

# Introduction to Philosophy

Philosophy 110

Spring Term 2017 – Purdue University

Instructor: Daniel Kelly

## **Syllabus**

### 1. Course Description

There are two main goals of this course. The first is to introduce students to the Western philosophical tradition, its defining themes and the way those have been developed by major historical and contemporary figures. Such themes include religion and the existence of God; perception and its relations to knowledge and the external world; the nature of personal identity and the self; the connection between mind and body, the mental and physical aspects of a person; free will; and morality. The second is to provide students with the tools to refine their thinking, articulate their own views, and evaluate the arguments of others. It will give you many opportunities to sharpen your wits on Great Ideas and Meaning of Life type questions, to think systematically about The Big Picture, and to thereby help you to TurboCharge your own Bullshit Detector.

### 2. Class Meetings

Class meets Tuesday and Thursday from 3:00pm – 4:15pm in Room 1268 of Beering Hall of Chemistry.

### 3. Office Hours and Contact Information

Professor Kelly

Office: 7126 Beering Hall

Office Phone: 765-494-4290

Email: [drkelly@purdue.edu](mailto:drkelly@purdue.edu)

Office Hours: 11:00am – 1:00pm Wednesdays and by appointment

### 4. Course Requirements and Grading

Grades on papers and exams will be given on the standard 0-100 point grading scale:

100-98:	A+
97-93:	A
92-90:	A-
89-87:	B+
86-83:	B
82-80:	B-
79-77:	C+
76-73:	C
72-70:	C-
69-67:	D+
66-63:	D

62-60: D-  
59-0: F

Final grades will be determined by class participation (broadly construed), 2 papers, a midterm, and a final exam. They will be weighted roughly as follows:

Participation, In Class Discussions, Outlines	20%
Two Papers	20% each (40% total)
Midterm	15%
Final Exam	25%

The date and time for the Final Exam are not scheduled yet.

Exams will be closed book, short essay format. A list of potential exam questions will be made available before both the midterm and the final.

The papers will be 5 pages minimum. Some suggestions for paper topics will be posted roughly 2 weeks before they are due. Papers not turned in by the end of class the day they are due are LATE. For each day late, 7 points will be deducted.

## 5. Course Policies

**Readings:** Do them. From a recent book's introduction: "Patience is a primary virtue in philosophy. Genuine understanding is a rare and valuable commodity, not to be obtained on the cheap. One cannot reap philosophy's rewards breathlessly, or by looking for the intellectual equivalents of sound bites. Very large claims are at issue here, claims that bear on understanding some of the matters most important to being human. Understanding requires investing time, close reading, and reflection."

**Lectures:** I will try to begin on time, and will usually go right up until the end of the class session. Please come on time. Do not pack up your materials until class has been dismissed. Talking during lectures will not be tolerated. Repeat offenders will be asked to leave.

**Laptop computers:** Bold proposal: dare to give yourself a break from the internet for 75 minutes. I would prefer that you exercise enough self-restraint to keep from texting for the 75 minutes that lectures are in session, but since a formal prohibition would be too difficult to enforce, this remains a preference. Use of laptop computers and iPads during lectures will not be allowed, however. Talk to me if you have special needs or circumstances.

**Attendance:** See Attendance Policy for details.

**Class participation:** I realize that not everyone is equally outgoing or talkative in class. However, participation in class discussion almost always helps in learning philosophy, and the quality of the discussion depends on everyone collectively. So while I highly encourage it, I do not penalize students simply for not speaking up. That said, a consistent record of participation and attendance always helps a student's final grade if it is on a borderline at the end of the semester. On the other hand, students who have not been present and engaged throughout the semester will not get the benefit of the doubt in similar borderline cases, and in particularly egregious cases will have their grades dragged down. We will occasionally have small group discussion questions in class, and participation in these will count towards participation grade.

**Outlines:** Your participation grade will also include your turning in 5 outlines, one from each chapter, that meet the following specifications:

- Choose one of the papers assigned
- Write up a 1 page (no more, no less) outline of that paper, pulling out the “bird’s eye view” structure of article
  - If you’ve never done outlines before, this may be helpful:  
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/544/1/>
  - You can also see my lecture notes, which are in outline form
- At the other side, separate from your outline:
  - Formulate, in your **own words**, the **main question** the paper is addressing
  - Identify one sentence **from the paper** (i.e. quoted from the text itself) that best states **the answer** the author gives to the paper’s main question
  - **Pose a question or two of your own** that the paper provoked
- You can turn in no more than one per class period
- Each of the five is due before we finished the chapter it is associated with.

