails within about 24 hours on weekdays and around 48 hours on weekends.

Grading Scale We will use the OSU Standard Grade Scheme:

- 93-100: A
- 90-92.9: A-
- 87-89.9: B+
- 83-86.9: B
- 80-82.9: B-
- 77-79.9: C+
- 73-76.9: C
- 70-72.9: C-
- 67-69.9: D+
- 60-66.9: D
- Below 60: E

Disability Services The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. SLDS contact information: slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; slds.osu.edu; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

Academic Misconduct Academic misconduct is a serious offense. You are responsible for knowing what counts as academic misconduct. You are also expected not to commit it. In accordance with Faculty Rule 3335-5-487, all suspected cases of academic misconduct will be reported to the university's Committee on Academic Misconduct who will then be responsible for investigating or establishing procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and

dishonest practices in connection with examinations. For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>.

Do not use ChatGPT or similar software for your discussion posts or your papers.

Religious Accommodations It is Ohio State's policy to reasonably accommodate the sincerely held religious beliefs and practices of all students. The policy permits a student to be absent for up to three days each academic semester for reasons of faith or religious or spiritual belief.

Students planning to use religious beliefs or practices accommodations for course requirements must inform the instructor in writing no later than 14 days after the course begins. The instructor is then responsible for scheduling an alternative time and date for the course requirement, which may be before or after the original time and date of the course requirement. These alternative accommodations will remain confidential. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all course assignments are completed.

Commitment to a diverse and inclusive learning environment The Ohio State University arms the importance and value of diversity in the student body. Our programs and curricula reflect our multicultural society and global economy and seek to provide opportunities for students to learn more about persons who are different from them. We are committed to maintaining a community that recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among each member of our community; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. Discrimination against any individual based upon protected status, which is defined as age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status, is prohibited.

Your Mental Health As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learn, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. No matter where you are engaged in distance learning, The Ohio State University's Student Life Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS) is here to support you. If you find yourself feeling isolated, anxious or overwhelmed, on-demand resources are available at go.osu.edu/ccsondemand. You can reach an on-call counselor when CCS is closed at 614-292-5766, and 24-hour emergency help is also available through the 24/7 National Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-TALK or at suicidepreventionlifeline.org. The Ohio State Wellness app is also a great resource available at go.osu.edu/wellnessapp.

Tentative Course Schedule

The schedule below is tentative. Any unexpected changes to the schedule will be announced on Carmen as the course proceeds.

Week One

January 7th Introduction
 Read the Syllabus
 January 9th Introduction
 Read the introduction to Dear's *The Intelligibility of Nature*.

Week Two

January 14th Induction

Read “Induction and inductivism” by Ladyman.

January 16th Induction

Read pgs. 31-40 of Ladyman’s “The problem of induction and inductivism.”

Week Three

January 21st Induction

Read pgs. 40-61 of Ladyman’s “The problem of induction and inductivism.”

January 23rd Demarcation & Falsification

Read pgs. 57-63 of Godfrey-Smith’s “Popper: Conjecture & Refutation.”

Week Four

January 28th Demarcation & Falsification

Read pgs. 63-74 of Godfrey-Smith’s “Popper: Conjecture & Refutation.”

January 30th Kuhn & Scientific Revolutions

Read “Kuhn and Normal Science” by Godfrey-Smith.

Week Five

February 4th Kuhn & Scientific Revolutions

Read “Kuhn and Revolutions” by Godfrey-Smith.

February 6th The Revolutions of Physics

Watch “The Scientific Revolution” and “Einstein’s Revolution” by CrashCourse.

Week Six

February 11th Scientific Realism

Read pgs. 129-146 of Ladyman’s “Scientific Realism.”

February 13th Scientific Realism

Read pgs. 146-160 of Ladyman’s “Scientific Realism.”

Week Seven

February 18th Scientific Realism

Read pgs. 1-8 of Chakravartty’s “Scientific Realism.”

February 20th Scientific Realism

Read pgs. 9-15 of Chakravartty’s “Scientific Realism.”

