

San José State University
Philosophy Department
Phil. 10-05, Introduction to Philosophy, Fall '14

Instructor:	Dr. Dan C. Williamson
Office location:	Faculty Office Building 204
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Email:	Dan.Williamson@sjsu.edu
Office hours:	M-Th 10:30-11:30am and by appointment
Class days/time:	MW 12:00-1:15pm
Classroom:	BBC 130
Prerequisites:	English remediation or post baccalaureate
GE/SJSU Studies Category, if applicable	Area C 2

Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging

Copies of the course syllabus and major assignment sheets may be found on my faculty web page accessible through the SJSU Home page A-Z quick links, look under “F” for Faculty web page link and then under “Williamson;” then click on “Courses” in the upper left of the Home page to navigate to the page for the courses. Follow the link for this course. Check this web site frequently. All relevant links are on my Home page and any homework assignments, paper topics, instructions and etc. will be available on the course page. You also are responsible for regularly checking with the new messaging system through MySJSU. .

Course Description and Goals

The course entertains perennial problems in philosophy. For example: Who am I? What can I know? What is the true nature of the world and universe? And if complete knowledge isn't possible what could I know? How should I live? We will consider classical philosophical ideas bearing on these issues by looking at different philosophers throughout history..

Student Learning Objectives

GE/SJSU Studies Learning Outcomes

This course satisfies General Education Area C2 as follows:

- Recognize how significant works illuminate enduring human concerns; *numerous writing assignments such as the exams and also discussion activities will help you to consider enduring human concerns.*
- Respond to such works by writing both research-based critical analyses and personal responses; *you will be asked to write two papers during the semester requiring some research as well as your critical assessment of the ideas.*
- Write clearly and effectively; you will do at least the minimum of 1500 words this semester and then some. You will receive constructive suggestions from the professor to improve your writing for clarity and effectiveness.

Required Texts/Readings

Textbooks

Steven M. Cahn *Classics of Western Philosophy*; 8th ed., Hackett Publishing

Jostein Gaarder *Sophie's World*; Farrar, Straus and Giroux

Other readings (or recommended readings)

There may be some materials that will be used throughout the semester. Also, consult my online links on my first web page. If any reading becomes necessary, they will be available either as a link or at the Course Reserve Desk in the MLK library. I will note this in class.

Classroom Protocol

A separate sheet detailing my specific requirements for this and other courses taught this semester is available online.

Dropping and Adding

You are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, etc. found at http://sa.sjsu.edu/student_conduct. You should be aware of the new deadlines and penalties for adding and dropping classes.

Assignments and Grading Policy

Please note the following from the Academic Senate, S12-3, in compliance with Federally mandated standards:

“Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of forty-five hours over the length of the course (normally 3 hours per unit per week with 1 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities including but not limited to internships, labs, clinical practice. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.”

Course Structure:

a. *Reading*

You should be able to engage the issues by reading the texts thoroughly in advance of the lectures covering the readings. Please come to class prepared and make sure to read the material thoroughly in advance. Everyone in the class will get far more from the course by doing so.

b. *Writing*

The course has a minimum of 1500 words of written work, per GE requirements. I will be working with you on all written work.

i. homework There will be some homework assigned earlier on in the semester and later as it becomes appropriate or necessary. We may also have some spot reading quizzes.

ii. papers There are two papers for this class. The first paper is valued less than the second (35 points) and is meant to prepare you for a better effort on the second paper, valued at 65 points. This Fall '14, we may break up the preparation of the first paper as a way to get you “in tune” not only with philosophy, but with GE objectives—see the Student Learning Objectives, above. Separate paper topics and instructions will be available on my website for each paper. I will announce when they are available. The first paper topics and instructions should be up by the

third week of class. Again, the idea for the papers is to develop your facilities at creating clear descriptions, explanations and/or arguments with adequate support in the paper. There are no rewrite options. I will provide you with feedback on the first paper so you can improve by the second. Some evident library research is mandatory (bibliography) on the second paper, but it also strongly recommended on the first paper as well. Only academically sound sources should be used. The professor likes to see students using books, not just electronic resources.

You should at all times conform to the tenets of correct English grammar. Sloppy grammar, incorrect punctuation and spelling will affect your grade. When in doubt, keep your sentences simple.

