

San José State University
Philosophy Department
Phil. 10-05, Introduction to Philosophy, Spring '18

Instructor:	Dr. Dan C. Williamson
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Office hours:	MW 10:30am-11:30am and <i>by appointment</i> TTH 12:15pm-1:15pm and <i>by appointment</i>
Class days/time:	TTh 3:00-4:15pm
Classroom:	MH 324
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, classroom protocols and major assignment sheets may be found on Canvas, under “files.” *Students should note that they are responsible for reading and understanding the basics of the course embodied in the syllabus and other course documents.*

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..

GE Learning Outcomes (GELO)

This course satisfies General Education Area C2 as follows:

- Recognize how significant works illuminate enduring human concerns; *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 one longer paper or two papers during (student's option) the semester. Both require 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 throughout all assignments, including the midterm short essays.*

Course Learning Objectives (CLO)

- Students should be able to interpret philosophical texts appropriately *Both writing assignments and group work are applicable.*
- They should have some grasp of the social and historical contexts of ancient philosophy. *The course is approached from a historical perspective. All writing assignments should reflect this.*
- They should be able to articulate the above by writing that also serves to show that the student can represent ideas clearly and effectively. *The group work and papers embody this goal.*

Required Texts/Readings

Robert C. Solomon, Higgins and Martin, *Introducing Philosophy: A Text With Integrated Readings*, 11th ed., Oxford University Press.

Other readings (or recommended readings)

The course may have some materials that could be used later in the semester. I will announce this in class. These additional materials either will be available as an online link or at the Course Reserve Desk in the MLK library, listed under this course. There are many texts that are available online. Students can research these themselves and I will mention some as we go along in class or online.

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.

homework: For the purposes of review some brief homework assignments may be assigned. I have assigned them 50 points; there may be less or, possibly, more homework as we go along. It depends on how everyone in the course progresses. All should be typed and double spaced. No handwritten homework will be accepted.

Papers There are three short position papers in this this course. I will make topics available online on Canvas under “files.” Students may come up with their own topics, but come in and clear it with me. Papers will be two to three pages in length. This paper requires the student to present a clear exposition of a philosopher or philosophical topic. The second paper should be longer, minimum 5 pages, doing the same as the first paper with the addition of some independent research into the topic. The research should be based on academically sound sources. Additional requirements, explanations and due dates for these papers will be available on the course web site at the appropriate time. I will discuss this further in class. There are no re-write options on the papers. The first paper will be lower points (20), the second somewhat higher (30) and the final paper the highest (50). The idea is to improve through comments from me.

I strongly urge students to come in during my office hours or by appointment to discuss their paper and the topic under consideration. If enough of you want to do this, we can set up appointments in advance.

midterms Both midterms are in class and are a mixture of true/false, multiple choice and short-essay format, unless otherwise noted. 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 in the previous midterms. The midterms will be 50 points each. I will provide review sheets on Canvas under “files” and we will review that in class prior to each midterm and the final.

Final Examination

The final is worth 125 points and will be the same format as the midterms. As with the midterms a review sheet will be made available on Canvas under “files.”

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

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

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 that is in our texts or in other materials and topics appropriate to the course. 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.

Grading Information

As above, separate instructions will be available on Canvas for papers, group and as noted for homework and review. These explain what student should be able to do for a grade in each activity.

I grade on points. I provide percentages below. Each assignment will follow something similar to the following:

The assignment is a midterm and is valued at 50 points.

50-45 A
44-39 B
38-33 C
32-27 D
26 and below F

Similarly, the final grade would be calculated thus:

450-427 A 23 pts
426-404 A- 22 pts
403- 388 B+ 15 pts

387-362 B “
361-346 B- “

And following based on 10% for each grade range and then broken down proportionally within each range.

d. Grade Breakdown:

Homework	50	(points per assignment will vary and the total might go higher or lower)	11%
Position Papers	100	(points on individual papers: 20, 30, 50)	22% (appx)
Participation	25		5-6%
Group	50		11%
Midterms	100	(50 points each)	11/22%
Final	<u>125</u>		27% appx
	450	Total	

Please see the Classroom Protocol sheet for all information regarding late assignments and other relevant issues. I will accept *some* late work, depending on good reasons. But repeated late assignments could result in a reduction of the grade, excluding midterms and finals. If you can't make a midterm or need to reschedule a final, please check with me for such arrangements. Not taking the final is *not* an option.

Classroom Protocol

A separate protocol sheet will be available on Canvas under “files”.

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

Briefly, students are expected to behave in a responsible fashion worthy of a college student. It goes without saying that ethical behavior is mandatory and any variation from that is simply not acceptable. For those with special needs, please know that you are welcome in this class and I will do all I can to accommodate your needs.

For more detail and other issues, please consult the “Classroom Protocol” sheet available in Canvas in this class under “files.”

Philosophy 10-01 Course Schedule, Spring '18

The following schedule is subject to change with fair notice

(There are some sections of Chapter 6 which might be able to be condensed and, if so, then we can get on to the next Chapter 7 earlier)

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	1/25	Introducing class. r 2/1 and the next week read the Introduction to our text, pgs. 1-40.
2	1/30, 2/1	Continue the text Introduction
3	2/6, 8	Continue. We will finish the Introduction. When this is completed, we will begin Part Two <i>Know Thyself</i> . Begin reading Chapter 5. There may be some articles in this and the following sections that aren't as important as the rest. I will note this prior to the section we consider. 2/5 is the last day to drop; it is the student's responsibility to drop.
4	2/13, 15	Continue; 2/12 is the last day to add.
5	2/20, 22	Continue; We should begin Chapter 6, <i>Self</i> this week. This is a very complex section and will take some time. I would like to do as much as we can in this section. We should also consider online resources for Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Nature" and "The Over-Soul," Walt Whitman "Song of Myself." See also pgs. 67-71 in our text; Plato's Myth of the Cave.
6	2/27, 3/1	Review with some Group Work here or next week; consult online for group discussion guidelines. <i>First Midterm next week</i> . I will keep you advised. I would like to keep it flexible! The first midterm won't cover anything we haven't done in class, so probably the Introduction and Chapter 5 will be the areas, possibly some of 6. <i>First short paper due after the midterm, next week. Topics will be posted online.</i>
7	3/6, 8	Continue with Chapter 6
8	3/13, 15	Continue
9	3/20, 22	Continue
10	3/27, 29	Spring Recess
11	4/3, 5	Continue; Group work and then we will take the <i>Second Midterm</i> on Chapter 6. <i>Second short paper due after we take the midterm.</i>
12	4/10, 12	We should begin Chapter 7 here, <i>Freedom</i> . Do we have free will? Depending on the answer, how should we consider how to care for ourselves (and what that means will be discussed). Additional short

		readings will be made from earlier chapters.
13	4/17, 19	Continue
14	4/24, 26	Continue.
15	5/1, 3	Continue Let's try for the <i>last paper here</i> in this week and begin group work
16	5/8, 10	Group Work and last day 5/10
		<i>Final Examination: Friday May 18, 1445-1700. .</i>