

PHIL 1001: Foundations in Philosophy

Fall 2018

Marquette University

Section 157: Tuesday & Thursday, 3:30 pm - 4:45 pm (Lalumiere Language Hall 296)

Instructor: Robert K. Whitaker

Office Hours: Wednesday, 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm, & Thursday, 1:30 pm - 3:00 pm; or by appointment (MH 424)

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Course Description

This course aims to help students critically engage their own experience as it relates to fundamental philosophical questions about the human condition, focusing on moral value and the meaning and purpose of human life. It aims to help students articulate their own deepest questions about these issues, and to increase their understanding of, organize, and befriend these questions in light of a variety of classical and contemporary philosophical approaches.

Texts

§ There is no required textbook for this class. All required and recommended readings will be available as PDF files via D2L.

Core Learning Outcomes

This course is part of the Marquette University Core. This course introduces the following Core learning outcomes:

Responsible and Ethical Communicators

Marquette students will be able to responsibly and ethically use written, spoken and visual communication to express ideas, create meaning, build relationships, foster understanding, and advocate for a better tomorrow.

Moral and Ethical Actors

Marquette students will be able to articulate appropriate professional and personal judgments that are rooted in an ethical and moral foundation and informed by Catholic, Jesuit thought. They will seek to analyze the sources and implications of inequity for a stronger community and a just society.

Citizens with Purpose

Marquette students will develop a sense of purpose professionally, personally, and as global citizens who demonstrate critically reflective discernment processes that are rooted in their theological, intellectual, and personal commitments.

This course advances the aims of the foundational courses and of the Core Curriculum at Marquette. Central questions and topics in Philosophy ask that students consider their roles as responsible and ethical communicators, ethical actors, and citizens with purpose. The course learning objectives, related activities,

and assignments are designed to help students realize their own philosophical questions, understand how historical and contemporary philosophers ask and answer central philosophical issues, and discern different approaches and methodologies for philosophical exploration.

Course Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- (1) **Articulate their own deepest philosophical questions:** Articulate their own fundamental questions about the nature of the human condition, moral value, and the meaning and purpose of human life in relation to a variety of philosophical approaches to these questions. Students should be able to express in writing and orally how their own experiences have made these questions relevant for them and may influence their preliminary answers to these questions.
- (2) **Explain how past and present philosophers have asked and attempted to answer these and related questions:** Explain how a variety of philosophical approaches ask and attempt to answer questions about the nature of the human condition, moral value, and the meaning and purpose of human life and the logical connections philosophical approaches make among these ideas (e.g., how a philosopher's understanding of human nature or the human condition bears on their understanding of morality and meaning/purpose of human existence).
- (3) **Demonstrate facility with a variety of critically reflective philosophical processes of discernment:** Demonstrate facility with a variety of critically reflective processes of discernment philosophers use to address fundamental questions about the human condition, moral value, and the meaning and purpose of human life.

Objective 1 will be assessed via the Curiosity Assignment. Objective 2 will be assessed via the Perspectives Assignment. Objective 3 will be assessed via the Methodologies Assignment. See below for details.

Course Requirements

Course Composition:

Curiosity Assignment	10%
Perspectives Assignment	10%
Methodologies Assignment	10%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%
Critical Paper	15%
Video Responses	5%
Participation	5%
Final Reflection Assignment	5%

The grading scale is as follows:

A	94 – 100	C	73 – 76.9
A-	90 – 93.9	C-	70 – 72.9
B+	87 – 89.9	D+	67 – 69.9
B	83 – 86.9	D	60 – 66.9
B-	80 – 82.9	F	... – 59.9
C+	77 – 79.9		

Curiosity Assignment: This assignment has two parts:

(1) There will be 5 short reflections assigned throughout the semester. These will be clearly marked with a “**C**” in the schedule. Any place a C appears will be a unit for which you will write a reflection for this assignment. These reflections should be no more than a **single paragraph, double-spaced; the date they are due is listed in the schedule.** The goal of the reflection is to state how the central ideas of the unit we are in **relate to you.** Note: the assignment is *not* to critique or defend any view we have discussed, nor is it to merely restate any view we have discussed. The assignment is to describe in your own words how the ideas in that unit are relevant to your own life. Each of these short reflections will be worth **1 point.**