An electronic copy of the same paper you turn in to me should be submitted to Turnitin.com under this course Philosophy 10, Introduction to Philosophy; the course number and password will be on the paper topic instructions.

iii. **midterms and final** Both midterms and final are in class and are a mixture of true/false, multiple choice and short-essay format. The midterms and final are closed book, unless otherwise noted by the professor. The final is cumulative with an emphasis on everything not already tested on in the previous midterms. There will be review questions and issues posted prior to the test on the website.

c. **Active Learning** I rarely just lecture. I like to engage in discussion with students. Come prepared for discussion. This will help you improve your comprehension of the material

i. **participation** I give 25 basic participation points reflecting your overall performance in the class. Make yourself noticed by speaking up, positively and constructively, please.

ii. **group activities** The course provides the student with the opportunity to explore ideas in our texts in discussion groups on a regular basis. I hand out a separate sheet of guidelines for discussions and presentations. Groups can review what has already been lectured on or on what has not been lectured on, limited only by what is in our primary text. You can develop material for the paper from what you do in a group, they need not be entirely separate. This activity is worth 50 points.

d. **Grade Breakdown:**

homework	50	note: points may vary
papers TTL	100	
midterms 2	100	@50 points each
participation	25	
group work	50	
final	<u>125</u>	
	450	Total Points

Grading is done on a strict 10% scale on all assignments; no curve is applied. All final grades are final unless the professor made an error in calculation of the final grade, no exceptions.

University Policies

Academic integrity

Students are expected to be familiar with the University's Academic Integrity Policy. Please review this at http://sa.sjsu.edu/student_conduct. "Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University and the University's integrity policy, require you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical development."

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person's ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. "If you would like to include in your assignment any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU's Academic Policy F06-1 requires approval of instructors."

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the DRC (Disability Resource Center) to establish a record of their disability.

Special accommodations for exams require ample notice to the testing office and must be submitted to the instructor well in advance of the exam date.

Student Technology Resources

Computer labs for student use are available in the new Academic Success Center located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional labs that may be available to students in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library.

A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include digital and VHS camcorders, VHS and Beta video players, 16 mm, slide, overhead, DVD, CD, and audiotape players, sound systems, wireless microphones, screens and monitors.

Learning Assistance Resource Center

The Learning Assistance Resource Center is designed to assist students in the development of their full academic potential and to motivate them to become self-directed learners. The center provides support services, such as skills assessment, individual or group tutorials, subject advising, learning assistance, summer academic preparation and basic skills

development. The Learning Assistance Resource Center is located in Room 600 in the Student Services Center.

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is staffed by professional [instructors](#) and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the [seven SJSU colleges](#). Our writing specialists have met a rigorous GPA requirement, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers.

Phil 10-05 Introduction to Philosophy Course Schedule

Fall '14

The following is subject to change with fair notice. The reading assignments may be too ambitious; changes will be noted as we go along, if any.

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	8/25, 27	Introduction; begin reading <i>SW</i> pgs. 1-78 for next several sections. <i>Portrait of a Philosopher</i> Read Cahn, Plato's dialogues Apology and Crito with Cahn's notes (pgs. 1-2), pgs. 27-46
2	9/1, 3	9/1 is a Holiday, no class. Continued 9/5 Last Day to Drop; this is your responsibility.
3	9/8, 10	Continue and begin <i>What is the nature of the Universe?</i> Lecture on the Presocratics; Read <i>SW</i> , above and Aristotle in Cahn, pgs.243-251.. Then for this week or next, read Plato, "The Line" and the Allegory of the Cave, pgs. 169-177; Symposium, pgs. 113-127; Phaedo 61-73. 9/12 Last Day to Add.
4	9/15, 9/17	Continue and if there is time begin Aristotle, pgs. 212-221, 255-261.
5	9/22, 24	Aristotle and <i>SW</i> 104-161; Augustine and Neo Platonism (Plotinus); pgs. 390-402, 403-416.
6	9/29, 10/1	Continue <i>first midterm this week or next, weeks 1-5</i>
7	10/6, 8	<i>The Question of God</i> , briefly Anselm and then on to Spinoza; pgs. 442-450, read as much as you can of the Spinoza selection, lecture will focus on a few sections. Begin groups
8	10/13, 15	<i>But what can we know?</i> Sextus Empiricus (352-357), Descartes (527-539, 555-559), Locke (pgs. 670-680, 687-880), Berkeley (751-756) Hume (838-863) and Kant (976-980).
9	10/20, 22	Continue
10	10/27, 29	Continue and begin some modern responses: Nietzsche (pgs.1227-1243), James (pgs. 1278-1289), and Sartre (pgs. 1319-1333) and some first feminism in philosophy: Simone deBeauvoir (online)
11	11/3, 5	Continue
12	11/10, 12	Continue and some group work here <i>second midterm on weeks 7-11 this week or next.</i>
13	11/17, 19	Continue groups and <i>What is an ethical life?</i> Plato (pgs.145-155, 162-169), Aristotle (pgs.275-290) , Epicurus (all), Epictetus (all), Kant (pgs. 1110-1120) and a few modern variants (lecture)
14	11/24, 26	Continue
15	12/1, 3	Groups

16	12/8, 10	Groups
	12/17	Final Examination: 0945-1200 same classroom