

PHI 2010-01 – Introduction to Philosophy

Spring 2024

Teacher Information

- **Teacher:** Dr. Michael Arvanitopoulos
- **Email:** marvanitopoulos@floridapoly.edu
- **Classroom Location:** 1067
- **Office Location:** TBA
- **Office Hours:** Before or after class sessions as needed and by appointment.
- **Other Ways to Contact:** Cell number: 813-892-3752
- **Communications Protocol:** This is my private cell number, so please use it sparingly and *only in the case of emergency*. If you text, first identify yourself in terms of school, course, name, and subject of inquiry. Phone texts that do not comply with the above parameters, will be erased and not responded to. Regarding emailing through Canvas, and in order to curb a possible chaotic situation when dealing with large numbers of emails sourcing from different needs and attitudes, all students must email the teacher by following a certain communications protocol:

1.
 1. Emails must be sent exclusively through Canvas, and not through the faculty email system.
 2. Must include first and last name of student.
 3. Must include the course title and session number.
 4. Must include a succinct Subject Line.
 5. Must be written in a professional and congenial tone.
 6. Emails disregarding one or more of these conditions of communication protocol are not likely to be responded to.

Course Details

- **Credit Hours:** 3
- **Delivery Mode:** Face to Face and Canvas
- **Course Pre and/or Co-Requisites:** None
- **Course Description:** This course is an introduction to the nature of philosophy, philosophical thinking, major intellectual movements in the history of philosophy, specific problems in philosophy. The course is tailored to the specific needs of our school. This course meets communication/writing-intensive requirements (W).

Required Course Textbooks

A. The following required readings for the Midterm Paper must be bought in the free market (*Amazon*, etc):

2. *A Rulebook for Arguments*, Anthony Weston, fifth, or any edition. (\$8.60 in Amazon).
3. *Plato Charmides*, translated by Benjamin Jowett, any edition. (\$7.25 in Amazon).
4. *Instabilities and Catastrophes in Science and Engineering*, Thomson, JMT. (Not required, but suggested, too expensive to buy, borrow from library.)

B. The required reading for the Final Paper is provided free in the following Link:

5. Charles Sanders Peirce, "The Fixation of Belief."

http://www.sophia-project.org/uploads/1/3/9/5/13955288/peirce_belief.pdf

C. The following required readings for the Final Exam are available in Canvas for free:

6. *Introduction to Philosophy*. Smith, et.al. OpenStax.
<https://openstax.org/details/books/introduction-philosophy>
7. *The Originals: Classic Readings in Western Philosophy*, ed. Jeff McLaughlin.
<https://pressbooks.bccampus.ca/classicreadings/>

D. Suggested Readings for Further Education in Logic, Science and Deep Knowledge

8. Aristotle - *Organon*
9. David Hume - *Moral Distinctions Not Derived from Reason*
10. Charles Sanders Peirce - *Chance, Love, and Logic*
11. Bertrand Russell - *Mysticism and Logic and Other Essays*
12. Ludwig Wittgenstein - *The Duty of Genius*
13. Thomas Kuhn - *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*
14. Daniel Cohnitz - *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Logic*
15. Sir Arthur Eddington - *Two Tables*

16. L. Susan Stebbing - *Furniture of the Earth*

17. Robert Nozick, *The Experience Machine*.

18. Immanuel Kant, *What Is Enlightenment?*

Course Objectives

- To provide students an understanding of major philosophers and movements in western history.
- To show how philosophical concepts and doing philosophy serve an important role in today's society.
- To facilitate strong writing, analytical, and critical thinking skills.
- To make the connections between philosophy, science, and logic.
- To make the student conversant on the existential pleasures of engineering.

Course Outcomes

Course Learning Outcome	Program Learning Outcome (ABET, GenEd, Other)
1. Students will be able to discuss the major philosophical movements and schools through western history.	AHSS#1, 4
2. Students will be able to discuss key idea of major philosophers.	AHSS#1, 4
3. Students will be able to apply philosophical knowledge to real-world problems and contemporary issues.	AHSS#1, 3
4. Students will learn to read, analyze, and reflect critically on primary philosophical texts to formulate their own understanding.	AHSS#1, 2, 5

Alignment with Program Outcomes: AHSS Department Outcomes are as follows:

#1 Communication—Students completing the certificate program will demonstrate the ability to deliver highly polished verbal communication that is appropriate to audience and context.