(2) Towards the end of the semester, you will write a slightly longer reflection—no more than a **single page, double-spaced**—in which you pose your own philosophical questions, and discuss their relevance and importance to you. Note: the assignment is *not* to choose a philosophical view we have discussed, and then say how it is relevant to your life. That is what you will have been doing in the 5 short reflections, and my hope is that that experience will help to prepare you for this longer reflection. But its goal is different: you must come up with **your own philosophical question(s).** We will discuss in class the differences between philosophical and non-philosophical questions to assist you in this. But the content of your questions, and the importance they hold for you, is entirely up to you. (NB: If you find that your own philosophical questions closely resemble or even mirror some that we have discussed in class, that is fine. But they may be entirely different.) This single-page reflection will be worth **5 points,** and is **due on November 29.**

For both portions of this assignment, I will post a document on D2L with questions to ask yourself to help you think through what your philosophical questions might be, as well as some examples of acceptable philosophical questions related to the topics in the schedule. The Curiosity Assignment is worth **10%** of your grade.

Perspectives Assignment: You will write a **single-page, double-spaced** reflection comparing the views of any two philosophers from the schedule (you may use either required or recommended readings). In your reflection, you should address the following questions for each philosopher you choose: (1) What is most central to defining humanity? (2) What does it mean to say that something is good or bad? (3) What is the point of human life? If a philosopher does not discuss all of these issues in the assigned text (this is likely), speculate about what their answers might be based on what they do say. I will provide a table to help you organize your thoughts here, and we will discuss some examples in class. The Perspectives Assignment is due on **December 11.** It is worth **10%** of your grade.

Methodologies Assignment: On the second day of class, we will discuss various philosophical methodologies that we will be encountering in class and the main differences between them. After this

lecture, you will complete a quiz, administered on D2L, to assess your comprehension of these distinctions. The quiz will have 20 multiple choice or true/false questions, and will include definitions, matching methods with examples, and identifying the core idea of each method. The Methodologies Assignment is due on **September 13**. It is worth **10%** of your grade.

Midterm Exam: There will be a midterm exam on **October 16**. The exam will include 40 multiple choice and short answer questions. A study guide will be provided. The midterm exam is worth **20%** of your grade.

Final Exam: There will be a (non-comprehensive) final exam on **December 13, from 8:00 am - 10:00 am**. The exam will include 40 multiple choice and short answer questions. A study guide will be provided. The final exam is worth **20%** of your grade.

Critical Paper: The critical paper consists of an **articulation and assessment** of at least one of the philosophical views considered during the course of the semester. This does not have to be a direct response to one of the readings, though it should be conversant with at least one of the authors we've covered. You will need to **identify and explain the argument or position you are responding to**, but the bulk of the paper should be **your own argumentation**. This may take the form of critiquing the argument of an author, critiquing a philosophical position taken by one or more authors, critiquing an entire style of approach to a type of philosophical problem, and/or making a positive case for your own view over and against the view of one or more of our authors. I will provide a list of potential topics for this paper, and I encourage you to choose something that interests you. You may also suggest something that is not on the list (pending my approval). You will submit the paper (PDF or Word files only please) **in the D2L dropbox by November 20, at 11:59 pm**. There is no need to turn in a hard copy. The critical paper is worth **15%** of your grade.

Specifications: 2-3 pages in length, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, with 1-inch margins, correct grammar, and proper citation.* See "Critical Paper Rubric" on D2L for further detail.

* I do not care what citation style you use, so long as whatever style you choose is consistent throughout, and so long as all sources, quotations, and borrowed ideas are properly cited (see below regarding academic honesty). No cover page or separate bibliography page is necessary, nor will such count towards page total. Footnotes are preferred over endnotes.

