

Phil 102, Introduction to Philosophy

Albert (Tyke) Nunez:
AN16@mailbox.sc.edu
University of South Carolina, Fall 2021
Tu, Th: 8:30-9:45 GAMB 404

Office hours:
CLOSE-HIPP 514
Mon: 1:00-2:00 & Thurs: 4:30-5:30
& by appointment

This course will introduce students to some of the major philosophers of the two great “Enlightenments” of the western world: the Athenian and the Modern. Our focus will be on what is now called metaphysics and epistemology, specifically the nature of substances, causation, the human mind, and human knowledge. The first half of the course will primarily be concerned with Plato's *Pheado*, Aristotle's *Physics*, and Aristotle's *On the Soul*, works that largely set the agenda in natural science for over two thousand years. In the second half we will turn to the Modern Period, focusing on Descartes' *Meditations* and Hume's *Enquiry*. Through these texts we will consider central questions like: What is the nature of the human soul? How is change possible and what does this entail for the nature of the thing undergoing the change? Can nature be explained mechanically or must we appeal to final causes? Is some of our knowledge innate, as Plato and Descartes held, or is all knowledge acquired through experience, as Aristotle and Hume held? Can we attain certainty in our knowledge? How far can our knowledge be extended? And, what principles govern the operation of our minds?

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND REQUIREMENTS:

Reading Comprehension: Students will learn to identify claims and arguments in a text, i.e. to identify the conclusions that an author is arguing for and the considerations offered in support of those conclusions. This is not as easy as it sounds.

Assessment: Students are expected to carefully complete all the required reading before class. Readings should also be brought to class so that they may be consulted during discussion or for in-class exercises. We will devote class time to practicing close reading skills, particularly in the early weeks of the course.

There will be **reading questions**. These will be designed to help students think more carefully about the reading, and to begin to form reasoned opinions about it. Responding to these is therefore good preparation for discussion. For each meeting there will be at least one group of questions. (In cases where there is more than one group and the instructions do not say otherwise, students will choose one group to respond to). The total responses for each meeting should be **about two paragraphs**. You must hand these in during class. Because a main point of having you respond to these reading questions is to prepare you for discussion, responses to questions will not be accepted after the corresponding class. They will be graded on a **pass/fail** basis. Responses to reading questions are worth 10% of the final grade. Grading works as follows. You begin the semester with a score of 100 for the reading questions portion of your overall grade. If you fail to turn in one set of reading questions, your score is penalized one point. For each additional set of reading questions you miss, the penalty doubles. For example:

100

100 - 1 - 2 - 4 = 93

100 - 1 - 2 - 4 - 8 - 16 = 69

All reading questions turned in, A+.

All reading questions in but 3, A-.

All reading questions in but 5, D+!

Conversational Competence: Students will learn to discuss arguments with each other. This involves (1) asking questions, (2) answering questions, (3) making suggestions, and (4) listening to others. Emphasis is placed on treating one another respectfully while engaging in these activities.

Assessment: With respect to these four activities, students will be assessed for (A) attendance, (B) respect for others, and (C) participation. Achieving a decent participation score (85+) requires you to be continually present, attentive, and respectful in class, while participating in a serious and engaged way. Achieving a good score (93+) requires in addition that you *often* make helpful contributions to open-forum class discussion in most of the class meetings. This is a small class, so I hope all of you will often and regularly be contributing. **Respectful participation** is worth **10%** of the final grade. **When you hand in your reading questions at the end of class, I ask that you write down the number of times you participated that day at the top.** (Please don't lie! I was there; trust me, it's obvious.) I will count discussions we have in office hours towards this component of your grade.

Attendance in class is required. I will be taking attendance and keeping tabs on participation through the reading question submissions. **If you cannot make it to class**, but feel the absence should be **excused**, and thus feel you should receive credit for the week's reading questions, you will need to fill out an **"absence form."** (**This is the first assignment under the "assignments" tab on Blackboard.**) In most circumstances this form needs to be filled out prior to the missed class. Generally, if it is not, then the reading questions will not be accepted. For COVID-19 related absences, please see the note below.

