PHIL 181: Metaphysics
Section 01: TR 1:30-2:45
Mendocino Hall 3009

Instructor:	Prof. Thomas F. Pyne
Office Hours:	TR 10:30-11:30 Other times by appointment.
Office Location:	Mendocino 3022
Email:	pynetf@csus.edu
Required Text:	[1] Peter Van Inwagen & Dean W. Zimmerman, editors. *Metaphysics: The Big Questions.* Second Edition. Basil Blackwell (Oxford, 2008). 978-1-4051-2586-4 [2] "Metaphysics Toolkit"
Canvas:	https://canvas.csus.edu/ or via My SacState https://my.csus.edu/
Faculty Website:	https://www.csus.edu/faculty/p/pynetf/

Course Description

Examines argument concerning the nature of reality. Representative topics include: substance, space, time, God, free will, determinism, identity, universals. Emphasis is on contemporary formulations. **Prerequisite:** 6 units in philosophy or instructor permission. **Units:** 3.0.

Course Objectives

– The course is designed to give a systematic introduction to philosophical problems that are *metaphysical*; to show what distinguishes metaphysical problems from other philosophical problems.
– We will then investigate a restricted sampling of metaphysical problems under active investigation in the present.
– This investigation will involve study of solutions by contemporary philosophers.
– Finally, the course will require some metaphysical investigation by the student, as well as some writing.

Students will be expected to:
– Demonstrate a developed ability to read and understand contemporary philosophical texts.
– Evaluate critically the concepts and arguments contained in the texts;

- Write journal entries and analytical essays applying philosophical concepts and reasoning to issues in metaphysics;

Students will demonstrate their achievement of the course objectives and expectations through:
- Reading comprehension quizzes on each reading assignment;
- Exams which test for a deeper understanding of metaphysical issues, as well as of the arguments for or against the different sides;   students will show their understanding via essay answers;
- Participation in discussion;
- Composition of journal entries analytic critical essays on contemporary works in metaphysics.

Course Delivery

While PHIL 181 will be in most ways a standard lecture/discussion class, it will be 'web-assisted.'

That is, we will be using some features of the Canvas course management system.
Canvas is a program designed for on-line college courses. Among other things, it serves as a location for course material, lecture notes, tests, papers, and discussions.

I will make important course content available, including lecture notes and other supplementary material.

You will be taking reading quizzes and submitting written work through Canvas. In addition, you may communicate with me, as well as with other students in the class.

Access the Course

You can use My SacState to log into the course by clicking on the 'Canvas' icon; or you can access Canvas directly at https://csus.instructure.com.

To get started using Canvas, visit https://community.canvasims.com).

Communications

The course will use the communication tools built into Canvas:
- Announcements: It's a good idea to check for announcements from time to time during the semester
- Mail: You may send me (or a classmate) a message via the 'Conversations' function (found at 'Inbox' on the left). I will try to respond promptly.
- Calendar: Exams and due dates for journal entries will all appear in the Calendar.

Work for the Course

1. Quizzes on Reading Assignments (**1** pt each; **21** pts total)
   You will be responsible for the readings assigned for a particular class day. While you will be responsible for the whole reading, I may indicate in the 'Course Schedule' (below) that you

should pay particular attention to some part of it. As a result, it may happen that other parts will not be treated in class. You will be responsible for them anyway, and I will respond to questions regarding them.

The quiz for a given reading assignment must be taken by the beginning of the class period for which it is assigned.

I will open the window for the reading assignment a week in advance; the window will close at class time.

2. Exams (**10** pts each; **30** pts total) Exams will be a combination of objective questions plus some short essays. The questions will be on the readings, lectures, and discussions.

3. Two analytical essays (**15** pts each; **30** pts total) on selected readings.

4. Journal Entries (**5** pts each; **25** pts total) I'm expecting about 450-600 words for each entry.

Assignment Submission Instructions

Journal Entries

Journal entries will be submitted in Canvas just like the analytical essays.