**Emergencies:** (See end of Syllabus for full Purdue attachment on Emergency Procedures). In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances. Information about emergencies changes in the course can be gotten by contacting either instructor via email or phone, or by consulting the course website (see above for that information). Purdue’s Emergency Procedures Handbook and other important emergency planning information is available online at

[http://www.purdue.edu/emergency\\_preparedness/](http://www.purdue.edu/emergency_preparedness/)

To obtain updates regarding an ongoing emergency, and to sign up for Purdue Alert text messages, go to

<http://www.purdue.edu/emergency/>

For the full document of Beering Hall Building Emergency Plan

[https://www.purdue.edu/ehps/emergency\\_preparedness/bep/brng-bep.html](https://www.purdue.edu/ehps/emergency_preparedness/bep/brng-bep.html)

**Plagiarism:** With the advent of the internet, plagiarism has become an increasingly serious problem at universities around the country, particularly in classes like this one, where papers determine a substantial part of the grade.

In order to avoid plagiarizing from a source, both **direct quotations and paraphrases or summaries** of material found in traditional print media or on the internet must be acknowledged. If you have any questions about how this definition will be interpreted, please do not hesitate to discuss the matter with me or your TA.

Plagiarism and cheating on exams undermines the integrity of the academic community. When undetected, it gives the perpetrator an unfair advantage over students who are graded on the basis of their own work. In this class we will do our best to detect plagiarism and cheating. Students who are aware of violations by others should bring this to my attention. This is the right thing to do. It is also in your own self-interest.

There will be zero tolerance for plagiarism in this course. Plagiarized papers will receive a 0, the student will automatically fail the course, and their name will be handed given to the university authorities. For more on the Purdue University policy on plagiarism, see the following websites:

[http://www.purdue.edu/univregs/pages/stu\\_conduct/stu\\_regulations.html](http://www.purdue.edu/univregs/pages/stu_conduct/stu_regulations.html)

<http://www.purdue.edu/odos/osrr/academicintegritybrochure.php>

With each paper assignment, a handful of students may be selected at random to submit their papers to TurnItIn, an online service that maintains an enormous database of papers that it uses to check for instances of plagiarism.

**External Sources:** Using sources not listed on the syllabus in researching and writing your papers is fine, as long as they are both to the point, and are properly cited. And at all times, when in doubt, ***cite your sources!*** It is the best way to avoid being accused of plagiarism.

This is probably the best place to make this point, too: Wikipedia can be useful for getting a very broad grasp of positions and debates, but when it gets into details, especially on philosophic topics, it can just as often be horrible – sketchy, convoluted, misinformed, and often simply wrong. If you wish to consult online resources, I suggest you use some of the other, much better sites. Most prominent is the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, but others are useful as well:

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy <http://plato.stanford.edu/>  
The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy <http://www.iep.utm.edu/>

## 6. Website

Information and comments will often be posted on the website, which can be reached via my homepage:

<http://web.ics.purdue.edu/~drkelly/>

To go directly to this course's website, the address is:

<http://web.ics.purdue.edu/~drkelly/KellyIntroPhilSpring2017.html>

## 7. Topics and Readings

Here is a tentative schedule of topics and readings. Depending how fast we are going, amendments and alterations will be announced in class as we go, and the readings for the next class will always be listed on the lecture outlines published on the course website. Since reminders and other information will be posted on the course website, **make sure you check that website on a fairly regular basis.**

Weeks 1 – 4 (1/9): Introduction and Philosophy of Religion

- Russell, “The Value of Philosophy”
- Plato *Apology*
- Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica*
- Anselm, *Proslogium, Or Discourse on the Existence of God*
- Paley, *Natural Theology*

- Hume *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*
- Dennett 1<sup>st</sup> reading, “Show Me the Science”
- Hume 2<sup>nd</sup> reading, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*
- Mackie, *Free Will and the Problem of Evil*
- Pascal, *Notes on Natural Religion and Other Subjects*
- James, *The Will to Believe*
- Alvin Plantinga, Interview on The Sensus Divinitatis
- Kwan, Can Religious Experience Provide Justification for the Belief in God?
- Gellman, *Mysticism*