Knowledge Acquisition: Students will become familiar with the claims and arguments discussed each week. This involves understanding (1) concepts, (2) the claims associated with various authors or views, (3) the arguments associated with various authors or views, and (4) how claims and arguments relate between authors or views.

Writing Competence: Students will learn to (1) articulate the arguments from a text in their own words, cogently reconstructing the reasoning involved, and to (2) evaluate these arguments using the positions of other authors we have studied.

Assessment: To assess these two course objectives there will be **four papers**. They will be of increasing length and complexity. The first will be about a page; the second, three to four; the third, four to six; the fourth, five to seven. The first paper is worth 5%, the second 15%, the third 25%, and the fourth 35% of the final grade. If you fail to hand in one of these, then you **automatically fail the course**.

Drafting and comments: These portions of the three longer essay assignments are to help you improve the final drafts of your essays. This is how they will help your final essay grades. They will hurt these grades if you do not make a good faith effort on them. If you do not hand in a good faith draft or do not give good faith comments on your peer's essay, then you will lose a letter grade on the final version of your essay. We will discuss what constitutes a good faith effort for each when these assignments are given.

Anonymous Grading: In order to facilitate fair and responsible grading, when you hand in the final version of each of the four writing assignments, they must not include your name or other identification. **Failure** to do so will result in a **penalty of one letter grade**. (The peer-review process is not anonymous.)

Format: All page guidelines for papers are based on a standard **12-point** font such as Times New Roman and a **double-spaced** page layout. I expect papers to be in this format.

RESOURCES:

There are a number of useful guides on how to go about writing a philosophy paper. See:

Pryor guide: <http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html>

Monash guide: <http://www.monash.edu.au/lis/lionline/writing/arts/philosophy/index.xml>

Please read Pryor's essay and/or spend a few hours working through the Monash guide.

GRADING: Reading response questions: 10%
In class participation: 10%
First Paper: 5%
Second Paper: 15%
Third Paper: 25%
Fourth Paper: 35%

OVERALL RUBRIC

A = 92–100%,	C = 72–76%,
B+ = 87–91%,	D+ = 67–71%,
B = 82–86%,	D = 62–66%,
C+ = 77–81%,	F = 0–61%

LATE POLICY: If for reasons beyond your control you are unable to submit your written work by the assigned deadline, you should request an extension *before* the deadline. Late papers without an extension may be penalized by a fraction of a grade point per day (e.g., a B+ paper one day overdue may receive a B; two days overdue, a B–; etc.). **If reading responses are late for any reason, they will not be accepted.**

ELECTRONIC DEVICES: Please do not use cell phones in this class. I would really prefer if you did not use any electronic devices at all. If you do use a laptop during class, please only use it to take notes. Finally, if you are using a laptop, please sit in the back of the class.

PLAGIARISM: Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of someone else's work as one's own in all forms of academic endeavor (such as essays, theses, examinations, research data, creative projects, etc), intentional or unintentional. Plagiarized material may be derived from a variety of sources, such as books, journals, internet postings, student or faculty papers, etc. This includes the purchase or “outsourcing” of written assignments for a course. A detailed definition of plagiarism in research and writing can be found in the fourth edition of the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, pages 26-29. The penalty for plagiarism is failure for the course. Students are also required to familiarize themselves with the University's Honor Code: <http://www.sc.edu/policies/ppm/staf625.pdf>

DISABILITY NOTICE: The University of South Carolina is committed to providing accommodations and/or services to students with documented disabilities. Students who are seeking support for a disability or a suspected disability should contact Disability Resource Center at 803-777-6142. The Disability Resource Center is responsible for approving all disability-related accommodations for U of SC students, and students are responsible for providing faculty members with formal documentation of their approved accommodations at least two weeks prior to using those accommodations. I will accept Disability Resources forms by email and personal delivery. If you have already been approved for accommodations, I request that you provide me with a copy of your forms within the first two weeks of the semester.