Week Eight

February 25th Midterm Week

Catch-up and review day.

February 27th Midterm Week

Midterm exam in class.

Week Nine

March 4th Objectivity and Science as Social

Read “The Challenge from Sociology of Science” by Godfrey-Smith.

March 6th Objectivity and Science as Social

Read “Values and Objectivity” pgs. 170-180 by Longino.

Week Ten

NO CLASS SPRING BREAK!

Week Eleven

March 18th Objectivity and Science as Social

■ Read “Feminist Philosophy of Science: Values and Objectivity” by Crasnow.

March 20th Explanation

■ Read “Explanation” by Godfrey-Smith.

Week Twelve

March 25th Unity of Science

■ Read pgs. 1-10 of “The Unity of Science” by Cat.

March 27th Unity of Science

■ Read pgs. 22-26 of “The Unity of Science” by Cat.

Week Thirteen

April 1st Laws of Nature

■ Read “Laws of Nature” by Zerella and pgs. 1-7 of “Laws of Nature” by Carroll.

April 3rd Laws of Nature

■ Read “Do the Laws of Physics State the Facts” by Cartwright.

Week Fourteen

April 8th Mathematics in the Sciences

■ Read “The Unreasonable Effectiveness of Mathematics in the Natural Sciences” by Wigner.

April 10th Mathematics in the Sciences

■ Read pgs. 1-13 of Marcus’s “The Indispensability Argument in the Philosophy of Mathematics.”

Week Fifteen

April 15th Mathematics in the Sciences

■ No new reading.

April 17th Final Day

■ No new reading.

Important Assignment Dates (Also Tentative!)

Initial reflection paper January 19th at 11:59pm

Midterm February 27th in class

Final paper DRAFT April 6th at 11:59pm

Final paper April 23rd at 11:59pm

Final reflection April 27th at 11:59pm

PROPOSED SYLLABUS FOR HISTORY OF ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY

Instructor	Jason DeWitt
Office	N/A
Contact	N/A
Office Hours	N/A
Class Time	N/A
Class Location	N/A

Description Welcome! I'm very excited to do philosophy with you all. This course is focused on the history of the philosophical movement known as "analytic philosophy." Analytic philosophy has dominated the world of English-speaking philosophy for over one hundred years. In this course, we will tell a story, simultaneously detailed and big-picture, about this fascinating and rich episode in the history of philosophy.

In the beginning, we will focus on the founders of analytic philosophy: figures like Gottlob Frege, Bertrand Russell, G.E. Moore, and Susan Stebbing. We will then move into analytic philosophy's pioneering middle-years as we examine logical positivism and atomism, the twists and turns of Ludwig Wittgenstein's ever-changing philosophy, and the beginnings of a "post-positivistic" turn in the work of C.I. Lewis, Margaret McDonald, Gilbert Ryle, Rudolf Carnap, W.V.O. Quine, and Wilfrid Sellars. Then we will consider two moments in late twentieth-century analytic philosophy. The first is the work of Saul Kripke, Ruth Barcan Marcus, Hilary Putnam, and David Lewis in logic, language and metaphysics which, in many ways, made a more recent revival of metaphysics possible. The second is the "neopragmatism" or "post-analytic philosophy" associated with thinkers like Donald Davidson and Richard Rorty.

These last figures will allow us to conclude the course by considering the history of analytic philosophy in broad terms: where has analytic philosophy taken us and where is it going?

General Education Information

Class Conduct

Materials

Requirements and Grading Your overall course grade will be assigned based on the following components (with the corresponding percentage of overall grade for the assignment given in parenthesis):

- Reflection papers (**20%**).
- Outside-the-canon research paper (**30%**).
- Final paper (**50%**).

Detailed assignment sheets for each assignment will be distributed closer to the time of assignment, though some minimal detail for each portion of your grade can be found in the next section of this syllabus.

