

**Three Rivers Community College**  
**Introduction to Philosophy**  
**Spring 2018**  
**PH101 3:00-4:15 MW**

Instructor: Carol Stanland

Email: CStanland@trcc.commnet.edu

Required Text: Readings to be handed out

Other Requirements: an email account; access to blackboard

**Course Description:**

Who or what are we? Do we have an essential self or soul? What is reality, and how do we know this? How do we determine what is right...and wrong? How do we determine the best way to structure society? This course will provide an introduction to some of these basic concepts and questions of philosophy, and to the ways various people and cultures have addressed them. We will proceed historically in pursuit of an understanding of how philosophical ideas have developed, since their origin in ancient times.

We will explore several of the main branches of philosophy in three ways: (1) reading, interpreting, and discussing philosophical texts; (2) discussing other writings that directly or indirectly address philosophical themes; and (3) applying philosophical concepts to our own lives.

To prepare for each class, you should: 1) **read** the appropriate primary source selection and 2) **take notes for class discussion** on the answers to the "Questions for Analysis" at the **beginning** of each selection. The questions are intended to help you to dissect the meaning of the reading. As you take notes, **do not** copy verbatim from the textbook: Make an effort to explain things in your own words. Even in note-taking, in the event that you wish to quote the author's words, get in the habit of **using quotation marks**. 3) In class, you should be prepared to **discuss** the primary source readings, based on the "Questions for Analysis." In addition, you should: 4) **be prepared to engage** in a give-and-take discussion on them in class.

Sometimes, in class, we will read or view a short supplemental reading or video clip that will address concepts from the primary source reading. The purpose of this is to help you to think about how the philosophical ideas presented in the primary source reading can be applied to various 'real life' issues. This skill of application will be evaluated on some of the paper-writing assignments, so using class discussion time to 'practice' applying ideas should be maximized.

**Course Objectives and Benefits:**

1) To strengthen critical and analytical reading and thinking skills. Readings will be selections from primary sources, that is, writings by the philosophers themselves. You may find these to be quite challenging. Read slowly and carefully.

2) To obtain a grasp of the overall scope of the evolution of the history of ideas and its major defining world views.

3) To hone verbal and written communication skills in order to clearly and convincingly argue a well thought-out conviction.

4) To heighten your self-awareness of your own personal philosophy and your core values.

### **Class Participation and Preparation:**

A significant part of the class will involve discussion of philosophical issues and problems. In order to participate meaningfully in discussion, you must obviously be prepared by having read the assignment(s) and taken notes on the answers to the questions for that day. Class participation is **extremely important**. As fulfillment of your homework grade, expect to be called on in class to address the “Questions for Analysis” or other questions that arise during class discussion. Please, no playing with your phones during class time!

### **Exams:**

There will be three **noncumulative** exams, **each** of which will constitute 16% of your grade. These will be open notebook/closed book, meaning that you may use your class notes as well as your “Questions for Analysis” notes that you took at home. The tests will be medium length essay questions that test your comprehension of the philosophical ideas presented in the reading and through the lectures, and enhanced through class discussions. Please note that comprehension and regurgitation are not the same thing. A sample test question will be provided before the midterm. Three to four multiple choice questions will be provided on each exam for extra credit.

### **Papers:**

You will be expected to write two 1 3/4- 2 page papers, and one 4 3/4-5 page paper for this class. Guidelines and more information on papers will be given in class. There is no penalty for exceeding paper length; however, if the length falls below the required minimum you can expect a lower grade.

Also, I accept rewrites on the first two papers, but not the third. Your final paper grade, should you decide to do a rewrite, will be the average of the initial grade and grade on the rewrite.

### **Grading Summary**

Participation	8%
Test 1	16
Test 2	16
Test 3	16
Paper 1	13
Paper 2	13
Paper 3	18
<u>Total</u>	100%

## Grading policy :

- A level work indicates outstanding achievement in all aspects of the course/assignment
- B level work indicates high achievement in some aspects of the assignment/course.
- C level work indicates adequate achievement—a basic understanding of the material and, in written assignments, an ability to express one’s thoughts readably; average/satisfactory quality.
- D to F level work is inadequate in many or all areas.

