

Syllabus  
PHIL 1000 (3 Cr.)  
Introduction to Philosophy  
Fall 2017

Instructor: Dr. Kristopher G. Phillips  
Office: 108F General Classrooms  
Office Hours: TR 8:30a-11:00a & also by appointment

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Classes Meet:

(Section 01) MWF 10:00a-10:50a in GC 106  
(Section 02) MWF 11:00a-11:50a in GC 106  
(Section 03) MWF 12:00p-12:50p in GC 106

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** An introduction to philosophy through classical and contemporary readings on perception, metaphysical problems of personal identity, and value theory as it applies to living a life with meaning. Over the course of this semester we explore not what one ought to think, but *how* to think about fundamental problems in all of these areas.

This course fulfills the *Humanities Knowledge Area* for the General Education Program.

**Course Learning Outcomes (GE):**

- Critical Thinking: The successful student will begin to be able to differentiate between good and bad reasons for holding philosophical beliefs and will be able to seek out and identify the assumptions that lie at the basis of philosophical positions.
- Inquiry and Analysis: The successful student will begin to be able to break complex philosophical problems into their components, and will be able to identify the consequences and implications of philosophical positions.
- Communication: The successful student will develop and clearly express difficult philosophical concepts through writing and speaking.

Evaluation of these learning outcomes will be done through exams, papers, and in-class discussions.

**Course Learning Outcomes (Personal):**

- Epistemic Humility: The successful student will begin to demonstrate an awareness of their own epistemic limitations and the complexity of the evaluation and propriety of knowledge claims.
- Sense of Self and Others: The successful student will demonstrate a stronger sense of self both in belief and behavior by deploying philosophical concepts in epistemology and metaphysics as they relate to self and identity.

I will evaluate your progress on these outcomes through the reading responses (outlined below). I will *require* responses on **three** of the 15 possible responses. These will specifically address the personal learning outcomes.

**TEXTS:** The material for the introductory, epistemology and metaphysics sections of this course is available on Canvas. I expect you to print out each of the readings (or make sure you have a copy on your tablet, computer, etc) and bring them to class with you so that we can discuss them.

*Meaning in Life and Why It Matters* (ISBN: 978-0-691-15450-3) by Susan Wolf, Princeton University Press (2010) is available at the bookstore and is *Required*.

**SOME GENERAL ADVICE:** This course presupposes a willingness to work hard and think critically about some very difficult problems. Philosophy is hard, you'll see. Students who read reflectively and attend class regularly are more likely to remain interested in (and even enjoy) the material, benefit from the class discussions, and develop the philosophical skills and level of comprehension required to do well on the exams and papers. Some notes will be provided every week, but these, the lectures, and class discussion will very likely be hard to follow if you don't do the readings or if you miss previous classes.



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**ASSIGNMENTS, EVALUATION, POLICY:**

*Three Exams* (75%; 25% for each exam) The first exam will cover the material from the epistemology section of the course and the introductory material (including logic). The second exam will cover personhood and personal identity. The *final exam* will cover value theory. The exams will be take-home. You will be expected to answer all of four short-answer questions, and one of three essays. Your short-answers will be 2-3 pages typed, and the essay question will be 2-3 pages typed. You are to work alone; standard exam rules apply. More on this in class.

*Ten Reading Responses* (25%; 2.5% for each) In addition to your exams, I expect you to keep up on the reading. To facilitate discussion and keep you on track, you are expected to complete 10 weekly critical summaries. You are to complete the reading for the week (assigned on Friday) and write a 1-page critical discussion of the reading. It is not enough to summarize the reading, you must make some kind of critical contribution in order to receive full credit. You are to submit them to Canvas by **7:00p on Sunday**. The dropbox will close at that time, and I will not accept *any* late responses.

As I stated above, I will **require** three responses. These will fall roughly around weeks 5, 10 and 15; as they fall in line with the end of our discussions. I will prompt you to discuss specific questions as they pertain to our personal outcomes listed above.

NOTE: I can and will feel free to utilize turnitin.com to ensure the originality of your work. As such, I will require at least an electronic copy of your paper, and probably a hard copy as well.

