

Framingham State University Syllabus

SEMESTER: Summer 2019

COURSE: Invitation to Philosophy (PHIL 101)

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Introduction to Philosophy: A critical inquiry into life, death, and the meaning of human existence. Issues such as the nature of reality, knowledge, the problem of truth, the existence of God, free will, and justice are examined from varying perspectives and sources: Western, global, classical, or modern.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Students can expect to learn about the historical development of metaphysical, ethical, epistemological, and political theory in the West. Too, students can expect to be challenged in the areas of critical thinking and thesis development in the construction of written composition.

GRADING:

You will be graded on the two tests and three papers that you will write for this course. Each test and each paper will count for 20% of the total grade. The first test is scheduled for July 26, and it will cover the readings from Plato, Aristotle and Saint Augustine. The second test is scheduled for August 09, and this test will cover the remaining reading assignments from the text. Both tests will be short answer format. The nature of the papers can be found under the Written Assignments section of this syllabus. The grading rubric for your written work is also attached to this syllabus.

First test 20%

Second test 20%

First paper 20%

Second paper 20%

Third paper 20%

Total 100%

Points	Value	Scale	Points	Value	Scale	Points	Value	Scale
95-100	4.0	A	80-82	2.7	B-	67-69	1.3	D+
90-94	3.7	A-	77-79	2.3	C+	63-66	1.0	D+
87-89	3.3	B+	73-76	2.0	C	60-62	0.7	D-
83-86	3.0	B	70- 72	1.7	C-	below 59	0.0	F

ATTENDANCE:

Class attendance is critical to your doing well in this course. Attendance will be taken at the start of each class. I expect each student to be in class and on time. Each absence or tardiness past the second instance will result in the subtraction of three points (half a grade) from the student's final average.

CELL PHONES:

All cell phones are to be shut off and put away during class.

HALFTIME BREAK:

We will take a ten minute break halfway through each lecture. I ask that you refrain from leaving your seats during the lecture. Please wait until the break or until the end of class to leave the classroom.

ACADEMIC HONESTY:

Integrity is essential to academic life. Consequently, students who enroll at Framingham State University agree to maintain high standards of academic honesty and scholarly practice. You will be responsible for familiarizing yourself with the published policies and procedures regarding academic honesty. Infractions of the policy on academic honesty include, but are not limited to: (1) Plagiarism – Claiming as one’s own work the published or unpublished literal or paraphrased work of another. It should be recognized that plagiarism is not only academically dishonest but also illegal; (2) Cheating on exams, tests, quizzes, assignments, and papers, including the giving or acceptance of these materials and other sources of information without the permission of the instructor; (3) Unauthorized collaboration with other individuals in the preparation of course assignments; (4) Submitting without authorization the same assignment for credit in more than one course; (5) Use of dishonest procedures in computer, laboratory, studio, or field work; (6) Misuse of the university’s technical facilities (computer machinery, laboratories, media equipment, etc.), either maliciously or for personal gain; (7) Falsification of forms used to document the academic record and to conduct the academic business of the university.

REQUIRED TEXT:

Melden, A.I., ed. Ethical Theories. 2nd ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1967. ISBN 10: 0132901226

COURSE EXPECTATIONS:

For our accreditation, it is essential that all Framingham State University credit courses follow that federal definition of credit hour: for every one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction, a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work is required. Since the summer China courses meet for two contact hours daily (10 contact hours of classroom time weekly), the expectation is that students spend 20 hours per week doing out-of-class work. For the five week 4-credit course, this reflects 50 hours of classroom time and 100 hours of out-of-class time since the credit hour is defined as 50 minutes.