This policy is meant to reestablish long-held standards so that grades are not emptied of their meaning. A grade of C is an adequate grade indicating that the student met the basic requirements of an assignment, but not to a noteworthy level. Therefore, students should not be horrified at receiving a C, but they should be able to see from the instructor’s feedback that there are many ways they could improve in the future. This policy means that an A grade is reserved for outstanding, exceptional achievement.

## Attendance Policy:

Regular attendance at class meetings is expected. Emergencies are obviously excepted. You are responsible for obtaining the notes you missed from a classmate. In the event of an emergency, special permission to turn in papers late, or to make up exams, must be arranged with me.

## Academic Integrity:

**This course is subject to the University’s Academic Integrity Policy. Please review the policy online. If you have questions about how it pertains to our course, do not hesitate to ask me. PLAGIARISM WILL NOT BE TOLERATED!!!**

## Academic Support:

Please note the the writing center provides academic support for all students.

## Statement of Policy for Public Act No. 14-11: An Act Concerning Sexual Assault, Stalking and Intimate Partner Violence on Campus:

“The Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR) in conjunction with the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU) is committed to insuring that each member of every BOR governed college and university community has the opportunity to participate fully in the process of education free from acts of sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence and stalking. It is the intent of the BOR and each of its colleges or universities to provide safety, privacy and support to victims of sexual misconduct and intimate partner violence.”

## UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS TITLE IX STATEMENT OF POLICY:

“Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) prohibits discrimination based on sex in education programs and activities in federally funded schools at all levels. If any part of a school district or college receives any Federal funds for any purpose, all of the operations of the district or college are covered by Title IX.

Title IX protects students, employees, applicants for admission and employment, and other persons from all forms of sex discrimination, including discrimination based on gender identity or failure to conform to stereotypical notions of masculinity or femininity. All students (as well as other persons) at recipient institutions are protected by Title IX - regardless of their sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, part-or full-time status, disability, race, or national origin-in all aspects of a recipient's educational programs and activities."

If any student experiences sexual misconduct or harassment, and/or racial or ethnic discrimination on Three Rivers Community College Campus, or fears for their safety from a threat while on campus, please contact the Diversity Officer and Title IX Coordinator:

Admissions Welcome Center \* Office A116  
 574 New London Turnpike, Norwich CT 06360  
 860.215.9255

Schedule:

Date	In Class	Assignment Due
1/17	Introduction to philosophy; pre-Socratic philosophers	
1/22	Discuss Plato	1) Read Plato's "The Nature of the Soul and Its Relation to the Body" 2) Answer questions on reading
1/24	Discuss Plato	1) Read Plato's "Allegory of the Cave" and "Crito" 2) Answer questions on reading
1/29	Discuss Aristotle	1) Read Aristotle's "The Proper Function of Man and Its Relation to the Good Life" 2) Answer questions on reading
1/31	Discuss Lucretius	1) Read Lucretius' "On the Nature of Things" 2) Answer questions on reading
2/5	Discuss Augustine	1) Read Augustine's "Confessions" 2) Answer questions on reading
2/7	Discuss White	1) Read White's "The Historical Roots of our Ecological Crisis" 2) Answer questions on reading
2/12	Discuss Merchant	1) Read Merchant's "Mining the Earth's Womb" 2) Answer questions on reading
2/14	Discuss Descartes <b><u>**first paper due</u></b>	1) Read Descartes' "Meditations on the Nature of Knowledge" 2) Answer questions on reading

