

PHIL 100: Introduction to Philosophy

Fall 2019

MWF 9:30 – 10:20 a.m.

Instructor: Michael Dufresne, M.A.

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Office: Sakamaki C-310

Office Hours: M 10:30 – 11:30 a.m., or by appointment

Course Description: This course will introduce students to a range of significant philosophical issues, looking at how they have been taken up in different historical and cultural contexts. The goal will not only be to understand the historical development of philosophical inquiry, but also to determine what value philosophy has for us today. With this in mind, we will examine the major branches of philosophy (i.e., logic, epistemology, metaphysics, ethics and aesthetics) and think through some of the ideas they give rise to, such as truth, identity, free will, justice, beauty and death. In addition to reading philosophical essays directly concerned with these topics, we will read and discuss relevant works of fiction, in an effort to make the abstract ideas these essays present more concrete and relatable. This will also give students an opportunity to meditate on the differences between non-fictional essays and fictional stories as philosophical resources.

Learning Outcomes: Students can expect to gain a general understanding of the philosophical problems, concepts and methods discussed in different historical periods and cultural contexts. They can also expect to cultivate their reasoning skills and develop a more philosophical approach to the concerns of everyday life, as well as to those encountered in the various works of fiction they watch or read in the future. This course aims to help students learn how to think critically and also how to live well.

Requirements: Given the cumulative nature of this course, students are expected to attend all class meetings, participate in classroom discussions and activities, and complete all assignments in a timely and satisfactory manner. Absences will only be excused if valid documentation (such as doctor's notes or travel letters for university sponsored events) is provided *prior to* the day the student is expected to miss class.

Required Text: Lowell Kleiman and Stephen Louis. *Philosophy: An Introduction Through Literature*. (St. Paul, MS: Paragon House, 1992). ISBN 978-1-55778-539-8

Additional readings will be posted on Laulima. The *Crash Course Philosophy* videos, which can be found on YouTube, are an *optional* supplement to the *required* reading.

Evaluation: Final grades will be calculated according to the following criteria.

- Attendance & Participation: 25%
- Weekly Reflections: 30%
- Midterm Paper: 20%
- Final Exam: 25%

Grading:

A+	100-97	B+	89-87	C+	79-77	D+	69-67	F	59-0
A	96-93	B	86-83	C	76-73	D	66-63		
A-	92-90	B-	82-80	C-	72-70	D-	62-60		

Assignments: Students are expected to attend each class and to participate in discussions. Repeated absences and/or tardy arrivals will affect your final grade.

The homework for this course consisted of daily reading and weekly writing assignments. The reading assignments will consist of short selections of required philosophical or fictional material. Many of these readings are difficult and require multiple read-throughs to fully understand, so please make time to read as much as possible. To make the reading process go smoothly, students should begin reading as early as they can, in order to give themselves enough time to reflect on the meaning and contemporary relevance of the ideas put forth in these works. Also, it is hard to come up with things to say about these materials on the spot, even if you have read them thoroughly, so please take note of things that interest or confuse as you read, so we can discuss them in class.

The writing assignments will consist of weekly reflections. In these reflections, you will be asked to draw connections between fictional stories and philosophical issues. Generally, we will go over new topics on Wednesdays and Fridays, and will then conclude our discussions of these topics by looking at works of fiction on Mondays, giving students the weekend to complete their assignments. ***Reflections should be 300 words long and will be due Sundays at 11:59 p.m. in the Assignments section of Laulima.*** The aim of these reflections is to help students engage with the abstract ideas presented in class by situating them in concrete scenarios. To aid with these assignments, I will send out reflection questions at the end of each week, though students should feel encouraged to write about whatever issues interest them, as long as they mention and engage with the course materials.

The midterm paper will be a 3-5 page essay (double spaced, 12-pt font) ***due on 10/20 at 11:59 PM in the Assignments section of Laulima***, the details of which will be provided later in the semester. The final exam will take place during finals week and will consist of a series of short and long written responses about the material the students read throughout the semester. The date will be posted and the syllabus updated as soon as the exact date is known. More information about the exam, including a list of potential questions, will be provided closer to exam time.

If you plan to miss class or need an extension on an assignment, please notify me in a timely manner. Only students with excused absences will be permitted to make up missing assignments for full credit. ***Grades for missing assignment will be reduced by 10% for each day they are late, including weekends.***

Academic Integrity: Cheating is a serious issue and will not be tolerated. Any student found to have cheated on an assignment or examination will receive an automatic failing grade for the course. In addition, any breaches in the ethical standards of the UH community may be reported to the appropriate academic dean. If you are uncertain about what constitutes a compromise of academic integrity, please consult the UHM Student Conduct Code. For additional information on plagiarism, please refer to the following website: http://www.cte.hawaii.edu/plagiarism/index_final.html.