- Enter Canvas
- On the Dashboard click on PHIL 181;
- Scroll down to 'Journal Entries';
- Open the correct journal; you will see the text of the assignment itself, as well as the due date and time, and the rubric.
- Read the instructions *carefully* (you will be graded on the completeness with which you answer everything being asked);
- Compose the journal entry using your own word processing application. (You can use .doc, .docx, for example. Nothing *too* exotic. And don't give me a .pdf.) Don't compose the journal entry in Canvas, even though it supports rich text.
- Click the dark rectangle 'Submit Assignment. That opens a box at the bottom of the page which gives you three choices: File Upload,' 'Text Entry,' or 'Office 365.' Ignore 'Office 365.' You may either upload the file using 'Choose File' or using 'Text Entry' copy and paste your entry. (Or, on the Belt-*and*-Suspenders Principle, you can do both.)
- Once you are satisfied with how your entry looks in that box, click 'Submit' (Important!);
- A success message should appear: "✓Submitted!" with the date and time. If it doesn't, try again.
- Late journal entries will be penalized .5 point for every day late. After five days the entry will no longer be accepted.

I'm expecting 450-600 words for each journal entry.

Analytical Essays

Analytical Essays will be submitted in Canvas. In writing the essay, follow the instructions for analytical essays in the file titled The Analytical Essay'. It can also be found in the Philosophy Department website. Look under "Guidance" for "Writing Guidelines."

You will find another document there that will help, since it gives you some hints as to what we look for. It's called "Grading Standards."

In addition, look carefully at the rubric by which the essays will be graded. The rubric can be found on the page for each writing assignment. Keep it in mind as you write.

To submit an essay in Canvas:
- Enter Canvas
- Open the main page for PHIL181.
- Scroll down to 'Analytical Essays'
- Open the correct assignment. You will see the text of the assignment itself as well as the due date and time.
- Follow the instructions for journal entries (see above).
- Late essays will be lowered one point for every day past the due date. After five days the paper will not be accepted.

Online Quizzes and Exams

Reading Quizzes: There will be a reading quiz on every assignment. A reading quiz will consist of five to ten multiple-choice questions designed so that a careful reader should be able to answer them.

Exams: The exam window will open a week before it is due. You must take the exam during that time.
To take an exam in Canvas, follow the instructions for taking a reading quiz. The difference between an exam and a quiz will be the time constraints. You will have 75 minutes to take the midterm, two hours (120 minutes) to take the final. In addition, there will be some essay questions in the exams.

Grading

Exams: Exams will be graded **10 – 0**.

Analytical Essays: Each essay will be graded **15 – 0**. The basis for the grade can be found in the 'rubric' for the essay in Canvas.

Reading Quizzes: Reading quizzes will receive a grade of **1** (full credit), **.5** (inadequate comprehension), or **0** (not taken).

Journal Entries: Journal entries will be graded **5 – 0**. The basis for the grade wil be found in the rubric for journal entries.

Final Grade: The final grade for the course will be determined by the sum of the exams, analytical essays, quizzes, and journal entries.

Grading Criteria

Score	Letter Equivalent
100-94	A
93-92	A-
91-90	B+
89-84	B
83-82	B-
81-80	C+
79-74	C
73-72	C-
71-70	D+
69-64	D
63-62	D-
61-	F

Viewing Grades in Canvas

For reading quizzes you will be able to see your raw score as soon as you have submitted your quiz. The raw score will then be converted into a final score.
For exams, essay, and journal entries I will post the grades as soon as I have finished grading them. You can see your grades during the semester by going to 'Grades.'

Course Policies

Attendance

I expect attendance at every class meeting. If for some excellent reason you cannot make class, let me know – preferably in advance. If this is impossible, let me know by 5:00 on the day you miss, preferably by an e-mail message within SacCT. I will lower you a grade increment for every absence in which you fail to contact me the same day.

Class meetings will begin at 1:30 pm with a roll. Be on time. Anticipate. Excuses don't cut it: I will treat a pattern of late arrival as an unexcused absence.

I expect attention to the material during class periods. If there is a class discussion, I will serve as moderator; please wait to be recognized before making a contribution.

If you wish to ask a question, answer a question, or make a contribution to the class, please ask to be recognized. There is no excuse for conducting a private discussion during class time. I will treat a pattern of talking in class as an unexcused absence.

Make-Up Exams and Quizzes

Since you may take exams and quizzes at your convenience, there will be consequences for missing the deadline – whatever the circumstances.