2/21	<b>TEST 1</b>	
2/26	Discuss Locke	1) Read Locke's "The Source of our Knowledge" and short excerpt from "On Personal Identity" 2) Answer questions on reading
2/28	Discuss Hume	1) Read Hume's "Doubts Concerning the Possibility of Knowledge" and short excerpt from "There is no Personal Identity" 1) Answer questions on reading
3/5	Discuss Rousseau	1) Read Rousseau's "The Social Contract" 2) Answer questions on reading
3/7	Discuss Kant	1) Read Kant's "The Good Will and Morality" 2) Answer questions on reading
3/19	<b>Discuss Bentham and Mill</b>	1) Read Bentham's "The Principle of Utility" 2) Read Mill's "What Utilitarianism Is" 3) Answer questions on reading
3/21	Discuss Mill	1) Read Mill's "On Liberty" 1) Answer questions on reading
3/26	Discuss Bergson <b>**second paper due</b>	1) Read Bergson's "An Introduction to Metaphysics" 2) Answer questions on reading
3/28	Discuss Sartre	1) Read Sartre's "Existentialism is a Humanism" 2) Answer questions on reading
4/2	<b>TEST 2</b>	
4/4	Discuss de Beauvoir	1) Read de Beauvoir's "Woman as the Second Sex" 2) Answer questions on reading
4/9	Discuss James	1) Read James' "Pragmatism's Conception of Truth" 2) Answer questions on reading
4/11	Discuss Dennett	1) Read Dennett's "Darwin's Dangerous Idea" 2) Answer questions on reading
4/16	Discuss Wong	1) Read Wong's "Relativism" 2) Answer questions on reading
4/18	Discuss Held	1) Read Held's "The Ethics of Care" 2) Answer questions on reading
4/23	Discuss Tuana	1) Read Tuana's "Revaluing Science" 2) Answer questions on reading
4/25	Discuss Mumford	1) Read Mumford's "Tool Users v. Homo Sapiens and the Megamachine" 2) Answer questions on reading

4/30	Discuss Williams	1) Read Williams' "Must a Concern for the Environment be Centered on Human Beings?" 2) Answer questions on reading
5/2	Discuss Hawkins	1) Read Hawkins' "Perceiving Overpopulation: Can't we see what we're doing?" 2) Answer questions on reading
5/7	Discuss Abram <b>**third paper due</b>	1) Read Abram's "Philosophy on the Way to Ecology" 2) Answer questions on reading
5/9	<b>TEST 3</b>	

### Grading Rubric for Writing

**Organization** - (1) Paper is structured logically to include: (a) an introduction with a clear statement of the central idea (e.g., purpose, position, problem, or thesis of the paper) as well as an explanation of how the paper is organized; (b) topic sentences for each paragraph that introduce supporting ideas; (c) clear transitions between paragraphs that link all the ideas; (d) a concluding paragraph that revisits your thesis and answers the question: So what?

**Elaboration and support** - Ideas are developed with adequate definition of terms as well as supporting details that include properly cited references, preferably to scholarly material related to the topic of the paper.

**Critical thinking** - Ideas are *analyzed* (by comparing, contrasting and/or challenging them), *evaluated* (by exploring the adequacy of assumptions and taking a position on them), and *synthesized* (by connecting them to other information or by summarizing and integrating them into a meaningful, inciteful whole).

**Diction and effective use of language** – College-level vocabulary and correct spelling and word choice are used. Correct capitalization, punctuation, verb tense, subject-verb agreement, and use of possessives are evidenced. There are no fragmented and/or run-on sentences. Ideas are expressed in a style that promotes ease of reading and clear communication of ideas.

**Research technique and academic integrity** - Sources are cited properly through the application of a standard documentation style assigned by the instructor (in the humanities, MLA is the accepted style). Plagiarism is grounds for a failing grade and will be reported as per College guidelines.

#### GRADE:

**A** Outstanding paper. It contains thought provoking insights and conclusions and demonstrates clear thinking. The paper is extremely well-written and edited.

**B** Good paper. It exceeds the criteria in a way that indicates a clear grasp of the topic(s) beyond merely summarizing information given. The paper is generally well written and focused.

**C** Average paper. It meets the criteria of the assignment. The paper may be improved with additional focus and/or editing. (Individual instructors have their own policies about accepting re-writes.)

**D** Below average paper. It is missing one of the more of the criteria. The paper requires additional focus and/or editing.

**F** Failed to meet the criteria of the assignment. (E.g. did not follow instructions, plagiarized, submitted paper late, other :\_\_\_\_\_).