COVID-19 RELATED ABSENCES:

All absences due to documented illness or quarantine will be excused, and no grade penalty will be assessed for missing classes for this reason. If you experience COVID-19 symptoms, please stay home, contact the COVID-19 Student Health Services (SHS) nurse line (803-576-8511), complete the [COVID-19 Student Report Form](https://go.sc.edu/covidstudentreport) (go.sc.edu/covidstudentreport), and select the option allowing the Student Ombudsman to contact your professors. When talking with the SHS nurse, be sure to ask for documentation of the consult, as you will need this to document why you missed class. You will also use the COVID-19 Student Report Form if you have tested positive for COVID-19 or if you have been ordered to quarantine because of close contact with a person who was COVID-19 positive. In each of these situations you will be provided appropriate documentation that can be shared through the Student Report Form. For my class, I also ask that you fill out an absence form on Blackboard for the class you will be missing as soon as you can.

FACE COVERINGS AND VENTILATION:

Face coverings are not required in residential and instructional spaces but are encouraged when physical distancing is not possible. Face coverings will continue to be required in the Student Health Center. KN95 masks remain available by request at the Center for Health and Well Being.

In our classroom, I believe there is a stand-alone filtration system. I will endeavor to turn it on when I come in to the room. If you notice it is not on, I encourage you to turn it on, or to ask me to turn it on.

STUDENT WELL BEING:

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the [Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support](#). If you are comfortable doing so, please notify me as the professor so that we can find resources that may be helpful. Students may experience situations or challenges that can interfere with learning and interpersonal functioning including stress, anxiety, depression, substance use, concern for a family/friend, or feelings of hopelessness. Pay attention to what is happening in the classroom and in the lives of your fellow students. There are numerous campus resources available to students including University Counseling & Psychiatry Service and University Student Health Services. Help is available 24/7. Students who need immediate help should call 803-777-5223. An outside resource is the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (800-273-8255).

TEXTS: these should be in the bookstore. You can also get them online, but make sure they are these editions so that we all have the same translations and can find passages easily.

Plato. *Five Dialogues: Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Meno, Phaedo*, Translated by G. M. A. Grube.

Edited by John M. Cooper. 2nd Edition. Hackett Classics

Aristotle. *Complete Works of Aristotle, Vol. 1*, edited by Jonathan Barnes. Princeton University Press, 1984.

Descartes. *Selected Philosophical Writings*. Translated and edited by John Cottingham, Dugald Murdoch, and Robert Stoothoff. Cambridge, 1988.

Hume. *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding: with Hume's Abstract of A Treatise of Human Nature and A Letter from a Gentleman to His Friend in Edinburgh*. Hackett, 1993.

SCHEDULE:

The schedule of reading assignments and paper due dates is subject to change.

Dates	Readings	Papers Due
8/18	Introduction	
8/23	PLATO: <i>The Euthyphro</i> . “V1 The Socratic Method” “V2 Euthyphro pt. 1” “V3 Euthyphro pt. 2”	1ST Assigned
8/23	10:00pm, to Blackboard	1ST Final
8/25	Recollection argument. <i>The Meno</i> (80a-86c); <i>The Phaedo</i> . (Beginning to 77a; esp. 72e-77a)	
8/30	Affinity, harmony, and the reply to Simmias <i>The Phaedo</i> . (77b-99d)	
9/1	Accounts of change: reply to Cebes <i>The Phaedo</i> . (mainly 99d-107b, but read to the end) (Before drafting the essay, watch V44 & V45 “On Writing”)	2ND Assigned
9/6	ARISTOTLE: Metaphysics <i>Categories 1-5; Topics I.9;</i>	
9/8	change <i>Physics</i> Bk. I.7;	
9/10	4:00pm, Saturday, to Blackboard (Have you watched V44 & V45 “On Writing”?)	2ND Draft
9/13	PLATO: On the causes. Teleology vs. mechanism <i>The Phaedo</i> . (95a-99d) ARISTOTLE: Four causes, chance, Teleology vs. mechanism <i>Physics</i> . Bk. II (as much as possible, but esp. Ch. 1-3 for today); On the Soul II.1, 4	
9/15	chance, Teleology vs. mechanism <i>Physics</i> . Bk. II cont. (esp. Ch. 4-9);	