Accessibility: If you require additional accommodations, please feel free to speak with me to discuss your specific needs, or contact the KOKUA Program: Queen Lili`uokalani Center for Student Services (QLCSS), Room 013; (808) 956-7511 or (808) 956-7612; kokua@hawaii.edu; <https://www.hawaii.edu/kokua/about/contact-info-and-staff.php>.

Health Services: University Health Services Mānoa (UHSM) is staffed by physicians, nurse clinicians, nurses, and other support staff, and offers a wide range of medical services and programs to UHM students, with many of the services also available to UHM faculty and staff and students from other UH campuses. Services include general medical care on a walk-in basis; women's health, sports medicine, psychiatry, and dermatology clinics by appointment; pharmacy and clinical laboratory; and student training, employment and volunteer opportunities. For more information, please contact UHSM: 1710 East West Road Honolulu, Hawaii 96822; (808) 956- 8965; <https://www.hawaii.edu/shs/>.

Mental Health: College work is hard and often stressful or psychologically demanding. It is important to study hard and do your best, but it is even more important to be kind to and take care of yourself. The instructor is available to discuss such matters if there is need. The University also has resources available. If you find yourself in a difficult situation, please do not hesitate to contact the Counseling and Student Development Center (CSDC): QLCSS 312; (808) 956-7927; <http://manoa.hawaii.edu/counseling/>.

Title IX: The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa is committed to providing a safe and respectful environment free from all forms of sex discrimination and gender-based violence, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you or someone you know is experiencing any of these aggressions, the University has the requisite staff and resources to assist you. For additional information about sex discrimination and gender-based violence, the University's Title IX resources, and the University's Policy, go to: <https://manoa.hawaii.edu/titleix/>.

LGBTQ+ Center: This office provides direct services to UHM students to confidentially discuss or seek advocacy and support for mistreatment due to their actual or perceived sex, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation. For more information, go to: QLCSS 211; (808) 956-9250; lgbtq@hawaii.edu; <https://manoa.hawaii.edu/lgbtq/>.

Prevention, Awareness, and Understanding (PAU) Violence Program: This program exists to inspire, educate, and empower students and campus communities to build safe living-learning environments, end interpersonal violence, and encourage holistic well-being in ways that are supportive, collaborative, student-centered, and strengths-based. PAU Violence Program staff provides direct services to all University of Hawai'i at Mānoa students including crisis response, safety planning, academic support, and referrals to campus and community resources. For more information, go to: QLCSS 211; (808) 956-8059; uhmpau@hawaii.edu; <http://manoa.hawaii.edu/pauviolence/index.php>.

Student Parents At Mānoa (SPAM): This group seeks to increase the visibility of and resources for student parents at UHM as they pursue education while parenting. SPAM staff provide advocacy, support, and referrals for pregnant and parenting students to help them succeed in their educational goals. For more information, go to: QLCSS 211; (808) 956-8059; gotkids@hawaii.edu; <http://manoa.hawaii.edu/studentparents/>.

COURSE SCHEDULE: (Tentative and subject to change)

Lesson 1: Introduction

8/26 (M): Overview of Course & Syllabus

8/28 (W): Bertrand Russell, "The Value of Philosophy" ([Link](#))

8/30 (F): Voltaire, "Memnon, the Philosopher" ([Link](#))

9/2 (M): **Labor Day**, No Class

Lesson 2: Truth (Logic & Reasoning)

9/4 (W): W. Russ Payne, "How Philosophy is Done" (Laulima)

Video: [How to Argue – Philosophical Reasoning: Crash Course Philosophy #2](#)

9/6 (F): Charles Sanders Peirce, "Definitions of Truth (1)" (pp. 118-120)

Gilbert Harman, "Inference to the Best Explanation I" (pp. 122-123)

Video: [How to Argue – Induction & Abduction: Crash Course Philosophy #3](#)

9/9 (M): Ryunosuke Akutagawa, "In a Grove" (pp. 85-90)

Lesson 3: Knowledge

9/11(W): Plato, "Knowledge as Justified True Belief" (pp. 17-25)

Video: [The Meaning of Knowledge: Crash Course Philosophy #7](#)

9/13 (F): René Descartes, "Meditation I" (pp. 29-32)

Video: [Cartesian Skepticism – Neo, Meet Rene: Crash Course Philosophy #5](#)

9/16 (M): James Joyce, "Araby" (pp. 6-9)

Last day to drop courses is Tuesday 9/17

Lesson 4: The Mind-Body Problem

9/18 (W): René Descartes, "Meditation II" (pp. 32-37)

9/20 (F): John R. Searle "Is the Brain's Mind a Computer Program?" ([Link](#))

Video: [Artificial Intelligence & Personhood: Crash Course Philosophy #23](#)

9/23 (M): Greg Egan, "Learning to Be Me" (Laulima)

Lesson 5: Personal Identity

9/25 (W): John Locke, "The Prince and the Cobbler" (pp. 193-196)

Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad, "Dialogue Between Janaka and Yājñavalkya" (Laulima)

Video: [Personal Identity: Crash Course Philosophy #19](#)

9/27 (F): David Hume, "Of Personal Identity" (pp. 196-202)

Samyutta Nikāya, "Vajirā Sutta" (Laulima)

Video: [Arguments Against Personal Identity: Crash Course Philosophy #20](#)

9/30 (M): Daryl Gregory, "Second Person, Present Tense" ([Link](#))

Lesson 6: Social Identity

10/2 (W): E. Victoria Spelman, "Woman as Body" (pp. 213-222)

10/4 (F): Linda Martín Alcoff, "Racialized Identities and Racist Subjects" (Laulima)

10/7 (M): Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, "The Thing Around Your Neck" (Laulima)

Lesson 7: Moral Theory I

10/9 (W): Aristotle, "The Nature of Virtue" (Laulima)

Video: [Aristotle & Virtue Theory: Crash Course Philosophy #38](#)

10/11 (F): John Stuart Mill, "Utilitarianism" (pp. 280-294)

Video: [Utilitarianism: Crash Course Philosophy #36](#)

10/14 (M): Ursula K. Le Guin, "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas" (Laulima)

Lesson 8: Moral Theory II

10/16 (W): Immanuel Kant, "Passage from Ordinary Rational Knowledge of Morality to Philosophical" (pp. 294-304)

Video: [Kant & Categorical Imperatives: Crash Course Philosophy #35](#)

10/18 (F): Virginia Held, "The Ethics of Care" (Laulima)

10/21 (M): Frank O'Connor, "Guests of the Nation" (pp. 250-256)

Midterm Paper Due Sunday 10/20 at 11:59 p.m. on Laulima

Lesson 9: Justice

10/23 (W): John Rawls, "from *A Theory of Justice*" (pp. 398-411)

Video: [What is Justice?: Crash Course Philosophy #40](#)

10/25 (F): Robert Nozick, "Distributive Justice" (Laulima)

10/28 (M): Stephen Crane, "An Experiment in Misery" (pp. 353-358)

Lesson 10: Freedom & Determinism

10/30 (W): William James, "The Dilemma of Determinism" (pp. 581-591)

Video: [Determinism vs Free Will: Crash Course Philosophy #24](#)

11/1 (F): Jean-Paul Sartre, "Passages from *Being and Nothingness*" (Laulima)

Video: [Existentialism: Crash Course Philosophy #16](#)

11/4 (M): Jorge Luis Borges, "The Garden of Forking Paths" (Laulima)

Last day for restricted withdrawals is Monday 11/4

Lesson 11: Religious Belief

11/6 (W): Anselm and Gaunilon, "A Dialogue on the Ontological Proof for the Existence of God" (pp. 484-487)

Thomas Aquinas, "The Existence of God" (pp. 499-501)

Video: [Anselm & the Argument for God: Crash Course Philosophy #9](#)

[Aquinas & the Cosmological Arguments: Crash Course Philosophy #10](#)

11/8 (F): Fyodor Dostoevsky, "Rebellion" ([Link](#))

Video: [The Problem of Evil: Crash Course Philosophy #13](#)

11/11 (M): **Veteran's Day**, No Class

Lesson 12: Beauty

11/13 (W): Plato, "*Symposium*" (Laulima)

11/15 (F): Yuriko Saito, "The Japanese Aesthetics of Imperfection and Insufficiency" ([Link](#))

11/18 (M): Edgar Allen Poe, "The Oval Portrait" ([Link](#))

Lesson 13: Death

11/20 (W): Martin Heidegger, “Being-toward-Death” (Laulima)

11/22 (F): Zhuangzi, “Passages on Death” (Laulima)

11/25 (M): Leo Tolstoy, “The Death of Ivan Ilyich, Chapters VI-VII” ([Link](#))

Lesson 14: The Environment

11/27 (W): Arne Naess, “The Shallow and the Deep, Long Range Ecological Movement” (Laulima)

Michael Kioni Dudley, “Traditional Native Hawaiian Environmental Philosophy” (Laulima)

Video: [Non-Human Animals: Crash Course Philosophy #42](#)

11/29 (F): **Thanksgiving**, No Class

12/2 (M): Terry Bisson, “The Toxic Donut” (Laulima)

Lesson 15: The Good Life

12/4 (W): Albert Camus, “The Myth of Sisyphus” (Laulima)

Video: [What is a Good Life?: Crash Course Philosophy #46](#)

12/6 (F): Derek Parfit, “What Makes Someone’s Life Go Best” (Laulima)

12/9 (M): James Baldwin “Sonny’s Blues” (Laulima)

12/11 (W): Review for Final Exam

Final Exam: 12/20 (F) from 9:45-11:45 AM in Sakamaki A-103