#2 Analysis and Interpretation—Students will demonstrate familiarity with a range of analytical frameworks associated with humanities and social science disciplines and apply them thoughtfully to social, historical, and other human phenomena.

#3 Conceptual Translation—Students will demonstrate the ability to create connections between concepts in one area of human experience and adapt and apply them to another.

#4 Epistemic Awareness—Students will recognize and describe different frameworks for constructing knowledge in the disciplines and the underlying assumptions, methods, and applications of that knowledge.

#5 Reflective Learning and Responsibility—Students will demonstrate strategic and reflective learning through course content and develop a healthy critical analysis of one's own responses.

Important Dates

First Day of Class:	January 9
Last Day to Add/Drop:	January 12
Last Day to Withdraw without academic penalty:	April 12
Midterm Grades:	March 4
Spring Break:	March 2-10
Last Day of Class:	April 24
Grades Posted:	May 8

Course Weekly Modulation

Instruction will be delivered exclusively in class. In Canvas the course will progress by Week-Modules, where the students can find a weekly preview of what is to be covered this week, along with auxiliary aids such as links for documentaries and video lectures from famous philosophers on the week's subject, and links for assigned readings. This weekly modulation functions as a detailed course schedule.

Students will need to follow up the teacher's postings in Canvas Announcements. In these postings the teacher may reach out to reflect on issues emerging from his email communications with students, on the progress of the course, on future actions, and on possible problems and solutions that may ensue in the duration of the course.

Students are strongly encouraged to email the teacher with their questions and concerns. Emails are typically answered within hours, the latest 48 hours, excluding weekends.

Course Assignments and Grading

There will be three types of work for learning and performance assessment: A Midterm Paper, a Final Paper, and a Final Exam. The due date of each is announced within the assignment directions in the Week-Module that each assignment belongs. ***No late work will be accepted without official documented excuse of distress, illness, or medical condition.*** The Final Exam is

taken online in Canvas, and cannot be retaken. The Midterm and the Final Papers cannot be resubmitted after the first draft. The Midterm Paper can be submitted for candidacy in the course's conference, in which case it will go through several drafts to participate in the course's conference (details in class). The Final Paper cannot be resubmitted.

Term Papers and Final Exam Assignments

- For the Midterm Term Paper we will write an *argumentative* essay of 1000 words long. We will work towards producing the class's best five papers, to be presented at the planned school conference under the working title "Plato on *Sophrosyne*: 10 Cases of Scientific Vice and Virtue." The best 5 papers will participate in the conference where they will receive special award(s), while all papers will be assessed towards earning **50 points** for the course's final grade. Papers presented at the conference will earn a grade of A by default, and the student will earn an A for the course no matter their performance in all other assignments.. More specific directions in the assignment itself and in our class discussions.
- For the Final Term Paper we will write an *argumentative* essay of 2000 words long, worth up to **30 points** towards the final grade. More specific directions in the assignment itself.
- The Final Exam is a quiz of 20 questions of various types. Each question can earn 1 point, for a total of **20 points** towards the final grade.
- Extra credit of **10 points** towards the final grade may be earned by the student's documented presence at the conference.

Although the course's papers are relatively short, they are demanding in that they are set to demonstrate the student's learning of philosophy as it applies to science and engineering. The papers must be written as a Microsoft Word document (no exceptions) and be submitted through Canvas. No late work will be accepted without documented excuse and before final grades are due.

Grade Assessment Breakdown

Midterm Term Paper: 50 pts

Final Term Paper: 30 pts

Final Exam: 20 pts

Extra Credit: 10 pts

Grading Scale

- A = 93% and above, A- = 90%-92%
- B+ = 87%-89%, B = 83-86, B- = 80%-82%
- C+ = 77%-79%, C = 73-76, C- = 70%-72%
- D+ = 67%-69%, D = 63-66, D- = 60%-62%

- F = 59% and Below

Plagiarism Concerns

Plagiarism manifests in this course when students use someone else's ideas and text, including AI constructs such as ChatGTP, in order to answer the questions asked by the instructor regarding the reading materials and the paper topic assigned.

