

**Syllabus for Spring '21, Philosophy 1101:
Introduction to Philosophy
Instructor: Christopher Rahlwes**

Class time: Mon/Wed 11:15-12:30

Hours for questions and concerns: Wed 1:30-3:30

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(always include 'PHIL 1101' in the subject if you send me an email)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

We will engage with five main questions:

1. Why is there something and not nothing?
2. Who am I? What am I? What is a person?
3. How is the mental connected with the physical?
4. How do we know anything? Do we actually know anything?
5. What is the good life?

In engaging with these questions, we will explore world philosophy and work through various cultures answers to these questions.

COURSE STRUCTURE:

- Lectures will be recorded and posted in advance.
- You only need to attend the Monday or Wednesday (except Week 1 and Week 15). We will meet over WebEx.
 - This time will be spent reviewing and discussing the material.
 - There will be a group assignment during this time over the material
- You may need a PowerPoint reader, word editor, and pdf reader.
 - Importantly, papers will only be accepted as a pdf or word document.

COURSE GOALS:

- To communicate (orally and in writing) the ideas and arguments presented in the readings as well as your own.
- To gain an understanding of what is philosophy and various traditions of philosophy.
- To be able to engage with some of the basic questions and concerns in philosophy.

REQUIREMENTS:

- Content Quizzes (40%)
- Paper 1 (15%) 500 Words
- Paper 2 (15%) 500 Words
- Paper 3 (20%) 1500 Words
 - It is strongly encouraged that this paper is a revision of Paper 1 or Paper 2.
 - You must explore the key concept you discussed and provide an argument.
- Group Discussion Board Assignments (10%)

Letter grade cut-offs:

A 93%	C 73%
A- 90%	C- 70%
B+ 87%	D+ 67%
B 83%	D 63%
B- 80%	D- 60%
C+ 77%	F below 60%

These are cut-off points:
decimals will not be rounded up.

POLICIES AND GENERAL NOTES:

1. **Disabilities:** *The University of Connecticut is committed to protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities and assuring that the learning environment is accessible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability or pregnancy, please let me know immediately so that we can discuss options. Students who require accommodations should contact the Center for Students with Disabilities, Wilbur Cross Building Room 204, (860) 486-2020, or <http://csd.uconn.edu/>.*
2. **Academic Integrity:** *This course expects all students to act in accordance with the Guidelines for Academic Integrity at the University of Connecticut. Because questions of intellectual property are important to the field of this course, we will discuss academic honesty as a topic and not just a policy. If you have questions about academic integrity or intellectual property, you should consult with your instructor. Additionally, consult UConn's [guidelines for academic integrity](#).*
3. **Against Discrimination, Harassment and Related Interpersonal Violence:** *The University is committed to maintaining an environment free of discrimination or discriminatory harassment directed toward any person or group within its community – students, employees, or visitors. Academic and professional excellence can flourish only when each member of our community is assured an atmosphere of mutual respect. All members of the University community are responsible for the maintenance of an academic and work environment in which people are free to learn and work without fear of discrimination or discriminatory harassment. In addition, inappropriate amorous relationships can undermine the University's mission when those in positions of authority abuse or appear to abuse their authority. To that end, and in accordance with federal and state law, the University prohibits discrimination and discriminatory harassment, as well as inappropriate amorous relationships, and such behavior will be met with appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the University. Additionally, to protect the campus community, all non-confidential University employees (including faculty) are required to report sexual assaults, intimate partner violence, and/or stalking involving a student that they witness or are told about to the Office of Institutional Equity. The University takes all reports with the utmost seriousness. Please be aware that while the information you provide will remain private, it will not be confidential and will be shared with University officials who can help.*
 - a. **Etiquette:** Differing opinions and arguments are encouraged. You should never feel embarrassed or ashamed about your opinion, concern, or question, but you must put it forth in a respectful manner. **Do not mock someone for their opinion. Do not speak when someone else is speaking. Do not use slurs.**
4. **Copyright:** *My lectures, notes, handouts, and displays are protected by state common law and federal copyright law. They are my own original expression and I've recorded them prior or during my lecture in order to ensure that I obtain copyright protection. Students are authorized to take notes in my class; however, this authorization extends only to making one set of notes for your own personal use and no other use. I will inform you as to whether you are authorized to record my lectures at the beginning of each semester. If you are so authorized to record my lectures, you may not copy this recording or any other material, provide copies of either to anyone else, or make a commercial use of them without prior permission from me.*

READINGS:

Readings will be posted on HuskyCT. We will mostly focus on excerpts of primary texts and some secondary sources.