Video Responses: Five times throughout the semester, I will assign short videos for you to watch before class (see places in the schedule marked with a "V"). The videos will typically feature some thought-provoking content relevant to the unit we are in at that time. You will prepare a question about the video(s), and bring it to class, typed and printed. **Handwritten questions will not be accepted.** We may watch portions of the video(s) again together in class, and then we will split into groups to discuss your questions. You will turn in your questions at the end of class. **To receive credit, you must be present for the whole class on the day you turn in a response (unless you have a valid excuse).** These will not be graded for content, but you will receive **one point** for each question you turn in, which together will constitute **5%** of your grade.

Participation: Participation involves two things: 1. class involvement, and 2. at least one 1-on-1 meeting with me outside of class. **Class involvement:** your involvement is essential to the success of this class and to your success in this class. This means that a) active listening and note-taking, b) open questioning, and c)

creative discussion are expected of you. Note that all of these things require attendance; thus, if your attendance drops below the required minimum, your participation grade will suffer. Class involvement constitutes **4%** of your grade (though excessive absences will result in a greater than 4% grade reduction—see below under “Attendance”). **Individual meeting:** you are responsible for meeting with me at least once during office hours or by appointment **on or before December 6**. This meeting may be in relation to your paper or another class assignment, but this is not necessary. A 10-15 minute chat about questions you might have had in class or anything philosophical fulfills this requirement. Please do not delay in scheduling this meeting, as I cannot guarantee extra appointments towards the end of the semester. The individual meeting constitutes **1%** of your grade.

Final Reflection Assignment: At the end of the semester, you will turn in a written reflection on how the topics discussed in the course relate to the second and third Core Learning Outcomes listed above: (2) Moral and Ethical Actors, and (3) Citizens with a Purpose. The purpose of this assignment is for you to demonstrate how what you have studied in the course has introduced you to these two course outcomes. This is a required assignment that is common to all sections of PHIL 1001. **The assignment will be posted as a separate document on D2L, along with a detailed worksheet.** We will also go over it in class when it is assigned. Your work will be graded as either Proficient, Competent, or Weak according to the rubric for the assignment, which will be included in the posted document. The Final Reflection Assignment is **due on the day of the final exam** (please bring it with you to class). It is worth **5%** of your grade.

Attendance: Attendance is required. From the University Attendance Policy:

“Students are responsible for attending all class meetings for courses in which they are registered. Any absence, regardless of the reason, prevents students from getting the full benefit of the course and as such, no distinction is made between excused and unexcused absences, with the following exceptions:

1. Absences resulting from legal obligations (such as jury duty).
2. Absences due to religious observances.
3. Absences resulting from university sanctioned activities and related travel.”

For more info, see: <http://bulletin.marquette.edu/undergrad/academicregulations/#attendance>.

For a 2 day/week course such as this, **any unexcused absences beyond three will result in a lowering of your grade.** 4 unexcused absences will result in the loss of 2 participation points; 5 unexcused absences will result in the loss of 4 participation points. More than 5 unexcused absences will result in the loss of 4 participation points, plus a further 4 percentage points off the **final course grade** per absence over 7. Please discuss any planned absences with me long in advance. Additionally, punctuality is expected; if you come to class late, it is your responsibility to make sure I know you are there, preferably by seeing me at the end of class so I can mark you on the attendance sheet.

Late Work/Make-Up Work Policy: Five percentage points will be deducted from the student’s assignment grade for each late day (including weekends). For example, a student who has earned an 85% (B) on an assignment but who has turned it in a day late may receive a maximum grade of 80% (B-). There will be no make-up opportunity for missed exams, except in extraordinary circumstances.

Extra Credit: I have included several **recommended readings** in the schedule. These are clearly marked as “Recommended” and appear in a slightly smaller font size. You are not required to read these for class, but if you choose, you may read one and write a short (**2-3 paragraphs, double-spaced**) response summarizing the main argument of the article. The goal is not to critique the article, but simply to restate in your own

words the central argument that the author is making. Each will be worth a maximum of **2 final percentage points**. You may write a maximum of **two** extra credit reading responses during the semester. These may be turned in (hard copy please) any time up to and including **December 6**.