The reading quizzes will remain open for two days after they are due, closing at 1:30. There will be a penalty of .25 for each day late.

Exams will also remain open for two days after they are due, closing at 1:30. There will be a penalty of 1 point for each day late.

The opening and due dates and times will be listed in the Calendar.

If your internet connection is unreliable, or you suspect it may be unreliable, plan to take the exam in one of the labs on campus.

Late Work

I will accept analytical essays and journal entries for five days after the due date. The grade for journal entries will be lowered .5 point for every day past the deadline, 1 point for analytical essays.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are using a reliable internet connection. I will not accept connectivity problems as an excuse and will impose any relevant late penalty.

In order to avoid such problems: *Don't wait until the last minute.* I have purposely made the deadlines for essay submission 11:30 PM because reliability problems tend to arise near midnight. But you should, if at all possible, submit before then.

Electronic Thingummies

Put your laptop under your seat during class. Set your phone on vibrate and put it away.

Since you will be getting my class notes, you will not need to take elaborate notes yourself. However, bring a pencil and paper.

Unless you need something electronic to keep you alive, don't use it in class.

University Policies

Academic Honesty

Students are expected to be familiar with the University's Academic Honesty, Policy & Procedures. https://www.csus.edu/umanual/student/stu-0100.htm

The University Library has very helpful information on plagiarism at http://csus.libguides.com/plagiarism.

Cheating on an assignment will be treated as a missed assignment. I reserve the right, after following the academic dishonesty procedures, to report it to the Student Conduct Officer.

However, consider this: Originality is an over-rated virtue in undergraduate writing, ranking well below unity, clarity, and cogency of argument. You can borrow other people's ideas and arguments all you like. You just need to *cite* them when you do. Use any method of citation you find comfortable and convenient. (I like MLA myself.) Don't borrow their *words*: you mustn't submit an essay consisting of a bunch of quotations.

Since you can borrow ideas, you have *no excuse* for plagiarism except laziness.

Reasonable Accommodation Policy

If you have a disability and require accommodations, you need to provide disability documentation to Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD). For more information please visit the SSWD website (http://www.csus.edu/sswd/). They are located in Lassen Hall 1008 and can be contacted by phone at (916) 278-6955 (Voice) (916) 278-7239 (TDD only) or via email at sswd@csus.edu.

Please discuss your accommodation needs with me after early in the semester – within the first week. It is difficult and time-consuming to make certain accommodations in Canvas. If you wait until the first quiz or paper is due to announce your disability it may simply not be *humanly* possible to make the accommodation. You will then just have to do the best you can.

A tendency to procrastinate is not a recognized disability.

University Resources

The CSUS Writing Center

The Writing Center provides encouraging, focused, and non-judgmental one-to-one tutorials in writing. Their tutors can help with writing at all points in the process, from initial planning and organizing through developing and revising a paper. You can bring the assignment to them for help.

Sac State Library

The Sac State Library's webpage is http://library.csus.edu.
To find a book or periodical, click on "Eureka: Library Catalogue" under "Resources and Collections or go directly to http://eureka.lib.csus.edu/

For a largely undergraduate institution, the Sac State library's holdings and resources in philosophy are pretty good.

Student Computing Labs

To access SacCT from campus, or use any of the other campus online resources, you can use the IRT managed student computer labs on campus. See University Learning Labs Website for information about locations, hours, and resources available.

Course Schedule

Introduction: Metaphysical Questions Among Philosophical Questions

What we are supplying are really remarks on the natural history of human beings; we are not contributing curiosities however, but observations which no one has doubted, but which have escaped remark only because they are always before our eyes.

Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*

Week	Topic	Readings	Due Dates
Week 1 **T 1/21**	T: Introduction, What is a Philosophical Question? Quine's Criterion of Ontological Commitment	T: "Introduction," 1-7; Quine, "On What There Is," 28-40	T:
R 1/23	R: Ontology: Reduction and Supervenience	R: "Metaphysics Toolkit," 1-16	R: Reading Quiz 1: Quine, "On What There Is"
Week 2 **T 1/28**	T: Ontology: Emergence and Elimination	T: Metaphysics Toolkit, 16-18;	T:
R 1/30	R: Ontology: A Live Example	R: Lewis, "Holes," 22-28	R: Reading Quiz 2: Lewis, "Holes **Exam 1 Window Opens 2:45 PM**

Part I: The Nature of Space and Time

6.4312 The solution of the riddle of life in space and time lies *outside* space and time.

Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*

Time is an illusion. Lunchtime doubly so.