Descriptions of Major Course Assignments

The **reflection papers** will be short papers (1-3 pages) in which you describe your reflections on that week's readings. You must do six reflection papers for full credit. What weeks you choose to complete your six reflections is up to you. If there are multiple readings assigned that week, you can write about either or both. The idea here is to practice forming paper ideas, so your reflection papers need to be substantive. Share your thoughts and your reasons for those thoughts. Mere summary or mere opinion-sharing will not be helpful. Hopefully, you can use one of your reflection papers as the beginnings of your final paper idea.

There will be an **outside-the-canon research paper** due around the midpoint of the semester. This assignment is a medium length (5-8 page) paper on an analytic philosopher who is not normally considered part of the standard analytic canon. A pre-approved list of philosophers will be made available with the assignment sheet, but you are welcome to choose someone not on the sheet if you clear it with me beforehand. The research paper should be about one-third biography of the philosopher that you choose, and two-thirds a critical exploration of one of the main ideas that philosopher is known for.

There will be a **final paper** on any topic of your choice that we have covered in class. I will have meetings with each of you to discuss proposed topics and I'm happy to look over drafts as long as they are sent before the end of week fourteen.

Tentative Course Schedule

Week One

Introduction.

Excerpts from Frege's *Foundations of Arithmetic* (1884).

Week Two

Frege's "On Sense and Reference" (1892).

Russell's "On Denoting" (1905).

Week Three

Excerpts from Russell's *The Philosophy of Logical Atomism* (1918).

Week Four

Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1921).

Week Five

Moore's "A Defense of Common Sense" (1925).

Stebbing's "The Method of Analysis in Metaphysics" (1932).

Week Six

Excerpts from Lewis's *Mind and the World Order* (1928).

Week Seven

Excerpts from Carnap's *The Logical Structure of the World* (1928).

Carnap's "Pseudoproblems in Philosophy" (1928).

Week Eight

Excerpts from Ayer's *Language, Truth, and Logic* (1936).

Week Nine

MacDonald's "Induction and Hypothesis" (1937).

Excerpts from Ryle's *The Concept of Mind* (1949).

Week Ten

Carnap's "Empiricism, Semantics, and Ontology" (1950).

Quine's "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" (1951).

Week Eleven

Excerpts from Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* (1953).

Week Twelve

Excerpts from Sellars's *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind* (1956).

Week Thirteen

Marcus's "Modalities and Intensional Languages" (1961).

Excerpts from Kripke's *Naming and Necessity* (1970/1980).

Week Fourteen

Putnam's "The Meaning of Meaning" (1975).

Excerpts from Lewis's *On the Plurality of Worlds* (1986).

Week Fifteen

Rorty's "The World Well Lost" (1972).

Davidson's "On the Very Idea of a Conceptual Scheme" (1973).

PHIL 1100: INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY

Spring 2024
The Ohio State University

Instructor	Jason DeWitt
Office	337e University Hall
Contact	dewitt.197@osu.edu
Office Hours	W 1pm-3pm or by appointment
Class Time	WF 9:35am - 10:55am
Class Location	Mendenhall Lab 125

Description Welcome! I'm very excited to do philosophy with you all. Philosophy is, fundamentally, a conversation about some of the deepest mysteries of the universe and of the human condition. Hopefully, this sounds exciting. Whether you are completely new to philosophy or have some experience, I hope we can all engage in this 3000-year-old conversation together and make some philosophical progress.

We will do this by first developing our philosophical and logical toolkit. Then we will examine issues of knowledge, skepticism, the nature of personhood, the divine, and the source of morality. We will end the course by discussing ethics and the value of a philosophical life.

There are many ways to organize an Introduction to Philosophy course: by location (for example, Asian vs. European philosophy), historically (starting with the beginning of philosophy and proceeding from there), or topically (getting a whirlwind tour of several of the many topics in philosophy). We will be doing a little bit of it all: looking primarily at discussions of God and personhood in Western, Chinese, Indian, Native American, Islamic, and African philosophy.