- 9/17 **4:00pm, Saturday, to Blackboard** **2ND Comments**
- 9/20 The soul and knowledge pt. 1
Metaphysics VI.1; *On the Soul* II.3, 5, 6, 12
- 9/22 Knowledge pt. 2
On the Soul III.3-5; *Posterior Analytics* II.19
- 9/24 **4:00pm, Saturday, to Blackboard** **2ND Final**
- 9/27 *Physics* Bk. I.1; *Metaphysics* I.1-2; *Posterior Analytics* I.1-2 & II.19
- 9/29 **DESCARTES:** The scientific revolution and Descartes' project
Discourse on the Method: Parts I–IV (pp. 20–40); and Synopsis
(May assign videos here if we are behind)
- 10/4 First Meditation (pp. 73-79); Objections and Replies (pp. 123–26); **3RD Assigned**
Principles of Philosophy (Part I): §§ 1–6 (pp. 160–161)
- 10/6 Second Meditation (pp. 80–86); Objections and Replies (pp. 126–131);
Principles §§ 7–10 (pp. 161–63)
- 10/11 Second Meditation cont.
- 10/13 FALL BREAK
- 10/15 **4:00pm, Saturday, to Blackboard** **3RD Draft**
(I hope you have already watched V44 & V45 “On Writing.”)
- 10/18 Third Meditation (pp. 86–98); Objections and Replies (pp. 131–33);
Principles §§ 13, 17, 23, 24, 26, 27, 45, 46, 51;
- 10/20 Third Meditation cont.;
- 10/22 **4:00pm, Saturday, to Blackboard** **3RD Comments**
- 10/25 Fourth Meditation (pp. 98–105);
Objections and Replies (pp. 133–35); *Principles* §§ 34, 35, 42;
- 10/27 Fifth Meditation (pp. 105–110); Objections and Replies (pp. 139–43);
Sixth Meditation (pp. 110–22); *Principles* §§ 52–54, 56, 60–62;
(If we are behind, I may assign extra videos here)
- 10/29 **4:00pm, Saturday, to Blackboard** **3RD Final**
- 11/1 Sixth Meditation cont.; *Principles* §§ 49.
ELIZABETH: Correspondence (On Blackboard)
- 11/3 **DESCARTES:** *Comments on a Certain Broadsheet*
(read the two paragraphs at AT 357–59 [pp. 215–16])
LOCKE: From Book I of *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*:
Chapter i (pp. 43–48); Chapter ii, §§ 1–5, 22–25 (pp. 48–51, 59–63) (On Blackboard)
LEIBNIZ: *New Essays*, preface selection (On Blackboard)
- 11/8

11/10	HUME: <i>An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding</i>: Section I Recommended: <i>The Treatise of Human Nature</i> : Abstract (In Hackett)	
11/15	Section II, Section III	
11/17	Section IV	4TH Assigned
11/22	Section IV, Section V <i>The Treatise of Human Nature</i> 1.3.6 (On Blackboard)	
11/24	THANKSGIVING	
11/26	4:00pm, Saturday, to Blackboard	4TH Draft
11/29	Section VI, Section VII	
12/1	Section VII, <i>Optional</i> : Section IX, Section XII	
12/3	4:00pm, Saturday, to Blackboard	4TH Comments
12/6	4:00pm, Saturday, to Blackboard	4TH Final