**Late Work:** I will accept late exams, but for each 24-hour period that the exam is late, the grade will be reduced by 1/3 of a grade. **I will not accept any late reading responses.**

**Grade Disputes:** If you feel that your work has been unfairly assessed, you may ask that I reconsider. I am, after all, a human with a unique perspective and various background experiences and beliefs that may lead to different interpretations of your work than what you had in mind. I will do so **only if** you submit to me, on paper, a one-paragraph typewritten explanation of why you believe that your work has been unfairly evaluated. You must indicate the grade you believe yourself to deserve and explain clearly why it is that you deserve that grade. Your dispute must be submitted within **one week** of receiving your grade.

**Plagiarism or academic fraud of any sort will result in an F for the course.** Academic dishonesty is a serious matter. Please familiarize yourself with Southern Utah University's *Student Handbook*, which you can find online at <https://www.suu.edu/pub/policies/pdf/PP633Academic.pdf>. I will follow the regulations described in this document for dealing with cheating, plagiarism, etc. If you have any questions regarding what constitutes plagiarism or academic fraud after reading through the student handbook, please do not hesitate to ask me for further clarification.

**Classroom Conduct:** The classroom constitutes a community of which we are each an important part. The very foundation of philosophy as a discipline is the ability to charitably listen, understand and represent the views of ourselves and others. As such, respect for your fellow student, your instructor and the course is of critical importance. We can, should, and will disagree with one another often, but this **MUST** be conducted with respect. As such threatening behavior, offensive language (including "hate speech") will not be tolerated.

**Attendance:** Excessive absences (6 or more) will hurt you 1 letter grade (as in A- to B-). Philosophy is hard even if you come to class. Skip at your own risk. You are responsible for information that I offer in lecture that is not in the readings. I will not give you notes for unexcused absences.

Participation in class discussion can raise your grade up to 1/3 of a letter grade.

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**Disabilities:** I warmly welcome any of you who have disabilities. Students with medical, psychological, learning or other disabilities desiring academic adjustments, accommodations, or auxiliary aids must contact the Office for Students with Disabilities. The Office for Students with Disabilities determines eligibility for and authorizes the provision of these services and aids. Reasonable and effective accommodations and services will be provided to students if requests are made in a timely manner, with appropriate documentation, in accordance with federal, state, and University guidelines. For Southern Utah University's full policy, see:

<http://suu.edu/pub/policies/pdf/PP119Disability.pdf>.

**SUU Care and Support Team:** The SUU Care and Support Team (CAST) is comprised of trained faculty and staff who are committed to creating an environment at SUU that supports students who may be struggling with emotional distress and mental health issues. As a member of CAST, please know that I am here to help. I am not a professional counselor, but I do care, know how and where to find help if you need it, and want to see you succeed. Please do not be afraid to visit me if you're struggling.

<http://www.suu.edu/cast/>

**SUU Allies on Campus:** Allies On Campus is a network comprised of students, staff, and faculty dedicated to creating safe spaces for Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender, Queer individuals and Allies (LGBTQA) on the campus of Southern Utah University (SUU). As an ally, please know that I am committed to seeing that everyone is afforded the dignity and respect they deserve regardless of their identity.

<http://www.suu.edu/allies/>

**Link:** SUU faculty and staff care about the success of our students. In addition to your professor, numerous services are available to assist you with the achievement of your educational goals. I may use SUU's Link system to notify you and/or your advisors of my concern for your progress and provide references to campus services as appropriate.

**Emergency Management:** In case of emergency, the University's Emergency Notification System (ENS) will be activated. Students are encouraged to maintain updated contact information using the link on the homepage of the mySUU portal. In addition, students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the Emergency Response Protocols posted in each classroom. Detailed information about the University's emergency management plan can be found at <http://suu.edu/emergency>.

**HEOA Compliance:** The sharing of copyrighted material through peer-to-peer (P2P) file sharing, except as provided under U.S. copyright law, is prohibited by law.

**Disclaimer:** Information contained in this syllabus, other than the grading, late assignments, makeup work, and attendance policies are subject to change with advance notice, as I deem appropriate.