Besides familiarizing students with classic topics and works from these philosophical traditions, there are three other primary goals for this course. First: to increase the critical thinking and analytic writing skills of the students. We will accomplish this via scaffolded writing assignments that ask the students to summarize philosophical arguments and positions and to critically evaluate them. Second: help the student to grow as a reflective philosopher. This goal will be assessed by two reflection exercises on the student's personal philosophical beliefs – one done at the beginning of the semester, the other at the end. Third: to help the student see that philosophy is more than just a set of central questions investigated by a small subset of authors in the Western canon. All these goals taken together, by end of course, should leave students as better philosophers, thinkers, and writers who see philosophy as applying to many of the central parts of their lives.

General Education Information This course partially fulfills your legacy GE requirements by being part of the *Cultures and Ideas* category of the old General Education curriculum. The goals of *Cultures and Ideas* GE courses are the following: Students evaluate significant cultural phenomena and ideas in order to develop capacities for aesthetic and historical response and judgment; and interpretation and evaluation.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

- Analyze and interpret major forms of human thought, culture, and expression.
- Evaluate how ideas influence the character of human beliefs, the perception of reality, and the norms which guide human behavior.

How this course attains these goals and outcomes: In this course, you will develop your capacities to critically analyze, interpret and evaluate prominent historical and contemporary philosophical arguments and theories.

This course also partially satisfies your new GE requirements by being part of the *Cultural Studies* category of the new General Education curriculum. The goals of *Cultural Studies* GE courses are the following: Successful students will evaluate significant cultural phenomena and ideas to develop capacities for aesthetic and cultural response, judgment, interpretation, and evaluation.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

- Analyze and interpret selected major forms of human thought, culture, ideas, or expression.
- Describe and analyze selected cultural phenomena and ideas across time using a diverse range of primary and secondary sources and an explicit focus on different theories and methodologies.
- Use appropriate sources and methods to construct an integrated and comparative perspective of cultural periods, events, or ideas that influence human perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors.
- Evaluate social and ethical implications in cultural studies.

How this course attains these goals and outcomes: In this course, you will develop your capacities to critically analyze, interpret and evaluate prominent historical and contemporary philosophical arguments and theories.

Class Conduct This class will be heavily discussion based. And we will discuss very sensitive political and religious topics, so even if we disagree with someone else, we must voice that disagreement in a respectful manner and treat all the members of class with human dignity. If we want to, as a class, we may develop a list of conversational ground rules for our discussions. Also, do not use cellphones once class starts and please do not email, Internet shop, or social media scroll during class.

Carmen All course content such as announcements, slides, assignments, grades and required readings (or videos or podcast episodes) will be made available on Carmen (or be made available via an Internet link on Carmen). You are expected to do the readings *before* the class for which the reading is assigned. Check Carmen regularly. What is assigned on Carmen takes precedence over the assignments/readings detailed on the syllabus. Contact me via *email*, *instead* of via the Carmen messaging.

Materials All of the assigned reading/watching/listening material will be available for free on Carmen or available free through the Internet via a link on Carmen. There are no required textbooks for the class. That being said, if you want to buy one of the classic works we will focus on (for your own personal library), you can purchase this book:

1. *Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy*, Hackett, 4th Ed. By Rene Descartes and translated by Donald A. Cress. ISBN = 978-0872204201.

Requirements and Grading Your overall course grade will be assigned based on the following components (with the corresponding percentage of overall grade for the assignment given in parenthesis):

- Initial reflection paper (5%).
- Argument summary/critique (10%).
- Midterm paper (20%).
- External philosophy research project (10%).
- Final paper. (30%).
- Final reflection paper (5%).
- Participation and attendance (20%).

This list of assignments is in chronological order. Detailed assignment sheets for each assignment will be distributed closer to the time of assignment, though some minimal detail for each portion of your grade can be found in the next section of this syllabus. Tentative due dates will be given below. There will be no extra credit in this class.

