

**Istituto Lorenzo de' Medici**

**2019 Summer Program**

**PHIL 101 Introduction to Philosophy**

**Course Outline**

**Term: June 17-July 19, 2019**

**Class Hours: 10:00 - 11:50 (Monday through Friday)**

**Course Code: PHIL 101**

**Instructor: Dr. Faraz Sheikh**

**Home Institution: College of William & Mary**

**Office Hours: Friday 15:00 - 18:00**

**Email: [fmsheikh@wm.edu](mailto:fmsheikh@wm.edu)**

**Credit: 4**

**Class hours**

This course will have 72 total class hours, including 40 lecture hours, 12 instructor office hours, 12-hours of TA-led discussion sessions (four sessions of 3 hour each), 8 hours of review sessions (four review sessions, 2 hours each led by Instructor and/or the TA ).

**Course Description**

The purpose of this course is to familiarize students with concerns and debates about reality, the possibility of knowledge, the agent of knowing, and the relationships between knowledge, freedom and action that permeate western philosophy. What are the basic constituents of reality? How may we gain knowledge of reality? Who or what is the moral agent and possessor of knowledge? How does action relate with knowledge? Are human beings responsible for their action? These are the kinds of questions that we shall raise and address through selected primary sources throughout our five weeks together. The course begins by raising formal questions about methods and processes of reasoning and then examines the aforementioned questions and other philosophical debates in the western philosophical tradition. One of the elemental aims of this course is to expose students to primary sources and to help them navigate the forms of reasoning they employ in addressing questions about reality, knowledge, selfhood, and the good life.

## **Required Texts**

All readings will be provided in the form of pdfs on the course website. Most readings are from the book *Western Philosophy: An Anthology* edited John Cottingham, Blackwell Publishers, 1996. In the detailed syllabus, this book is referred to in the shortened form as **WP**. Also we will read the short book *A rulebook for Arguments*

## **Course Requirements:**

Attendance and Class Participation 20%  
Two Response Papers 40% (20% each)  
Midterm: 20%  
Final: 20%

## **Detailed Course Requirements**

### **Participation and Attendance: 20%**

This course is designed to stimulate discussion and conversation about the issues and philosophers we shall take up during class. The success of the course depends largely on your careful preparation and substantive participation in our conversations. Consequently, attendance is mandatory. Your participation or discussion grade, which will constitute 15% of your final grade, will be based on your active contribution of thoughts, questions, and answers during class time. You must come to class having already read and reflected upon the reading assigned for that day. Here is my grading scale for participation:

- A: participates with original ideas and insights that show in-depth reflection on the reading material
- B: participates, but only by answering specific questions or repeating others' ideas
- C: present without substantial participation
- D: present with no participation
- F: absent, asleep, reading, disturbing others, etc.

### **Response Papers: 20%**

For two reading assignments throughout the semester, you shall compose a 4-5 page (double-spaced, 12 pt. Times New Roman font) textual analysis papers. You shall submit it at the beginning of the classes for which the readings have been assigned. I will provide "prompts" for each of the papers.

### **Midterm and Final: 20% and 20%**

During these exams you will have the opportunity to demonstrate what you have learned during the course of our semester-long conversation. The exams will be a combination of short-essay questions and one lengthier essay.

### **A note on reading for this course**

This course requires students to engage with the assigned readings with both attention and care. For each of the sessions, I shall send out questions that you should focus on as you do the assigned reading. An important part of the purpose of the course is to enable you to read texts that may appear daunting at first glance. We will only be able to acquire the ability to fruitfully engage with and develop in relation to the material of the course if you come to class after carefully reading the assigned material.

### **Detailed Weekly Course Schedule** (WP refers to the book “Western Philosophy: An Anthology”)

#### **Week One:**

Monday:

Introduction to the course

“The Value of Philosophy,” Bertrand Russell in *Introduction to Philosophy*

Tuesday:

“Short Arguments,” and “Generalizations,” in *A Rulebook for Arguments* pg. 1-31

Wednesday:

“Arguments about Causes,” and “Deductive Arguments,” in *A Rulebook for Arguments*

Thursday: pg. 32-78

Thursday

“Spiritual Exercises” in *Philosophy as a Way of Life* Pierre Hadot Pg. 81-95

Friday:

“Spiritual Exercises” in *Philosophy as a Way of Life* Pierre Hadot Pg. 95-109

TA-led session (3 hours)

#### **Week Two: Being and Reality**

Monday:

WP, “Being and Reality”, Plato’s Cave p.62-70

Tuesday:

WP, “Being and Reality”, From Aristotle’s Categories to Hume’s Human Understanding p. 70-85

Wednesday

WP, Leibniz to Hume's Empiricism p. 85-102

Thursday

WP, Kant to Carnap p. 103-122

Review Session # 1

Friday:

TA-led session (3 hours): Discuss Specimen questions on WP p. 122

**Reflection Paper # 1 due by 5 pm**

### **Week Three: Mind and Body**

Monday:

WP, "Mind and Body" Plato to Aquinas p. 126-145

Tuesday:

WP, "Mind and Body" Descartes to Malebranche, p. 145-160

Wednesday:

WP, "Mind and Body" p. 160-170

Thursday:

WP, "Mind and Body" p. 170-181

Review Session # 2

Discuss Specimen Questions on WP p. 182

**Friday:**

**Midterm Exam**

### **Week Four:**

Monday

WP, "Self and Freedom" p. 186-202

Tuesday

WP, "Self and Freedom" p. 203-228

Wednesday

WP, "Self and Freedom" p. 228-240

Thursday

WP, "God and Religion" p. 244-265  
Review Session # 3

Friday:

WP, "Reason, Passion and Religion" p. 283-296  
TA-led session (3 hours): Discuss Specimen questions on WP p. 241  
**Reflection Paper # 2 is due**

### **Week Five: God and Religion; Ethics and Authority**

Monday:

WP, From Hume to Kierkegaard p. 265-283  
Review Session # 4: Discuss Specimen questions on WP p. 295-296

Tuesday:

WP: Gender and human rights p. 433-443

Wednesday:

WP: Beauty and Art (Kant) p. 555-561

Thursday:

WP, "Authority and the State" Locke and Hobbes excerpts

Friday:

**Final Exam**