FSU NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION AND DIVERSITY:

Framingham State University is committed to a policy of non-discrimination, equal opportunity, diversity, and affirmative action. The university is dedicated to

providing educational, working, and living environments that value the diverse backgrounds of all people. Furthermore, the Massachusetts Civil Rights Act protects the rights of all residents of and visitors to Massachusetts to be free from bias-motivated threats, intimidation, and coercion that interfere with their civil rights. The Massachusetts Civil Rights Act protects the right to attend school, live peacefully, and enjoy other basic rights.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

DATE	READING FROM MELDEN	EXAM	WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT
July 12	pp. 1 – 87 (Plato) and Handout on Allegory of the Cave.		Paper One Pre-writing Exercise
July 15			Paper One Due
July 18			Paper Two Pre-writing Exercise
July 19	pp. 88 – 142 (Aristotle).		
July 22			Paper Two Due
July 26	pp. 164 – 187 (St. Augustine).	First test; covers readings from Plato, Aristotle and Saint Augustine	
July 31	pp. 218 – 231 (Thomas Hobbes).		
Aug. 01			Paper Three Pre-writing Exercise
Aug. 02	pp. 273 – 316 (David Hume).		
Aug. 05			Paper Three Due

Aug. 07	pp. 317 – 366 (Immanuel Kant).		
Aug. 09	pp. 367 – 390 (Jeremy Bentham).	Second test; covers remaining reading assignments from the text	

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS:

This course will require three papers from you. We are going to spend a lot of time in the classroom going over the kind of critical thinking one must do in order to write an excellent paper. Footnotes and bibliography references for these papers must be put into MLA format. Specifics for the MLA style can be found at the Writing Guide Website, and you can find a link to this site at myFramingham. Other important details about the papers will be discussed as the due dates draw near.

Paper One: In Book VII of the Republic, Plato has Socrates depict the human condition in allegory form. After listening to Socrates, Glaucon says, “You have shown me a strange image, and they are strange prisoners.” Socrates responds, “Like ourselves.” Write a story – either real or invented – in which the symbols of this story come to life. Show me the major message of Plato’s allegory in a story of your own. (Three pages: pre-writing exercise July 12, paper due July 15).

Paper Two: In Part IV of the Republic, Plato makes an argument that describes the problematic nature of liberty. Explain his argument. Connect his stance on liberty with his critique of democracy. (Three pages: pre-writing exercise July 18, paper due July 22).

Paper Three: Defend the concept of liberty against the criticism of it made by Plato. Summarize Plato’s position, then describe what you understand by liberty and defend it. Present reasons (an argument) that you believe shows that your view is better. (Three pages: pre-writing exercise Aug. 01, paper due Aug. 05).

These are not easy assignments. Good papers will require much thought. Don’t leave the work until the last minute. Late papers will be penalized half a grade for each day past the due date.

EVALUATION FOR WRITTEN WORK

General merit: Low		Middle		High	
Ideas	2	4	6	8	10
Organization	2	4	6	8	10
Clarity	1	2	3	4	5
Depth	1	2	3	4	5
Accuracy	1	2	3	4	5
Relevance	1	2	3	4	5_____
Mechanics:					
Usage	1	2	3	4	5
Punctuation	1	2	3	4	5_____

Total: _____

Central idea: The paper will be rated on the degree to which it is focused on a clear and distinct subject. Is the purpose of the paper clear to the reader?

Support: The paper will be rated on the degree to which its generalization (thesis) is supported. Are there adequate details to support each of the paper's points?

Unity: The paper will be rated on the degree to which it proceeds smoothly and logically from point to point. Are transitions between paragraphs clear? Are paragraphs coherent and logical?

Introduction: The paper will be rated on the degree to which the introduction gets the reader's attention and prepares the reader for what is coming. Is there a hook?

Conclusion: The paper will be rated on the degree to which the conclusion draws a paper to a close, summarizes the main points, and reemphasizes the paper's purpose.

Style: The paper will be rated on the degree to which its sentences reflect a variety of syntactic structures and an appropriate usage of vocabulary. Does the word choice reflect a concern for the audience and the purpose of the paper?

Usage: The paper will be rated on its employment of capitalization, spelling, and grammar.

Punctuation: The paper will be rated on its employment of punctuation.