

## Introduction to Philosophy

**Course code:** PHI 125

**Semester and year:** Fall 2021

**Day and time:** Tuesday, 18:30-21.15

**Instructor:** Dr Janusz Salamon

**Instructor contact:** janusz.salamon@aauni.edu

**Consultation hours:** On Wednesday, 10.00-11.00, on MS Teams; also at other times, by appointment.

<b>Credits US/ECTS</b>	3/6	<b>Level</b>	Introductory
<b>Length</b>	15 weeks	<b>Pre-requisite</b>	TOEFL iBT 71
<b>Contact hours</b>	42 hours	<b>Course type</b>	Bachelor Required/Elective

### 1. Course Description

In this course students will be introduced to the key philosophical debates and to the thought of the greatest minds within the Western philosophical tradition. The students will have an opportunity at once to (a) explore the most fundamental philosophical questions (concerning the nature of reality, the limits of human knowledge, the basis of morality, etc.), (b) to acquaint themselves with the ideas of history's greatest philosophers (from Socrates to Wittgenstein), and (c) to read and analyze fragments of some of the most famous philosophical works.

### 2. Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Comprehend and have a clear understanding of the main philosophical questions and of the main positions taken in the central philosophical debates
- Outline and analyze the most important ideas of history's greatest philosophers
- Compare and contrast the ways in which various philosophers justify their claims and defend their philosophical positions

### 3. Reading Material

***All compulsory readings will be available in electronic form from the course website, drawn mostly from the following books (available at the AAU Library):***

Steven M. Cahn, *Classics of Western Philosophy*, Hackett Publishing, 2007.

Marcus G. Singer, *Introductory Readings in Philosophy*, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1974.

Jorge J. E. Gracia et al (eds), *The Classics of Western Philosophy*, Blackwell, 2003.

### 4. Teaching methodology

Lectures, home assignments with follow-up analysis and discussion in class.

## 5. Course Schedule

Date	Class Agenda
31.8	<p><b>Class 1</b> The death of Socrates as the birth of Western philosophy</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> In the NEO</p> <p><b>Assignments/deadlines:</b> Preparing for the in-class test of the knowledge of the content of the relevant class readings</p>
7.9	<p><b>Class 2</b> Western philosophy as footnotes to Plato</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> In the NEO</p> <p><b>Assignments/deadlines:</b> Preparing for the in-class test of the knowledge of the content of the relevant class readings</p>
14.9	<p><b>Class 3</b> Plato's Cave or on the social function of philosophy</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> In the NEO</p> <p><b>Assignments/deadlines:</b> Preparing for the in-class test of the knowledge of the content of the relevant class readings</p>
21.9	<p><b>Class 4</b> Aristotle's philosophy of nature and naturalistic ethics as the guide to human flourishing</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> In the NEO</p> <p><b>Assignments/deadlines:</b> Preparing for the in-class test of the knowledge of the content of the relevant class readings</p>
5.10	<p><b>Class 5</b> Rational doubt as the foundation of the modern philosophy: Descartes' discovery of subjectivity (and its echoes in the modern philosophy from Pascal to Nagel)</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> In the NEO</p> <p><b>Assignments/deadlines:</b> Preparing for the in-class test of the knowledge of the content of the relevant class readings</p>
12.10	<p><b>Class 6:</b> British empiricism and the problem of skepticism</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> In the NEO</p> <p><b>Assignments/deadlines:</b> Preparing for the in-class test of the knowledge of the content of the relevant class readings</p>
19.10	<p><b>Class 7:</b> Kant on what can we know, what ought we do, and what can we hope</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> In the NEO</p> <p><b>Assignments/deadlines:</b> Preparing for the in-class test of the knowledge of the content of the relevant class readings</p> <p><b>Paper 1 due</b></p>
25-29.10	<p><b>MIDTERM BREAK</b></p>
2.11	<p><b>Class 8</b> Hegel on the rationality of the historical process as the history of freedom</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> In the NEO</p> <p><b>Assignments/deadlines:</b> Preparing for the in-class test of the knowledge of the content of the relevant class readings</p>