Recommended: Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*

Edition: 3rd 93

Publisher: Hackett

ISBN: 9780872201927

Tentative Schedule (Subject to Change)

<u>Week</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic / Assigned Reading/ Recommended Reading</u>
1	1/20	<u>Module 1: Why something and not nothing?</u> Introduction. Creation Myths. (No required reading.) Heraclitus, “Fragments” (Recommended) Parmenides, “On Nature” (Recommended) Anaximander, “On Nature” (Recommended)
2	1/25 & 1/27	Nishitani, selections from <i>Religion and Nothingness</i> Heidegger, “The Ontotheological Constitution of Metaphysics” (Recommended) Sartre, “The Origins of Negation” (Recommended)
3	2/1 & 2/3	Parfit, “Why anything? Why this?”
4	2/8 & 2/10	<u>Module 2: Who am I?</u> Chandogya Upaniṣad, Selections Bhagavad Gītā Chapter 2 and 15 Ibn ‘Arabī selections from <i>Al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiya</i> Rumi, “Being a Lover” (Recommended) Module 1 Quiz Due (2/9)
5	2/15 & 2/17	Descartes selections from <i>Meditations on First Philosophy</i> Locke, “Of Identity and Diversity” Williams, “The Self and The Future” (Recommended)
6	2/22 & 2/24	Fanon, “Lived Experience of the Black Man” Coulthard, “The Politics of Recognition” Butler selections from <i>An Account of Oneself</i> Cavarero selections from <i>Relating Narratives</i> Hegel, “Independence and Dependence of Self-Consciousness: Lordship and Bondage” (Recommended)
7	3/1 & 3/3	<u>Module 3: The Mind/Body Problem</u> Descartes selections from <i>Meditations on First Philosophy</i> Ryle, “Descartes’s Myth” Cavendish, “Grounds of Natural Philosophy” Module 2 Quiz Due (3/2)

- 8 3/8 & 3/10 Nagel, “What is it like to be a bat”
 Īśvarakṛṣṇa selections from *Sāmkhyakārikā*
 Śāṅkara selections from *Vedāntasūtrabhaṣya*
 Dennett, “Qualia Disqualified” (Recommended)
Paper 1 Due (3/12)
- Module 4: How do we know?*
- 9 3/15 & 3/17 Plato, *Theaetetus*
 Gettier, “Is Justified True Belief Knowledge”
Module 3 Quiz Due (3/16)
- 10 3/22 & 3/24 Descartes selections from *Meditations on First Philosophy*
 Hume selections from *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*
 Kant selections from “Transcendental Doctrine of Judgment”
 St. Teresa of Avila, *The Interior Castle* (Recommended)
- 11 3/29 & 3/31 Sextus Empirics selections from *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*
 Nāgārjuna selections from *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*
 Pseudo-Dionysius selections
Paper 2 Due (4/2)
- Module 5: The Good Life*
- 12 4/5 & 4/7 Plato, *The Apology*
 Aristotle selections from *Nicomachean Ethics*
 Marcus Aurelius selections from *Meditations*
 Annas, “Making Sense of My Life as a Whole” (Recommended)
Module 4 Quiz Due (4/6)
- 13 4/12 & 4/14 **Spring Break**
- 14 4/19 & 4/21 Laozi selections from the *Dao de Jing*
 Confucius selections from the *Analects*
 McLeod, “The Analects” (Recommended)
 Module 3 Quiz Due
- 15 4/26 & 4/28 Sextus Empirics selections from *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*
Cūlamālukya Sutta
 Śāntideva selections from *A Guide to the Bodhisattva Way of Life*
 (Recommended)
- 16 5/3-5/8 Final Weeks
Paper 3 Due (TBD)
Module 5 Quiz (TBD)