Descriptions of Major Course Assignments

The **initial reflection paper** will be a short paper (500-1000 words) in which you describe your personal philosophical beliefs regarding some of the topics of our class. I expect you to offer some reasoning for the beliefs you hold, but not much reasoning as we will have only just begun our introduction to philosophy at this point in the semester. Hopefully, you will compare this paper with your **final reflection paper** (same length) at the course's end so that you can see how much you have grown as a philosopher.

You will be assigned an **argument summary/critique**. It will be due rather early in the semester and will be worth 10% of your grade. I expect the argument summary to be 500-1000 words long. It will consist of two parts. Around half of it should be summarizing the assigned argument (taken from our readings or lectures), and the second part should be devoted to offering a clearly expressed and plausible criticism of the argument summarized in section one. It is a low stakes way to practice the sort of skills you need on the midterm and final papers.

You will be assigned **two papers**. The midterm will be worth 20% of your grade. The final will be worth 30% of your grade since you will have gotten constructive feedback on several writing assignments by then. I expect the papers to be 1100-1700 words long. They will each consist of three parts. The first section should be devoted to clearly explaining the argument assigned (taken from our readings or lectures). The second section should be devoted to offering a plausible critique of that argument. And the final section will involve you offering a rebuttal to the objection you discussed in section two.

The **external philosophy research project** is intended as a project for students to examine how wide-ranging the world of philosophy is and to do a short research project on a philosophical issue, movement, or philosopher of their choice. A pre-approved list of philosophers, movements, and issues will be distributed, but students can choose another topic if they meet with me a couple of weeks before the due date to get topic approval. The end-product can be an essay of 500-1000 words or a powerpoint presentation of 300-800 words. Students can work alone on this project or work in small groups (the groups can be no larger than a group of three).

Participation and attendance. Please read the assigned reading material *before* class for the day that it was assigned. Everyone is expected to participate in the class in some capacity, whether it be in small group discussion, by asking questions, or by participating in whole-class discussions. A note will be made of participation in lectures, and your participation grade will rise the more one conscientiously participates. A conscientious participant is one who makes respectful contributions to the discussion, not one who tries to dominate it or change the subject. Conscientious participation also requires being familiar with the material before class begins. As for attendance, it will be recorded and kept up with via exit cards. Most class periods, I will distribute index cards where you are to write a question or comment that you had about the material for the day. Make sure to write your full name on them legibly as they will serve as the way I take attendance during lectures. A conscientious participant **MUST** make an effort to ask an on-topic question with their exit cards. You are allowed up to **four** absences, no questions asked. That is, you can miss four lectures, for any reason whatsoever, with no penalty to you. (No need to email me or even let me know when you're going to absent!) Starting with the fifth day missed, however, a point will be dropped from your participation and attendance grade for every further day missed. This means, for example, if you miss six lectures, the **maximum** participation and attendance grade you will be able to receive will be an 18 out of 20. Of course this attendance policy is up to negotiation on a one-on-one level if you are suffering from a more severe illness, facing some traumatic life event during the semester, or are a student-athlete with the University-approved travel documentation. If any of this applies to you or if you have any questions about the attendance policy (or any other grading policy), please just come see me or email me.

Late Assignments Extensions will only be granted in extraordinary circumstances (or, of course, if you have an accommodation from SDLS which involves an extension). That being said, please email me ASAP if you need an extension because of some emergency. Late submissions of assignments will lose 5 points per day. No credit will be given after 5 days.

Instructor Feedback and Response Time For every assignment, I will have grades returned to the students within 14 days of submission. If you need to contact me out of class, please email me at dewitt.197@osu.edu directly. I have technical difficulties getting Carmen messages, so if you message me via Carmen do not expect me to receive your message. I will respond to emails within about 24 hours on weekdays and around 48 hours on weekends.