Reading Incentive: In lieu of regular reading quizzes, you will have the following opportunity: for each day of class, you may bring in a **single 4x6 note card** with notes you have taken from the required reading for that day, **completed prior to the class for which the reading is assigned**. These may be turned in at the beginning of class. **Please print your name clearly at the top of each note card**. On exam day (midterm and final), I will return to you any note cards you have turned in, and you may use them on the exam. If you don't turn them in, you don't get any help on the exams.

Grading: Grading rubrics for the critical paper, the final reflection assignment, and the curiosity and perspectives assignments will be posted on D2L.

Writing: Good writing is a basic skill in any professional field, and I expect you to put in the necessary effort to make sure that all written assignments are lucid and well organized. A **“Tips for Writing Philosophy Papers”** document will be posted on D2L. Please use it. If you need additional help with this, the Ott Memorial Writing Center, located on the second floor of Raynor Library, offers comprehensive guidance in writing for the entire Marquette community. In one-on-one sessions, tutors assist writers in identifying topics, revising, and creating final drafts. Appointments can be made by calling (414) 288-5542 or visiting <https://marquette.mywconline.com/>.

Reading: The reading for this course is difficult. Despite this, it is crucial that you keep up with the reading schedule and engage the material (especially since the lectures and all assignments are based on the readings). This means setting aside adequate time to engage the material *before class*. I have tried to keep the assigned readings to a length that allows you to wrestle with the material without getting overwhelmed. If something from the reading is unclear, you may always bring it up in class, or in a meeting with me. Remember that reading philosophy is a skill like any other, and you will get better at it with practice.

Academic Dishonesty: The College of Arts and Sciences and the Philosophy Department policies on academic dishonesty will be enforced. *Ignorance is not an excuse*. Please refer to these policies for more details or contact me with particular questions in order to avoid any problems. The College's policies can be found in the Undergraduate Bulletin and online here: <http://bulletin.marquette.edu/undergrad/academicregulations/>.

More information on what counts as academic dishonesty as well as tips on how to avoid it can be found here: <http://libguides.marquette.edu/plagiarism>, and here: <http://www.plagiarism.org/plagiarism-101/what-is-plagiarism/>.

*A useful, but not foolproof, rule of thumb: When in doubt, err on the side of over-citing.

In this course you will be required to submit your critical paper in electronic form to a plagiarism detection website called Turnitin (this is done automatically via the D2L dropbox). Your assignments become a permanent part of the Turnitin database, but will not be used for any purpose other than checking for plagiarism.

Disabilities: Students with documented physical or learning disabilities wishing to have special accommodations should contact me as soon as possible. In addition, the Office of Disability Services is

available to assist you. They can be reached by phone at (414) 288-1645 or online here: <http://www.marquette.edu/disability-services/>. The University policy on accommodation of disabilities can be found here: <http://bulletin.marquette.edu/undergrad/personalresourcesandfacilities/#disabilityservices>.

Phones and Computers: Unless a legitimate reason is provided, mobile phones and computers are to be off and put away for the duration of the class. Texting, or any other form of electronic communication, is strictly prohibited. Use of phones, computers, tablets, etc., will lower your participation grade.

Food and Drink: Please try to avoid bringing food into the classroom. However, in the exceptional case, choose being engaged in class while eating a snack over not eating and being unable to focus. Beverages in closed containers are welcome.

Conduct: Disagreement is a basic feature of philosophy and all other academic discourse. In this class, we will be discussing important and controversial issues. We may be engaging in discussions which challenge some of our most deeply held beliefs, and disagreement is sure to arise. For this reason, it is vital for each student, and myself, to always conduct ourselves with the utmost generosity and sensitivity toward one another and our authors. I reserve the right to steer discussions in whatever way I deem most appropriate to the day's lesson, and I will not tolerate rude, disrespectful, or offensive comments. If you are unsure whether something you plan to say or do could possibly be offensive, always talk to me before sharing it with the class.

Tentative Schedule

All readings should be completed by the date assigned.