**First Paper Due:** In class, Tuesday 2/7

Weeks 5-7 (2/6): Epistemology: Perception, Reality, and the External World

- Descartes 1<sup>st</sup> reading, *Meditations on First Philosophy*
- Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*
- Berkeley, *Three Dialogues Between Hylas and Philonous*
- Chalmers, Matrix as Metaphysics
- Hume, *An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding*
- Paul, *What You Can't Expect When You're Expecting*

**Midterm Exam:** in class, Tuesday 2/28

Weeks 9-11 (3/6): Ethics

- Plato *Euthyphro*
- Rachels *Does Morality Depend on Religion?*
- Antony, *Good Minus God*
- Rachels, *Subjectivism in Ethics*
- Rachel's, *The Challenge of Cultural Relativism*
- Mill, *Utilitarianism*
- Le Guin, *The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas*
- Coates, *The Case for Reparations*

**Spring Break:** 3/13 – 3/17

Weeks 12-13 (4/3): Free Will and Moral Responsibility

- Timpe, *Free Will*
- Holmstrom, *Firming Up Soft Determinism*
- James, *The Dilemma of Determinism*
- Nahmias, *Neuroscience and the Death of Free Will?*
- Roskies, *Neuroscientific Challenges to Free Will and Responsibility*

**Second Paper Due:** In class, Tuesday 4/18 (CHANGED FROM ORIGINAL OF 4/11)

Weeks 14-15: (4/17): Personal Identity and the Self

- Perry, *A Dialogue on Personal Identity and Immortality*
- Haslanger, *Gender and Race: (What) Are They? (What) Do We Want Them To Be?*

If any extra time: Philosophy of Mind (time permitting)

- Lycan, *The Mind-Body Problem*
- Nagel, *What is it Like to be a Bat?*
- Ismael, *On Being Some-One*

**Final Exam:** Saturday 5/6 10:30 – 12:30 in Beering 1268.



## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS SYLLABUS ATTACHMENT

**EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES** are based on a simple concept – if you hear a fire alarm inside, proceed outside. If you hear a siren outside, proceed inside.

- **Indoor Fire Alarms** mean to stop class or research and immediately **evacuate** the building.

Proceed to your Emergency Assembly Area away from building doors. **Remain outside** until police, fire, or other emergency response personnel provide additional guidance or tell you it is safe to leave.

- **All Hazards Outdoor Emergency Warning Sirens** mean to immediately seek shelter (**Shelter in Place**) in a safe location within the closest building.

“Shelter in place” means seeking immediate shelter inside a building or University residence. This course of action may need to be taken during a tornado, a civil disturbance including a shooting or release of hazardous materials in the outside air. Once safely inside, find out more details about the emergency\*. **Remain in place** until police, fire, or other emergency response personnel provide additional guidance or tell you it is safe to leave.

*\*In both cases, you should seek additional clarifying information by all means possible...Purdue Home page, email alert, TV, radio, etc...review the Purdue Emergency Warning Notification System multi- communication layers at [http://www.purdue.edu/ehps/emergency\\_preparedness/warning-system.html](http://www.purdue.edu/ehps/emergency_preparedness/warning-system.html)*

## EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROCEDURES:

- Review the **Emergency Procedures Guidelines**  
[https://www.purdue.edu/emergency\\_preparedness/flipchart/index.html](https://www.purdue.edu/emergency_preparedness/flipchart/index.html)

- Review the **Building Emergency Plan** (available from the building deputy) for:

Evacuation routes, exit points, and emergency assembly area

when and how to evacuate the building

Shelter in place procedures and locations

Additional building specific procedures and requirements.

## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AWARENESS VIDEOS

- "Shots Fired on Campus: When Lightning Strikes," is a 20-minute active shooter awareness video that illustrates what to look for and how to prepare and react to this type of incident.

See: <http://www.purdue.edu/securePurdue/news/2010/emergency-preparedness-shots-fired-on-campus-video.cfm> (Link is also located on the EP website)

## MORE INFORMATION

Reference the Emergency Preparedness web site for additional information:

[http://www.purdue.edu/emergency\\_preparedness](http://www.purdue.edu/emergency_preparedness)