9.11	<p><b>Class 9</b> Utilitarianism of Bentham and Mill</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> In the NEO</p> <p><b>Assignments/deadlines:</b> Preparing for the in-class test of the knowledge of the content of the relevant class readings</p>
16.11	<p><b>Class 10</b> From Kierkegaard to Sartre: How has Existentialism contributed to the formation of the contemporary Western self-consciousness</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> In the NEO</p> <p><b>Assignments/deadlines:</b> Preparing for the in-class test of the knowledge of the content of the relevant class readings</p>
23.11	<p><b>Class 11</b> Schopenhauer's and Nietzsche's rebellion against the Western philosophical tradition (and its echoes in contemporary post-modern philosophy)</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> In the NEO</p> <p><b>Assignments/deadlines:</b> Preparing for the in-class test of the knowledge of the content of the relevant class readings</p>
30.11	<p><b>Class 12</b> American Pragmatism and the 20<sup>th</sup> Century American Philosophy</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> In the NEO</p> <p><b>Assignments/deadlines:</b> Preparing for the in-class test of the knowledge of the content of the relevant class readings</p>
7.12	<p><b>Class 13</b> Wittgenstein and the "linguistic turn" in the 20<sup>th</sup> century philosophy</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> In the NEO</p> <p><b>Assignments/deadlines:</b> Preparing for the in-class test of the knowledge of the content of the relevant class readings</p> <p><b>Paper 2 due</b></p>
14.12	<p><b><u>FINAL EXAM</u></b></p>

## 6. Course Requirements and Assessment (with estimated workloads)

Assignment	Workload (average)	Weight in Final Grade	Evaluated Course Specific Learning Outcomes	Evaluated Institutional Learning Outcomes*
Weekly reading notes	30	15 %	Ability to identify the key issues explored in the class readings	1, 2, 3
Paper 1	40	25%	Ability to outline, analyze and criticize the issues and arguments	1, 2
Paper 2	40	25%	Ability to outline, analyze and criticize the issues and arguments	1, 2
Final Exam	40	35%	Ability to identify the relevant political ideas and ascribe them to the thinkers explored in the course of the semester	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100%</b>		

\*1 = Critical Thinking; 2 = Effective Communication; 3 = Effective and Responsible Action

## 7. Detailed description of the assignments

**WEEKLY READING NOTES:** Students are expected to write weekly 1-2 pages of notes identifying the key ideas explored in the weekly class readings and upload them BEFORE each class at which the readings will be discussed.

### Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Knowledge and comprehension of the weekly reading assignments.	30%
Critical thinking about the issues explored in the readings.	40%
Argumentative and analytical skills.	30%

**PAPERS 1 & 2:** Students will write two essays (ca. 1500 words each) devoted to topics provided by the instructor, related to the key issues studied in the course of the semester (thus enabling students to explore in some depth issues that are likely to come up at the final exam).

### Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Knowledge and comprehension of the concepts, ideas and theories discussed in the essays.	60%
Analytical, argumentative and writing skills.	40%

### FINAL EXAM:

An online quiz testing the knowledge of the key ideas of the political thinkers explored in the course of the semester. The exact form of the quiz will be explained both in writing and during the live sessions well in advance of the exam.

### Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Knowledge and comprehension of the concepts, ideas and theories covered during the course.	60%
Analytical, argumentative and writing skills.	40%

## 8. General Requirements and School Policies

### General requirements

All coursework is governed by AAU's academic rules. Students are expected to be familiar with the academic rules available in the Codex and Student Handbook and to maintain the highest standards of honesty and academic integrity in their work.

### Electronic communication and submission

The university and instructors shall only use students' university email address for communication. It is strongly recommended that any email communication between students and instructors take place in NEO LMS.

Each e-mail sent to an instructor that is about a new topic (meaning not a reply to an original email) shall have a new and clearly stated subject and shall have the course code in the subject, for example: "COM101-1 Mid-term Exam. Question".

All electronic submissions are carried out through NEO LMS. No substantial pieces of writing (especially take home exams and essays) can be submitted outside of NEO LMS.

### ***Attendance***

Attendance, i.e., presence in class in real-time, is expected and encouraged. However, the requirement that students miss not more than 35% of real-time classes is temporarily suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### ***Absence excuse and make-up options***

Should a student be absent from classes for relevant reasons (illness, serious family matters), s/he must submit to the Dean of Students an Absence Excuse Request Form supplemented with documents providing reasons for the absence. The form and documents must be submitted within one week of the absence. If possible, it is recommended the instructor be informed of the absence in advance. Should a student be absent during the add/drop period due to a change in registration this will be an excused absence if s/he submits an Absence Excuse Request Form along with the finalized add/drop form.

