

Philosophy 101 – Intro to Philosophy (3 Credits)

Online - Fall 2015

Middlesex Community College

CRN # 3380

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Course Description

Some of the major philosophical problems, theories of knowledge, reality, and value. The nature of philosophical thought. Readings in philosophical literature. Library research required. This is an “L” course.

Prerequisite

As this course requires clear thinking and good writing ability, students should have already completed English 101 or have equivalent college-level writing ability.

Learning Objectives

- To understand, interpret, critique, compare, and apply major philosophical theories.
- To learn basic logical reasoning, including learning to identify basic arguments, types of reasoning, and logical fallacies; applying logic to thinking, discussion, and writing.
- To write clearly and thoughtfully on philosophical issues.
- To be able to engage in academic discussion.
- To learn sufficient cultural and historical background so that the philosophical theories and issues studied can be understood in the context from which they originated.
- To relate philosophy to contemporary human problems and conditions.

Required Text and Course Resources

Journey Through the Landscape of Philosophy, Bowen, Jack (ed.) Penguin Academics, 2008.

Additional readings will be available on the course website as .pdf or .doc files.

Other Course Inputs:

The course may include some analysis of films, as well as news stories and other cultural events and trends. Every effort will be made to provide points of entry for the exercise of critical thought.

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| Grading | Class Participation | 16% |
| | Reading Responses | 17% |
| | Quizzes | 16% |
| | Midterm | 17% |

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| Term Paper | 17% |
| Final Exam | 17% |

Final grades and academic standing can be obtained from mycommnet.edu.

Coursework

Class Participation: Class discussions provide the opportunity to explore what each of you find interesting or difficult about a topic or a reading; participating will help your understanding.

Class discussions must reflect some understanding of the assigned material, and may include questions, concerns, arguments for and against a particular philosopher, and any personal observations that are particularly relevant. Comments should be respectful and scholarly. Ask questions! The more you discuss this material, the more you will get out of the course.

As this is an online class, the class participation will take place on the course message board. There is a specific rubric that must be followed in order to earn full participation credit. Each week (with the exception of the first) begins on Monday and ends Sunday at 11:59 PM. Students must submit remarks to the message board by the second day of the week (usually Tuesday), as well as submit three additional posts to the board on three separate days by Sunday at 11:59 PM. The reason for the need of such staggered participation is that you are expected to respond to the views and comments made by other members of the class.

Discussion posts must reflect some understanding of the assigned material, and may include questions, concerns, arguments for and against a particular philosopher, and any personal observations that are particularly relevant.

Remember, the message board may appear informal, but it is still part of a college course. Comments should be respectful and scholarly.

Quizzes

These will be some short multiple choice quizzes testing how well you've understood the material.

Exams Multiple choice and essays. Questions will cover material from class.

Reading Responses: These short papers will give you a chance to explore the ideas from class as presented in the course readings.

Reading Response Rubric

- Briefly summarize the reading. (30 points)
 - Quote the author at least once. (20 points)
 - Cite page numbers when quoting text. (10 points)
 - Discuss what you find interesting and relate it to the real world. (40 points)
 - (450 word minimum)
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- All homework must be double-spaced.
 - Late reading responses will be marked down 10% per week.
 - Assignments must be received by 11:59 PM on date due.

All written work must be double-spaced and submitted as a Microsoft Word document. Please save your files with your last name as the first word of the file name. (Example: Smith RR1, Smith Week 3)

Term Paper You will be required to write an 8-12 page paper on a topic related to the course. After picking your topic, **you must develop a thesis** on it. Your paper must then argue in support of that thesis by utilizing academic citations from course readings. You may use outside sources, but these are not required.

Your topic can be strictly abstract, dealing with an issue solely in philosophical terms. You also have the option of developing a philosophical thesis about a real-world issue. News events, films, television shows and personal experiences may be incorporated. Due: Sunday, 4/26

Term Paper Rubric

- Introduce the issue, presenting both sides of the debate. (10 points)
- State your thesis on the issue. (10 points)
- Explain the arguments on each side of the issue. (30 points)
- **Quote authors from the course** on each side of the issue. (20 points)
- Cite page numbers when quoting text. (10 points)
- Explain why your thesis is the best way of approaching the issue. (20 points)

Works Cited

As this class is an “L” course, you must do some independent research and document it. This will be as a part of your Ethical Issue Project. Your presentation/paper must be grounded in fact. Your sources must adhere to proper citations guidelines, citing the authors name, the article title, the publication title, the publisher’s name and the date of publication.

