

**St. Francis Xavier University
Department of Philosophy
PHIL 100 Introduction to Philosophy II
Course Outline**

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Office Hours: see online schedule: <http://people.stfx.ca/dalmaini/Al-Maini/scheduleDA.htm>

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PLEASE NOTE: LAPTOP COMPUTERS AND PHONES ARE STILL NOT ALLOWED IN CLASS.

Course Description:

A continuation of the first semester's introduction to the field of philosophy. We shall examine classic texts from the ancient period period forward that draw together deep insights into recurring philosophical topics such as human nature, metaphysics, knowledge, logic, value, art, ethics, and politics. The course aims to continue the work done at familiarizing students with logical ways of thinking, appreciating the value of philosophical enquiry in their own lives, and providing a basic understanding of some fundamental philosophical questions (and answers). Most of our texts were chosen in order to emphasize the on-going nature of the philosophical project: philosophy is a grand discussion about all aspects of reality, and you are invited to join in. All of our texts marry literary distinctiveness with profundity, and we shall investigate how both of these aspects work together.

Assignments:

Students will be required to complete in-class assignments, two short essays responding to the ideas presented in the texts and a final exam. The in-class work will be worth 30% of the semester's final grade, each response will be worth 20% of the semester's final grade. The final exam will be worth 30%.

The short essays will consist in an answer to the question provided below. We shall be looking for slightly longer analyses than in the first semester, and each response should be no less than 1500 words in length. Any shorter and your response will seem superficial; any longer and I might question the conciseness of your response.

Schedule:

Week	Topic	Readings	Assignments Due
1 Jan 9	Instinct and Impulses	Epictetus, <i>Discourses</i> , Book 1	
2 Jan 16	Impressions, Assent, Beliefs	Epictetus, <i>Discourses</i> , Book 2	
3 Jan 23	Free Will & Determinism	Cicero, <i>De Fato</i>	
4 Jan 30	Free Will & Determinism	Cicero, <i>De Fato</i>	
5 Feb 6	Emotions	Epictetus, <i>Discourses</i> , Book 3	1 st Essay 1 st Outline
6 Feb 13	Value and Indifferents	Epictetus, <i>Discourses</i> , Book 4	1 st Essay 2 nd Outline
Feb 20	Reading Week		
7 Feb 27	Epistemology, Certainty	Descartes, <i>Meditations</i> , 1-2	1 st Essay
8 Mar 6	Proof for God's Existence	Descartes, <i>Meditations</i> , 3-4	
9 Mar 13	Dualism	Descartes, <i>Meditations</i> , 5-6	2 nd Essay 1 st Outline
10 Mar 20	Good and Evil & Good and Bad	Nietzsche, <i>Genealogy</i> , First Essay	2 nd Essay 2 nd Outline
11 Mar 27	Guilt and Bad Conscience	Nietzsche, <i>Genealogy</i> , Second Essay	
12 Apr 3	Ascetic Ideals	Nietzsche, <i>Genealogy</i> , Third Essay	2 nd Essay

Short Assignments:

#1: due Feb 27nd (Outlines due Feb 6th and 13th)

Epictetus continually tells us that we have control over our own reason and beliefs; in fact he seems to think that is the only thing we have control over. But on the other hand Stoics are committed determinists, and that implies that we have *no* control over our thoughts, which should be just as fated to be the way they are as anything else. How can free will and determinism be made compatible? In your first outline, you must provide an argument the Stoics give in favour of determinism plus an argument Epictetus gives for the position that we have control over our thoughts, and in your second outline you must give a chain of reasoning that shows how the two positions are compatible.

#2: due Apr 3rd (Outline due March 13th and 20th)

In the *Meditations*, Descartes uses the example of a wax block to support his position of not trusting the senses. What is wrong with Descartes' reasoning here? In this assignment your first outline must provide an explanation of how Descartes' argument concerning the wax works, and in the second outline you must tackle that argument.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS SEMESTER, OUTLINES WILL BE MARKED WHOLISTICALLY FOR THEIR CONCEPTUAL CONTENT, AND NOT FOR THEIR VALIDITY, AS THEY WERE LAST SEMESTER.

Technical Considerations for Written Assignments:

- 1) All written assignments must be typed (black ink, please) and double-spaced in Times New Roman 12 pt. font on pages with at most 1 inch margins. No extra line spaces between paragraphs. Indent the first line of a paragraph. Printing on both sides of a sheet of paper is quite acceptable.
- 2) Please no title pages. Also no "Works Cited" or "Bibliography" pages referring to one work; do bibliographic references in a footnote if you must. Please no enormously large-fonted things like titles, names, dates, course numbers, student numbers, phone numbers, or due dates that take up half a page of space. Your title, name, and student number at the top of the first page is quite sufficient. Please visibly number any multiple-page assignments. If for some reason you must hand in the assignment to the office, please include my name at the top of the assignment as well.
- 3) No duo-tangs, folders, binders, or paperclips. Loose sheets are acceptable, but do remember to number them.
- 4) Under no circumstances will emailed assignments be accepted. Please hand in your assignments at the start of class on the day they are due.
- 5) The late policy is a deduction of 3% per day that the assignment is handed in late. This course outline lets you know when assignments are due, and you have been given plenty of time to complete them. Consequently last minute excuses for not completing assignments on time will be met with skepticism.
- 6) Many of the above requirements are arbitrary demands on my part, but they really do facilitate the assessment of your work. If you do not follow them, your "Organization" mark will suffer.
- 7) Plagiarism is completely unacceptable. If you make use of an idea that is not of your own devising, you must cite the source of that idea. Failure to properly cite sources may result from removal from the course and expulsion from the university.
- 8) You are responsible for keeping an extra copy of your essay accessible in your files. It is possible that something might happen to your essay once it is handed in, and the best way to deal with that is to have another copy printed off which can be marked in the original's place.