To earn the grade one cannot just cut and paste any writings or AI text from the Web. To earn the grade you must first study the textbook, watch the video assigned, and take notes to make references from, and apply with critical thinking to form and propose your own position. This takes effort, engagement, critical thinking, and time. This is how we learn and become smart. This is what "education" means, and your degree means something both to you in particular and society in general. Your essay must contain both your own position AND precise references of the ideas you are discussing (from our textbook by page and paragraph, and from the video by the minute your reference appears). Remember: No true textbook and video references, no credit. The teacher has already researched the field on the Web, and knows the sites that have posted commentaries relevant to the paper topic assigned. Thus it is easy for the teacher to look up any given text and verify its authenticity or its presence already in the internet. *Do not try it.*

Plagiarism consists of presenting someone else's ideas or words as your own without properly acknowledging that person. You must research and write your papers yourself. Changing a few words is not enough; it is still plagiarism. You may not have a friend or friends write your paper. You may not hire someone to write your paper (this includes Internet sites, which we can easily check through services such as Plagiarism.org and Turnitin.com). You may not turn in a paper previously used in a different class. If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism, consult me and/or read the Student Conduct Code. Plagiarism is a very serious matter that carries with it a number of possible penalties. Minimally, you will receive zero points for the assignment in question. Depending on the severity of the offense, however, other academic disciplinary proceedings may follow. So a word to the wise, *don't* do it!

Presenting work you did not write as your own is a form of academic dishonesty and a violation of both course and university policy (see "Academic Integrity"), whether that work was written by another human or generative artificial intelligence. You may not use AI chatbots, text generators, etc., at the generative stage of writing in this class. You may use programs such as Grammarly to help facilitate the revision of your initial drafts.

The faculty and administration take academic integrity very seriously. Violations of [academic integrity regulation](#) include actions such as cheating, plagiarism, use of unauthorized resources (including but not limited to use of Artificial Intelligence tools), illegal use of intellectual property, and inappropriately aiding other students. Such actions undermine the central mission of the university and negatively impact the value of your Florida Poly degree. Suspected violations will be fully investigated, possibly resulting in an academic integrity hearing and sanctions against the accused student if found in violation. Sanctions range from receiving a zero on the exam or assignment, to expulsion from the university. Repeat offenders are subject to

more severe sanctions and penalties. Do not compromise your integrity for a perceived short-term gain.

Attendance, Participation, Tardiness

Students in this face-to-face course are expected “to attend all of their scheduled University classes and to satisfy all academic objectives *as defined by the instructor*” (University Policy, [FPU-5.0010AP](#)). Attendance will be taken and reported from the first week of class for academic census purposes, and throughout the course. This course's teacher requires full attendance in every class. ***Attendance will be taken 15 minutes into the course, and if you miss it, you will be recorded as absent, no excuses accepted other than official documentation for illness, distress, or medical condition. After two absences the teacher may drop you from the course,*** as successful completion of the course is put into doubt. Students arriving late should avoid creating disruptions when they enter the classroom. A portion of each student’s grade depends on in-class participation as a reflection to the teacher's impression of how the student has contributed in the class work. From such impression the teacher may or may not grant extra credit to round up a grade accumulation upwards to the next upper grade. A two-point round up from an accumulated 78 points to 80, is what turns a C to a D, and so forth. This evaluation remains at the discretion of the teacher and is incontestable.

Electronic Devices in the Classroom

The use of electronic devices such as laptops, I-pads, and cell phones are proven to have detrimental effects on the learning experience for both the user in particular and the class as a whole. The first week module provides links with videos and papers as examples of recent academic research on the subject. ***The use of these devices during class is not allowed and students who engage in this behavior may be asked to leave the class for the day and will be recorded as absent.*** (Noting exceptions for authorized accommodations). Persistent problems with this violation of in classroom behavior may result in a code of conduct referral. The student will be asked to leave the class. There will be instances where we will need to use our devices, and this will be signaled by the teacher.

