# PHIL 6: Introduction to Philosophy Semester 201X

## Instructor Information and Availability

Class Meetings:

Instructor:

Office Hours:

Contact:

Availability:  Every effort is made to communicate with you quickly, effectively, and accurately. I take this as an important element of my responsibility to you. However, after 5pm M-F or on the weekends, my response may be delayed. If the concern regards a time sensitive matter, please check frequently for a response from me with a solution, as often the best solution is one which can be implemented quickly.

Special Note: This faculty member is considered a ‘mandated reporter’for suspected child abuse or neglect under the *California Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act* and is bound by the requirements set forth in *CSU Executive Order 1083 (available here* [*http://www.calstate.edu/eo/EO-1083.html*](http://www.calstate.edu/eo/EO-1083.html)*)*.

## CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION

A representative selection of philosophical problems will be explored in areas such as knowledge, reality, religion, science, politics, art and morals. GE Area C2. 3 units.

## GE AREA C2 REQUIREMENTS:

This course satisfies General Education Requirements of Area C2: Humanities

**C2 Humanities**. The learning objectives associated with C2 should focus on the human condition. Specifically, students completing C2 requirements should be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the conventions and methods of the study of the humanities.
   1. As a course in philosophy, students will have the opportunity to learn about and begin to develop their skills at identifying arguments, premises, and fallacies in reasoning about important concepts, such as freedom, identity, god, good, etc., as well as develop their ability to reflect on their own view about these matters while learning about how philosophers have done it through a close and detailed study of representative philosophical positions.
   2. Students will demonstrate this outcome through a combination of assessment instruments, but most closely in their written essays and in-class activities. Specify your own assessments as they apply to this LO.
2. Investigate, describe, and analyze the roles and effects of human culture and understanding in the development of human societies.
   1. By (i) exposing students to a variety of philosophical positions on important subjects as free will, god, self-identity, the good, etc., from both Western/European and Eastern/Asian traditions, and (ii) offering students an opportunity to discuss these topics, this course fosters in students the development of an understanding of and an appreciation for the diversity of the human community and condition. As this course is structured so as to incorporate both historical and contemporary viewpoints, students will have the opportunity explore the connection between historical context and philosophical reflection from within that context.
   2. Students will demonstrate this outcome in a combination of their written essays, weekly quizzes, and in-class activities. Specify your own assessments as they apply to this LO.
3. Compare and analyze various conceptions of humankind.
   1. As an introductory philosophy course among the underlying concerns is the identification and analysis of the various conceptions of humanity and human nature in various historical and contemporary philosophical traditions, including a consideration of the differences between these traditions. For example, a comparison between the ancient Greek conception of self, as present in Aristotle’s philosophy, and in Hume’s philosophy, and as present in Parfit’s allows students the opportunity to explore the implications of these differences on their respective understanding of humanity, culture, and the nature of human relationships.
   2. Students demonstrate this outcome in a combination of assessments including both essays, weekly in-class exercises and weekly quizzes. Specify your own assessments as they apply to this LO.
4. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the historical development of cultures and civilizations, including their animating ideas and values.
   1. While this course is generally not structured historically, that the required readings include samples from a variety of philosophical traditions which have long historical roots. The required readings also include contemporary philosophical explorations of these traditions and of the claims each makes about the nature of reality, human understanding, and ethics. Students will have the opportunity to explore these in appropriate detail and complexity.
   2. Students will demonstrate this outcome by completing the various in-class practical exercises, and weekly quizzes. Specify your own assessments as they apply to this LO.

This course satisfies both PHIL and GE requirements. Students will complete a combination of in-class activities and assessment, asynchronous assessment (quizzes, reading reflections, journals, homework, etc.), and short written essays or journals is encouraged. Specify your own assessments as they apply to this LO. Minimum writing requirement is 1000 words, in any formal mode. Written work should be assessed not only for mastery of course content, but also for clarity of writing.

## COURSE CONTENT

Your specific course description, theme or topical focus, if relevant.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Departmentally recommended philosophy learning outcomes. Be sure your assessment plan assessed students for these or similar outcomes, in addition to the GE outcomes.

Students will be able to:

1. *Describe* and *distinguish* key philosophical concepts in the main subfields of philosophy, including concepts such as free will, mind, knowledge, belief, reality, faith, reason, good.
2. *Read* and *comprehend* philosophical texts, both classical and contemporary.
3. *Discuss* core philosophical problems, such as whether there is a god, what does it mean to be conscious, are we free to make choices, what is justice.
4. *Explain* and *defend* a position on basic philosophical problems.
5. *Write* clear and concise explanations and arguments about basic philosophical problems.

## TEXT

Default Textbook: *Readings on the Ultimate Questions: An Introduction to Philosophy*. 3rd Edition, Rauhut (ed), Prentice Hall 2010.

## ASSIGNMENTS AND REQUIREMENTS

SAMPLE: Evaluation of your progress toward the satisfaction of the course learning objectives, will be conducted by several means. The following assignments comprise the whole of the requirements for this course. This course is based on a total of XXXX available points.

This course satisfies both PHIL and GE requirements. As such your assessment plan should be designed to allow students the opportunity to demonstrate their attainment of the associated learning outcomes. Any combination of in-class activities and assessment, asynchronous assessment (quizzes, reading reflections, journals, homework, etc.), and short written essays or journals is encouraged.