Adams, *The Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy*

Week	Topic	Readings	Due Dates
Week 3 **T 2/4**	T: Is Space a Something or a Nothing?	T: Martin Gardner, "The Fourth Dimension," 165-168	T: Reading Quiz 3: Gardner, "The Fourth Dimension" **Exam 1 Due 1:30 PM**

R 2/6	R: How Many Dimensions are There?	R: Van Cleve, "Incongruent Counterparts and Higher Dimensions," 168-175	R: Reading Quiz 4: Van Cleve, "Incongruent Counterparts"
Week 4 **T 2/11**	T: Is Time a Something or an Illusion?	T: McTaggart, from *The Nature of Existence*, 116-123	T: Reading Quiz 5: McTaggart
R 2/13	R: Spacetime as a Four-Dimensional Manifold	R: Williams, "The Myth of Passage," 149-161	R: Reading Quiz 6: Williams, "The Myth of Passage" **Journal Entry 1: 'Odd' Entities due 11:30 pm.**
Week 5 **T 2/18**	T: Broad's Theory of Time	T: Broad, "The General Problem of Time and Change," 141-149	T: Reading Quiz 7: Broad, "The General Problem…."
R 2/20	R: Presentism	R: Prior, "The Notion of the Present," 129-131; Prior, "Changes in Events and Changes in Things," 131-141; Prior, "Some Free Thinking About Time," 161-164	R: Reading Quiz 8: Prior, "The Notion of the Present"; Prior, "Changes in Events and Changes in Things"; Prior, "Some Free Thinking About Time"

Part II: The Will

> 4.1362 The freedom of the will consists in the impossibility of knowing actions that still lie in the future. We could know them only if causality were an *inner* necessity like that of logical inference.
>
> Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*

Week 6 **T 2/25**	T: 'Hard' Determinism vs 'Soft'	T: Baron Holbach, "We are Never Free," 413-419; Hobart, "Free Will as Involving Determination," 420-432	T: Reading Quiz 9: Holbach, "We are Never Free"; Hobart, "Free Will as Involving Determination"
R 2/27	R: Compatibilism vs Incompatibilism	R: Van Inwagen, "The Consequence Argument," 450-456; Van Inwagen, "The Mystery of Metaphysical Freedom," 456-465	R: Reading Quiz 10: Van Inwagen, "The Consequence Argument"; Van Inwagen, "The Mystery of Metaphysical "Freedom"

			Journal Entry 2: The Metaphysics of Time due 11:30 pm
Week 7 **T 3/3**	T: A Revised Compatibilism	T: Frankfurt, "Alternate Possibilities and Moral Responsibility," 471-479; Frankfurt, "Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person," 480-492	T: Reading Quiz 11: Frankfurt, "Alternate Possibilities and Moral Responsibility"; Frankfurt, "Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person"
R 3/5	R: The Theory of Agency	R: Chisolm, "Human Freedom and the Self," 441-450; O'Connor, "The Agent as Cause," 465-471	R: Reading Quiz 12: Chisolm, "Human Freedom and the Self"; O'Connor, "The Agent as Cause" **Analytical Essay 1 due 11:30 PM**

The Furniture of Reality

1.1 The World is the totality of facts, not of things.

Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*

III. Universals

Week 8 **T 3/10**	T: The Problem of Universals: *Universalia ante Res*; *Universalia in Rebus* Nominalism and Other Reductive Strategies	T: ["Metaphysics Toolkit" 9-14; Inwagen & Zimmerman, 'Introduction,' 7-13; Armstrong, "Universals and Attributes," 59-67	T: Reading Quiz 13: "Metaphysics Toolkit," Van Inwagen & Zimmerman, "Introduction"; Armstrong, "Universals and Attributes" **Journal Entry 3: Free Will due 11:30 pm**

R 3/12	R: Resemblance v. *Universalia in Rebus*; Trope Theory	R: H.H. Price, "Universals and Resemblances," 67-84; D.C. Williams, "The Elements of Being," 84-96	R: Reading Quiz 14: Price, "Universals and Resemblances"; Williams, "The Elements of Being"

IV. Individuals

Moreover every substance is as it were an entire world and a mirror of God, or rather of the whole universe.