“C” indicates a Curiosity Reflection assignment

“V” indicates a Video Response assignment

Date	Text	Page #
What Is Philosophy?		
Week 1 (8/28 - 8/30)	Intro to Course	
	What Is an Argument? (No Reading)	
	Bertrand Russell: <i>Philosophy for Laymen</i>	1-10
Death & the Soul		
Week 2 (9/4 - 9/6)	Bertrand Russell: <i>Philosophy for Laymen</i> (Continued)	1-10
	Philosophical Methodologies Lecture	
	Plato: <i>Apology</i> Plato: <i>Phaedo</i> <i>Recommended:</i> Plato: “The Allegory of the Cave”	1-17 127-133 63-70
Mind & Body		
Week 3 (9/11 - 9/13)	Alvin Plantinga: “Against Materialism”	3-15
	Peter van Inwagen: “Dualism and Physicalism” <i>Recommended:</i> David Armstrong: “The Nature of Mind”	224-240 270-277
	NO CLASS: INSTRUCTOR AWAY *Methodologies Quiz Due*	
Mind & Body (Continued) / The Self		C (due 9/27)
Week 4 (9/18 - 9/20)	Plantinga & van Inwagen (Continued)	V
	Peter Harvey: “Theravāda Philosophy of Mind and the Person” Fazang: “The Rafter Dialogue” & “Essay on the Golden Lion”	265-274 80-91
The Self (Continued) / Free Will		C (due 10/4)
Week 5 (9/25 - 9/27)	Harvey & Fazang (Continued)	
	Peter van Inwagen: “The Powers of Rational Beings: Freedom of the Will” <i>Recommended:</i> G.E. Moore: “Free Will”	267-285 396-401
Free Will (Continued) / God		C (due 10/11)
Week 6 (10/2 - 10/4)	Harry Frankfurt: “Alternate Possibilities and Moral Responsibility”	408-414
	William Rowe: “The Idea of God”	V 4-15
	William Lane Craig: “Five Arguments for God” <i>Recommended:</i> William Rowe: “The Cosmological Argument”	1-10 16-28
God (Continued) / Evil		

Week 13 (11/20 - 11/22)	James Rachels: "The Theory of Natural Law," Ch. 4 (from <i>The Elements of Moral Philosophy</i>) Friedrich Nietzsche: "The Madman" (from <i>The Gay Science</i>) <i>Recommended:</i> Harry Gensler: "Natural Law and Rationality" (from <i>Ethics and Religion</i>) *Critical Paper Due*	54-58 57-83
	NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING	
Contract Theory		
Week 14 (11/27 - 11/29)	Thomas Hobbes: "The Social Contract" James Rachels: "The Social Contract Theory" (6.3-6.5) (from <i>The Elements of Moral Philosophy</i>) <i>Recommended:</i> Jean-Jacques Rousseau: from "Discourse on Inequality" & a Selection from <i>Emile</i> <i>Recommended:</i> John Stuart Mill: "The Limits of Majority Rule"	1-6 89-98 6-10 110-113 516-522
	John Rawls: "The Original Position and the Principles of Justice" Robert Nozick: "A Libertarian Critique of Rawls" *Curiosity Assignment Due*	684-693 694-702
Gender & Race		
Week 15 (12/4 - 12/6)	<i>Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy:</i> "Topics in Feminism," § 2 Hilde Lindemann: "What is Feminist Ethics?" <i>Recommended:</i> Mary Wollstonecraft: "A Vindication of the Rights of Woman" <i>Recommended:</i> John Stuart Mill: from <i>The Subjection of Women</i> <i>Recommended:</i> Jean Grimshaw: "The Idea of a Female Ethic"	1-9 663-670 397-408 153-161 221-238
	Lawrence Blum: "Can Blacks Be Racist?" (from <i>I'm Not a Racist But...</i>) <i>Recommended:</i> George Yancy: "Elevators, Social Spaces, and Racism" <i>Recommended:</i> Martin Luther King, Jr.: "Letter from Birmingham Jail"	V 843-868
Finals Week		
Week 16 (12/11 - 12/13)	*Perspectives Assignment Due*	
	Final Exam: Thursday, December 13, 8:00 am - 10:00 am *Final Reflection Assignment Due*	