

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

Instructor: Doug Al-Maini

Office: Lane Hall A 127

Office Hours: Mon 10:15-11:00, Tues 2:15-3:00, Thurs 11:15-12:00, 1:15-2:00

E-mail: dalmaini@stfx.ca

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.

Schedule:

Week	Topic	Readings	Assignments Due
1 Jan 7	Instinct and Impulses	Epictetus, <i>Discourses</i> , Book 1	
2 Jan 14	Impressions, Assent, Beliefs	Epictetus, <i>Discourses</i> , Book 2	
3 Jan 21	Free Will & Determinism	Cicero, <i>De Fato</i>	
4 Jan 28	Free Will & Determinism	Cicero, <i>De Fato</i>	
5 Feb 4	Emotions	Epictetus, <i>Discourses</i> , Book 4	1 st Essay 1 st Outline
6 Feb 11	Epistemology, Certainty	Descartes, <i>Meditations</i> , 1-2	1 st Essay 2 nd Outline
Feb 18	Reading Week		
7 Feb 25	Proof for God's Existence	Descartes, <i>Meditations</i> , 3-4	1 st Essay
8 Mar 4	Dualism	Descartes, <i>Meditations</i> , 5-6	
9 Mar 11	The Four Shoots	Mencius, <i>Mencius</i> Book II	2 nd Essay 1 st Outline
10 Mar 18	The Role of Shun	Mencius, <i>Mencius</i> Book V	2 nd Essay 2 nd Outline
11 Mar 25	Human Nature as Good	Mencius, <i>Mencius</i> Book VI	
12 Apr 1	The Way	Mencius, <i>Mencius</i> Book VII	2 nd Essay

Assignments:

Students will be required to complete eight 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.

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.