Leibniz, *Discourse on Metaphysics*

Week 9 **T 3/17**	T: The Problem of Individuals: Leibniz's "Identity of Indiscernibles"	T: Max Black," The Identity of Indiscernibles," 96-105	T: Reading Quiz 15: Black, "Identity of Indiscernibles T:
R 3/19	R: Leibniz's Identity of Indiscernibles Refuted	R: Max Black," The Identity of Indiscernibles," 96-105	R: **Exam 2 Window Opens 2:45 PM**
Week 10 **T 3/24**	T: The Two Spheres Problem Updated	T: Zimmerman, "Distinct Indiscernibles and the Bundle Theory," 105-111	T: Reading Quiz 16: Zimmerman, "Distinct Indiscernibles"

V. Identity

6.371 The whole modern conception of the world is founded on the illusion that the so-called laws of nature are the explanations of natural phenomena.

Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*

R 3/26	R: The Ship of Theseus; The 'Error Theory' of Identity Through Change	R: Arnauld and Nicole, "Of Confused Subjects which are Equivalent to Two Subjects…" 239-241	R: Reading Quiz 17: Arnauld & Nicole, "Of Confused Subjects" **Exam 2 Due 1:30 PM**
Week 11 **T 3/31**	T: **Spring Recess**	T:	T
R 4/2	R: **Spring Recess**	R:	R:

Week 12 **T 4/7**	T: Can Objects Change by gaining or losing parts?	T: Olson, "The Paradox of Increase," 241-263	T: Reading Quiz 18: Olson, "Paradox of Increase **Journal Entry 4: Transcendent vs Immanent Universals due 11:30 pm**:
R 4/9	R: The Paradox of Increase (cont.)	R: Olson, "The Paradox of Increase," 241-263	R:

Part VI: Realism and Anti-Realism

> 4. 2211 Even if the world is infinitely complex, so that every fact consists of infinitely many states of affairs and every state of affairs is composed of infinitely many objects, even so there must be objects and states of affairs.
> Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*
>
> You can't get behind the rules, because there isn't any *behind*.
> Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Grammar*

Week 13 **T 4/14**	T: Realism and Its Alternatives	T: [Lecture]	T:
R 4/16	T: Putnam's 'Internal' Realism	R: Putnam, "After Metaphysics, What?" 547-552; Putnam, "Truth and Convention," 552-558	R: Reading Quiz 19: Putnam, "After Metaphysics" Putnam, "Truth and Convention"
Week 14 **T 4/21**	T: **Nammour Symposium** (Attendance Required)	T:	T:
R 4/23	R: Conceptual Relativism	R: Sosa, "Nonabsolute Existence and Conceptual Relativity," 558-566; Sosa, "Addendum to "Nonabsolute Existence and Conceptual Relativity," 566-568	R: Reading Quiz 20: Sosa, "Nonabsolute Existence and Conceptual Relativity"; Sosa, "Addendum" **Journal Entry 5: Identity Through Change due 11:30 PM**
Week 15 **T 4/28**	T: Strange Kinds	T: [Lecture]	T:
R 4/30	R: A Defense of Our 'Naïve Conception' of the World	R: Korman, "Ordinary Objects and the Argument from	R: Reading Quiz 21: Korman,

		Strange Kinds" [Found in Part VI Folder]	"Ordinary Objects…"
Week 16 **T 5/5**	T: Is Our Ordinary Conceptual Scheme Privileged?	T: Korman, "Ordinary Objects and the Argument from Strange Kinds"	T: **Exam 3 Window Opens 2:45 PM**
R 5/7	R: Concluding Reflections	R:	R:
Finals Week **T 5/12**	T:	T:	T: **Analytical Essay 2 due 11:30 pm**
R 5/14	R:	R:	R: **Exam 3 Due 2:45 PM**

The descriptions and due dates are subject to change for pedagogical reasons.

Good luck in all your courses this semester!