Assignments missed due to unexcused absences cannot be made up which may result in a decreased or failing grade as specified in the syllabus.

Students whose absence has been excused by the Dean of Students are entitled to make up assignments and exams provided their nature allows for a make-up. Students are responsible for contacting their instructor within one week of the date the absence was excused to arrange for make-up options.

***Late work:*** No late submissions will be accepted – please follow the deadlines.

### ***Electronic devices***

Electronic devices (phones, tablets, laptops...) may be used only for class-related activities (taking notes, looking up related information, etc.). Any other use will result in the student being marked absent and/or being expelled from the class. No electronic devices may be used during tests or exams.

***Eating*** is not allowed during classes.

### ***Cheating and disruptive behavior***

If a student engages in disruptive or other conduct unsuitable for a classroom environment of an institution of learning, the instructor may require the student to withdraw from the room for the duration of the activity or for the day and shall report the behavior to the Dean.

Students engaging in behavior which is suggestive of cheating (e.g. whispering or passing notes) will, at a minimum, be warned. In the case of continued misbehavior the student will be expelled from the exam and the exam will be marked as failed.

### ***Plagiarism and Academic Tutoring Center***

Plagiarism is "the unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one's own original work." (Random House Unabridged Dictionary, 2nd Edition, Random House, New York, 1993)

Turnitin's White Paper 'The Plagiarism Spectrum' (available at <http://go.turnitin.com/paper/plagiarism-spectrum>) identifies 10 types of plagiarism ordered from most to least severe:

1. CLONE: An act of submitting another's work, word-for-word, as one's own.

2. CTRL-C: A written piece that contains significant portions of text from a single source without alterations.
3. FIND-REPLACE: The act of changing key words and phrases but retaining the essential content of the source in a paper.
4. REMIX: An act of paraphrasing from other sources and making the content fit together seamlessly.
5. RECYCLE: The act of borrowing generously from one's own previous work without citation; To self-plagiarize.
6. HYBRID: The act of combining perfectly cited sources with copied passages—without citation—in one paper.
7. MASHUP: A paper that represents a mix of copied material from several different sources without proper citation.
8. 404 ERROR: A written piece that includes citations to non-existent or inaccurate information about sources
9. AGGREGATOR: The "Aggregator" includes proper citation, but the paper contains almost no original work.
10. RE-TWEET: This paper includes proper citation, but relies too closely on the text's original wording and/or structure.

As the minimum policy the types of plagiarism from 1 through 8 results in the failing grade from the assignment and must be reported to the Dean. The Dean may initiate a disciplinary procedure pursuant to the Academic Codex. Allegations of bought papers and intentional or consistent plagiarism always entail disciplinary hearing and may result in expulsion from AAU. If unsure about technical aspects of writing, students are encouraged to consult their papers with the tutors of the AAU Academic Tutoring Center. For more information and/or to book a tutor, please contact the ATC at: <http://atc.simplybook.me/sheduler/manage/event/1/>.

### ***Students with disabilities***

Students with disabilities are asked to contact their instructor as soon as possible to discuss reasonable accommodation.

## 9. Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage*	Description
A	95 – 100	<b>Excellent performance.</b> The student has shown originality and displayed an exceptional grasp of the material and a deep analytical understanding of the subject.
A-	90 – 94	
B+	87 – 89	<b>Good performance.</b> The student has mastered the material, understands the subject well and has shown some originality of thought and/or considerable effort.
B	83 – 86	
B-	80 – 82	
C+	77 – 79	<b>Fair performance.</b> The student has acquired an acceptable understanding of the material and essential subject matter of the course, but has not succeeded in translating this understanding into consistently creative or original work.
C	73 – 76	
C-	70 – 72	
D+	65 – 69	<b>Poor.</b> The student has shown some understanding of the material and subject matter covered during the course. The student's work, however, has not shown enough effort or understanding to allow for a passing grade in School Required Courses. It does qualify as a passing mark for the General College Courses and Electives.
D	60 – 64	
F	0 – 59	<b>Fail.</b> The student has not succeeded in mastering the subject matter covered in the course.

\* Decimals should be rounded to the nearest whole number.

**Prepared by and when:** Dr Janusz Salamon, 16.06.2021

**Approved by and when:** Andrew Giarelli, Chair, Department of Arts, Culture and Society, June 16, 2021