Grading Scale We will use the OSU Standard Grade Scheme:

- 93-100: A
- 90-92.9: A-
- 87-89.9: B+
- 83-86.9: B
- 80-82.9: B-
- 77-79.9: C+
- 73-76.9: C
- 70-72.9: C-

- 67-69.9: D+
- 60-66.9: D
- Below 60: E

Disability Services The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. SLDS contact information: slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; slds.osu.edu; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

Academic Misconduct Academic misconduct is a serious offense. *You are responsible for knowing what counts as academic misconduct.* You are also expected not to commit it. In accordance with Faculty Rule 3335-5-487, all suspected cases of academic misconduct will be reported to the university's Committee on Academic Misconduct who will then be responsible for investigating or establishing procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>.

We will discuss what and how to cite sources for philosophical writing as we go through our first set of writing assignments. We will also discuss which online resources are the most reliable sources for writing philosophy.

Commitment to a diverse and inclusive learning environment The Ohio State University arms the importance and value of diversity in the student body. Our programs and curricula reflect our multicultural society and global economy and seek to provide opportunities for students to learn more about persons who are different from them. We are committed to maintaining a community that recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among each member of our community; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. Discrimination against any individual based upon protected status, which is defined as age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status, is prohibited.

Your Mental Health As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learn, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. No matter where you are engaged in distance learning, The Ohio State University's Student Life Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS) is here to support you. If you find yourself feeling isolated, anxious or overwhelmed, on-demand resources are available at go.osu.edu/ccsondemand. You can reach an on-call counselor when CCS is closed at 614-292-5766, and 24-hour emergency help is also available through the 24/7 National Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-TALK or at suicidepreventionlifeline.org. The Ohio State Wellness app is also a great resource available at go.osu.edu/wellnessapp.

Tentative Course Schedule

The schedule below is tentative. Any unexpected changes to the schedule will be announced on Carmen as the course proceeds. The materials under the date are mandatory readings, unless specifically labeled as merely recommended. Do not read the recommended readings unless you want to. If you are a philosophy major or minor (or thinking about becoming one), it's best to do a majority of the recommendations.

Week One

January 10th Introduction
 Read the Syllabus.

January 12th Introduction
 Read (1) "Introduction: On the Study of Philosophy" and (2) "Logical Toolkit" by Perry, Bratman, and Fischer (2010).

Week Two

January 17th God
 Read (1) excerpts from *Summa Theologica* by St. Thomas Aquinas (written circa 1274) and (2) section 2.1 of "Arabic and Islamic Philosophy of Religion" by McGinnis and Acar.

January 19th God
 Read (1) excerpts from "Why I Am Not a Christian" by Bertrand Russell (1927) and read (2) "Guidelines on Reading Philosophy" by Jim Pryor. Recommended: Read the entire "Why I Am Not a Christian" essay.

Week Three

January 24th God
 Read (1) excerpts from *The Proslogion* by St. Anselm (1078) and (2) section 2.2 of "Arabic and Islamic Philosophy of Religion" by McGinnis and Acar. Recommended: watch "Anselm & the Argument for God: Crash Course Philosophy #9" by CrashCourse (2016).

January 26th God
 Read (1) "The Problem of Evil" by Metcalf and (2) "Guidelines on Writing a Philosophy Paper" by Jim Pryor.

Week Four

January 31st Epistemology, God, & Self
 Read "Meditations I - III" by Rene Descartes (1641). Recommended: Watch *The Matrix* by L. Wachowski & L. Wachowski (1999).

February 2nd Epistemology, God, & Self
 Read (1) "Descartes' Meditations 4-6" (2011) by Marc Bobro and (2) "al-Ghazālī's Dream Argument for Skepticism" (2020) by John Ramsey. Recommended: if you want to read the actual text of Descartes's *Meditations*, then read IV-VI instead of the Dobro. Also recommended: read "Brains in a Vat" by Hilary Putnam (1981).

Week Five

February 7th Epistemology, God & Self
 Read (1) "Correspondence to Descartes" by Princess Elizabeth of Bohemia (1643) and (2) "Anton Wilhelm Amo: The African Philosopher in 18th Century Europe" by Dwight Lewis (2018).