Classroom Behavior

In this class, we will maintain civility. Rude or disruptive behavior may result in reduction of your final grade. During lectures and discussion do not talk when someone else (either your instructor or a fellow student) is speaking. Additionally, be prepared to demonstrate respect for ideas and experiences that may differ from your own.

Readings

Students are responsible for keeping up with the assigned readings, which are identified in the syllabus (see “Course Schedule”) and in Canvas. Complete the assigned readings *before* the relevant class meeting. None of the assigned readings should be considered superfluous.

Moreover, the teacher will not necessarily reiterate the entire content of assigned readings during lectures.

Academic Support Resources

- **Library:** Students can access the Florida Polytechnic University Library through the University website and [Canvas](#), on and off campus. Students may direct questions to library@floridapoly.edu.
- **Peer Learning Strategists (PLS):** Are specially trained student leaders who help their peers strategize approaches to course content and work through solution methods. PLS work in collaboration with the courses they support so the content and methods are aligned with your instructors' expectations. Students can meet with a PLS in The Learning Center, which is located on the first floor of the Innovation, Science and Technology (IST) building in room 1019.
- **Academic Success Coaches:** All students at Florida Poly are assigned an Academic Success Coach. Your Academic Success Coach can assist you with academic success strategies. Please visit the Student Success Center on the second floor of the IST building to meet with an Academic Success Coach.
- **Writing Center:** Located on the second floor of the IST (2059/2061), the Writing Center helps students to develop their writing and presentation skills. Consultations are available in person and virtually. For more detail, visit <https://floridapolytechnic.libguides.com/writingservices>.

Reasonable Accommodations

The University is committed to ensuring equal access to all educational opportunities. The University, through the Office of Disability Services (ODS), facilitates reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities and documented eligibility. It is the student's responsibility to self-identify as a student with disabilities and register with ODS to request accommodations.

If you have already registered with ODS, please ensure that you have requested an accommodation letter for this course through the [ODS student portal](#) and communicate with your instructor about your approved accommodations as soon as possible. Arrangements for testing accommodations must be made in advance. Accommodations are not retroactive.

If you are not registered with ODS but believe you have a temporary health condition or permanent disability requiring an accommodation, please contact ODS as soon as possible.

The Office of Disability Services (ODS):

DisabilityServices@floridapoly.edu

(863) 874-8770

The Access Point

[ODS website: www.floridapoly.edu/disability](http://www.floridapoly.edu/disability)

Accommodations for Religious Observances, Practices, and Beliefs

The University will reasonably accommodate the religious observances, practices, and beliefs of individuals in regard to admissions, class attendance, and the scheduling of examinations and work assignments. (See [University Policy](#).)

Title X Policy

Florida Polytechnic University is committed to ensuring a safe, productive learning environment on our campus that prohibits sex discrimination and sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence and stalking. Resources are available if you or someone you know needs assistance. Any faculty or staff member you speak to is required to report the incident to the Title IX Coordinator. Please know, however, that your information will be kept private to the greatest extent possible. You will not be required to share your experience. If you want to speak to someone who is permitted to keep your disclosure confidential, please seek assistance from the Florida Polytechnic University [Ombuds Office](#), BayCare's Student Assistance Program, 1-800-878-5470 and locally within the community at [Peace River Center](#), 863-413-2707 (24-hour hotline) or 863-413-2708 to schedule an appointment. The Title IX Coordinator is available for any questions to discussion resources and options available.

Recording Lectures

Students may, without prior notice, record video or audio of a class lecture for a class in which the student is enrolled for their own personal educational use. Recordings may not be used as a substitute for class participation or class attendance. Recordings may not be published or shared in any way, either intentionally or accidentally, without the written consent of the faculty member. Failure to adhere to these requirements is a violation of state law (subject to civil penalty) and the student code of conduct (subject to disciplinary action).

*Recording class activities other than class lectures, including but not limited to lab sessions, student presentations (whether individually or part of a group), class discussion (except when incidental to and incorporated within a class lecture), and invited guest speakers is **prohibited***

Syllabus Revision

The teacher retains the right to make changes in the syllabus as this ground-braking course advances, without, nevertheless, changing the substance and the aims of the course, but only in order to amend initial policies.