Citing a book:

Andress, David, *The Terror, Civil War in the French Revolution*, New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux 2005.

Citing a periodical/magazine:

Lefort, Claude, "The Revolutionary Terror," in *Democracy and Political Theory*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 1988 p. 50-88

One Place to Look for Articles for your Project:

Opposing Viewpoints, On-Line Resource Center, Middlesex Electronic Information Databases, <http://www.mxcc.commnet.edu/library/eResources.htm>. Students must have a library card and log on with their student ID# to access the database.

Course Schedule (subject to change)

All assignments due on the Sunday indicated by 11:59 P.M.

| Date | Topic(s) Covered | Assignments/Reading to be completed before class | Assessment Schedule |
|-------------|---|---|---|
| 8/31-9/6 | Course Overview | | |
| 9/7-9/13 | Taoism | <i>Dao De Jing</i> p.397-403 | |
| 9/14-9/20 | Buddhism | The Four Noble Truths p.387-389 | Reading Response due Sunday, 9/20 on Taoism or Buddhism |
| 9/21-9/27 | Idealism Metaphysics Epistemology Ethics | Plato: "The Allegory of the Cave" p.2-6 | Plato Quiz due Sunday, 9/27 |
| 9/28-10/4 | Metaphysics Ethics | Aristotle <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> p. 570-593 | Reading Response due Sunday, 10/4 on Plato or Aristotle |

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| 10/5-10/11 | Logic | Logic p. xvii-xxvii | Logic Quiz due Sunday, 10/11 |
| 10/12-10/18 | Modern Philosophy | Descartes <i>Meditations I and II</i> p.47-52 | |
| 10/19-10/25 | Idealism Ethics Midterm Review | Kant <i>Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals</i> p.594-607 | Reading Response on Kant or Descartes due Sunday, 10/25 |
| 10/26-11/1 | Midterm | | Midterm Due by Sunday, 11/1 |
| 11/2-11/8 | Economic Philosophy | Economic Philosophy.doc | |
| 11/9-11/15 | Objectivism Altruism | Rand <i>Ethical Egoism and the Virtue of Selfishness</i> p.632-640 | Reading Quiz (Economic Philosophy, Rand) due Sunday, 11/15 |
| 11/16-11/22 | Individualism | Nietzsche .pdf (9-54), (58-65), (99-102), (137-142), (191-195), (286-291) | Reading Response on Rand or Nietzsche due Sunday, 11/22 |
| 11/23-11/29 | Thanksgiving Week | ***No Class*** | |
| 11/30-12/6 | Metaphysics Ethics | Ecclesiastes Selections .doc | Term Paper due Sunday 12/6 |
| 12/7-12/13 | Metaphysics Ethics | Matthew 5-7 .doc | |

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| 12/14- 12/18 | Final Exam | | Final Exam due by Sunday, 12/18 |
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Blackboard Vista Course Web Site / Grade Info

<http://my.commnet.edu>

Enter your student ID number (on your student ID card or registration form) followed by @student.commnet.edu; then enter your password. If you have never logged on to the Community College System before, your password is: 1st three characters of birth month (with the first letter capitalized) Ampersand character: &, and Last 4 digits of Social Security Number. So, for a user with a birth date on 10/24/79 and ssn of 123-45-6789, the initial password would be Oct&6789. You will then be asked to change your password immediately. After logging in, look for Blackboard Vista link in the upper right corner of the screen. If you have problems logging on or using Blackboard Vista, call 860-343-5783.

IMPORTANT COLLEGE POLICIES!! PLEASE READ CAREFULLY!

For information about the college's policies and procedures regarding academic honesty, accessibility/disability services, attendance, audio-recording in the classroom, grade appeals, plagiarism, religious accommodations, weather and emergency closings, and more, please go to the following

website: www.mxcc.edu/catalog/syllabus-policies/ or scan the QR code with your

smart phone. Also, please become familiar with the policies regarding nondiscrimination, sexual misconduct, and general student conduct at the following website:

www.mxcc.edu/nondiscrimination/.



NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

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The following people have been designated to handle inquiries or complaints regarding non-discrimination policies and practices:

- Primary Title IX Coordinator
Dr. Adrienne Maslin
Dean of Students/Title IX and Section 504/ADA Coordinator
amaslin@mxcc.edu; 860-343-5759; Founders Hall Room 123|
- Secondary Title IX Coordinator
Ms. Queen Fordham
Coordinator of the Meriden Center Welcome Desk
qfordham@mxcc.edu; 203-608-3011