February 9th Epistemology, God, & Self

Watch (1) “PHILOSOPHY - Epistemology: Three Responses to Skepticism [HD]” (2016) and (2) “PHILOSOPHY - Epistemology: New Responses to Skepticism [HD]” (2016) by Wireless Philosophy.

Week Six

February 14th Personal Identity

Read (1) sections 1-4 of “Personal Identity” (2023) by Eric Olson and (2) “Writing Philosophy Papers” by Perry, Bratman, and Fischer (2010).

February 16th Personal Identity

Watch (1) “PHILOSOPHY - History: Locke on Personal Identity #2” (2014) and (2) “PHILOSOPHY - History: Locke on Personal Identity #3” (2014) by Wireless Philosophy.

Week Seven

February 21st Personal Identity

Read selections from *Reasons and Persons* (1984) by Derek Parfit.

February 23rd Self & God

Guest lecture by Pranav Ambardekar. Reading TBD.

Week Eight

February 28th No-Self

Read (1) sections 1-2 of “Buddha” (2023) by Mark Sideritis and (2) “The Buddhist Theory of No-Self (Anātman/Anattā)” (2023) by Daniel Weltman.

March 1st No-Self

Read (1) sections 3-4 of “Buddha” (2023) by Mark Sideritis and (2) “Was Hume a Secret Buddhist” (2019) by Rachel Paine.

Week Nine

March 6th Selfhood

Read “A Theory of Confucian Selfhood: Self-Cultivation and Free Will in Confucian Philosophy” (2004) by Chung-ying Cheng. Recommended: “The Chinese Conception of Selfhood” (1999) by Roger Ames.

March 8th Selfhood

Read “Soul and Self: Comparing Chinese Philosophy and Greek Philosophy” (2008) by Jiyuan Yu. Recommended: “Thirteen Ways of Looking at the Self in Early China” (2009) by Lisa Raphals.

SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS! March 13th and 15th

Week Ten

March 20th Personhood

Read “Akan Philosophy of the Person” (2006) by Ajume Wingo. Recommended: “Akan Concept of a Person” (1971) by Kwame Gyekye.

March 22nd Personhood

Read “Akan and Euro-American Concepts of the Person” by Kwame Anthony Appiah. Recommended: “Self as a Problem in African Philosophy” (1992) by Chukwudum B. Okolo.

Week Eleven

March 27th Personhood

Read “Common Themes in American Indian Philosophy” (2010) by Norton-Smith.

March 29th Personhood

Read “An Expansive Concept of Persons” (2010) by Norton-Smith. Recommended: read “The Dance of Person and Place” (2010) by Norton-Smith.

Week Twelve

April 3rd Personhood

Read “Feminist Perspectives on the Self” (2020) by Ellie Anderson and Cynthia Willett.

April 5th Personhood & Animals

Read “Theories of Moral Considerability: Who and What Matters Morally?” (2022) by Jonathan Spelman. Recommended: “Nonhuman Persons” (2021) by Gerard Elfstrom.

Week Thirteen

April 10th Source of Morality

Read *Euthyphro* by Plato (written c. 380 BC).

April 12th Morality

Read: “Why Be Good? Plato” from Notre Dame. Recommended: Watch “Confucius - How To Be Happy (Confucianism)” by Philosophies for Life. Watch “PHILOSOPHY - The Good Life: Aristotle [HD]” by Wireless Philosophy.

Week Fourteen

April 17th The Meaning of Life

Read “The Meaning of Life” by Thaddeus Metz (2021). Recommended: Watch *The Seventh Seal* by Ingmar Bergman (1957).

April 19th Purpose & Value of Philosophy

Read “The Value of Philosophy” by Bertrand Russell (1969).

Important Assignment Dates (Also Tentative!)

Initial reflection paper Jan. 21st at 11:59pm

Argument summary/critique Feb. 11th at 11:59pm

Midterm essay Mar. 3rd at 11:59pm

External philosophy project Apr. 7th at 11:59pm

Final paper Apr. 21st at 11:59pm

Final reflection Apr. 28th at 11:59pm