Minimum writing requirement is 1000 words, in any formal mode. However, be certain to assess not only for mastery of course content, but also for clarity of writing.

The department encourages all faculty to use the following resources and share these with their students:

Department Writing Guidelines <http://www.csus.edu/phil/Guidance/WritingGuidelines.html>

Writing Analytic Essays <http://www.csus.edu/phil/Guidance/How%20to%20Write%20an%20Analysis.htm>

Grading Standards and Expectations <http://www.csus.edu/phil/Guidance/Grading%20Standards.html>

In the sections below, be sure to indicate – especially for assessments like “participation” – how you assign students’ earning or losing points. It should be clear to anyone looking at this syllabus how their final grade will be calculated. Your assessment plan for the course must be connected to the course learning outcomes such that the final grade is a reliable indicator of students’ attainment of those LOs.

Note that the department encourages early and frequent assessment, so students have an indication of their preparation for or performance in your course prior to the drop deadline at the end of week 4.

### Grading Scale

Use the department grading standards to describe the assignments and their values. Every point for the course must be specified. Do not leave things ambiguous. <http://www.csus.edu/phil/Guidance/Grading%20Standards.html>

### Technology Component

SAMPLE: Please note this course uses SacCT in XXX ways. It is your responsibility to ensure you have regular and reliable access to computing facilities sufficient to the needs of this course. Technical problems must be reported to me at your earliest encounter of the problem. If the problem is more complex than instructor skills allow, you must address your problem to the SacLink Help Line @ 916-278-7337.

### Assignment A

Description of the assignment type, number/frequency and point values

### Assignment B

Description of the assignment type, number/frequency and point values

### Assignment C

Description of the assignment type, number/frequency and point values

### Assignment D

Description of the assignment type, number/frequency and point values

### Assignment E

Description of the assignment type, number/frequency and point values

### Bonus Points (up to X pts)

SAMPLE: Bonus points can be earned by listening to the series of “visiting speakers” and writing a two page reflection on the interview. Up to X bonus points may be earned in this way. All bonus reports are due by the last day of classes as indicated in SacCT.

## Late Assignments

Insert your Late Policy here. Be specific about any penalties imposed and how they are assessed.

## Plagiarism/Cheating

SAMPLE: Plagiarism and cheating are serious academic offenses which will not be tolerated in this class. Assignments in which plagiarism or other forms of cheating are found will at the least be graded at 0 (not just an F). Repeated or egregious (>20% of course grade value) violations of the university policy will result in an F in the course. ALL incidents of cheating and plagiarism will be reported both to the Department Chair and to the Student Conduct Officer in the Office of Student Affairs for possible further administrative sanction. *It is your responsibility to know and comply with the University’s Academic Honesty Policy* <http://www.csus.edu/umanual/student/STU-0100.htm>.

## Universal Accommodation

SAMPLE: This course and all material have been designed for universal access. If you have difficulty accessing any of the material, please let me know at your earliest experience of difficulty.

Also, this course has been designed to facilitate accommodation for specific disability needs. If you have a documented disability (visible or invisible) and require accommodation for assignments, tests, course material, etc., please let me know ***the end of the FIRST week of semester*** so that arrangements can be made. Failure to notify and consult with me by this date may impede my ability to offer you the necessary accommodation and assistance in a timely fashion. Also be sure to consult with the Services to Students with Disabilities (Lassen Hall 1008, or <http://www.csus.edu/sswd/>) to learn what other campus services and accommodation options are available for you.

Students with other types of accommodation requirements, such as English as a second language, are invited to discuss accommodations with the instructor to facilitate understanding and the best learning experience for all. All information will remain confidential. ESL students are advised to make use of the University Writing Center (Calaveras Hall 128, <http://www.csus.edu/writingcenter/>).

## **WEEKLY SCHEDULE (15 WEEK SCHEDULE)**

Include your weekly schedule, which should include reading assignments, due dates for assignments, exam dates, and dates which the class does not meet (approved holidays).

Sample Schedule:

Date :                            Topic:                                         Reading: LOs:

WEEK 1                            Intro

WEEK 2                            Knowledge                                Descartes: 32-36 GE C2 A, D

WEEK 3                            Knowledge                                Descartes: 36-41 GE C2 A, B

WEEK 4                            Knowledge                                Locke: 62-70 GE C2 A, C, D

WEEK 5                            The Self                                     Perry: 135-145 GE C2 B, C

WEEK 6                            The Self                                     Dennett: 172-182 GE C2 B, C

WEEK 7 The Self                                     Parfit, Vesey: 165-171 GE C2 B, C

WEEK 8                            Freewill                                     Taylor: 76-79 GE C2 C, D

WEEK 9                            Freewill                                     Chisholm: 106-114 GE C2 C, D

WEEK 10                          Freewill                                      Stace: 79-86 GE C2 A, D

WEEK 11                          The Problem of Evil                 Johnson: 336-341 GE C2 B, D

WEEK 12                          The Problem of Evil                  Swinburne: 341-351 GE C2 C

WEEK 13                          The Ontological Argument      Rauhut: 278-284 GE C2 B, D

WEEK 14                          The Ontological Argument       Descartes: 247-277. GE C2 B, D

WEEK 15                           **Final Exam**