

PHL 201

Introduction to Philosophy (CRN: 21111)

Fall 2018

Instructor: Joey Tuminello

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Office Hours: MW 10-11am and by appt.

Class Time: MWF 11-11:50am

Classroom: NSH 109

Office: IA 216

Course Description

In this course, students will examine the nature and history of critical thinking as well as its role in everyday life, major themes that have dominated philosophy over the past three thousand years, and the trends these themes are taking in contemporary society.

Learning Outcomes

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

- Identify elements of critical thinking and what constitutes a logical fallacy,
- Identify the most prominent historical figures in philosophy, including their most significant contributions,
- Apply analytical skills to natural phenomena to explain, evaluate, or predict human behavior,
- Communicate an understanding of the cultural/historical contexts in western culture, connections to other disciplines, and the relevance of philosophy to their own discipline,
- Identify and analyze complex practices and beliefs, and the culturally and historically defined meaning of difference.

Course Materials

All required readings will be made available through the [course page on Canvas](#). These readings will also be made available in a [shared folder on Google Drive](#). Students are required to bring either digital copies or printed copies of readings to class on the appropriate dates.

Course Requirements and Grading

Participation (10%)

Student participation is required in this class. This includes participation in class discussions as well as in-class group work. Failure to participate in class activities will result in a loss of participation points.

Exams (40%)

Over the course of the term, students will take both a midterm exam and a final exam. The midterm exam will take place during class on **Monday, October 29**, and the final exam will take place on **Wednesday, December 5, from 10-11:50am**. Each exam is worth 20% of the total course grade. Exams will be comprehensive, and will consist of a combination of multiple choice, true/false, and essay questions.

Argumentative Paper (30%)

Students will write one argumentative paper on a topic relevant to any of the course themes. Students will select their own topics, and are encouraged to consult with the instructor (during office hours, via email, or during a scheduled appointment) when determining their topics. Detailed information on paper requirements and recommendations will be included in a "Paper Guidelines" document on Canvas, and will also be discussed in class. The first draft of the paper is due on **Wednesday, November 14 by 11:59pm**, and this draft is worth 15% of the total course grade. The instructor will return these drafts with feedback for each student within one week of the due date. Students will then

revise their papers based on instructor feedback on their first drafts. The final draft of the paper is due on **Friday, November 30 by 11:59pm**, and is also worth 15% of the total course grade.

Reading Quizzes (20%)

Throughout the term, the instructor will administer 10 unannounced in-class reading quizzes. Each quiz is worth two points. Some quizzes will consist of one multiple choice, true/false, or short essay question. Other quizzes will consist of brief in-class group activities where students work together to examine and evaluate arguments from the assigned reading material.

Grading Policy

This course is graded according to the requirements specified and weighted above. Final grades will be issued as follows:

- A = 90%+
- B = 80-89%
- C = 70-79%
- D = 60-69%
- F = 0-59%

Course Policies

Makeup/Late Assignment Policy: The instructor may grant permission for makeup exams/quizzes and for extensions on argumentative paper drafts, but students must contact the instructor prior to the due date of the assignment in order to utilize this policy. If there is an emergency situation that prevents students from completing an assignment on time, please contact the instructor as soon as possible to make alternate arrangements.

Classroom Behavior: Respect must be shown for the instructor and fellow classmates at all times. This includes being on time for class, not leaving early (unless prior notice is given for exceptional situations), having your phone on silent (or off), refraining from disrespectful comments, and any other actions which may be distracting to the instructor or the class. Any disruptive, rude, or inappropriate behavior can and will result in the loss of participation points. **Electronic devices are only allowed for accessing course materials and taking notes during class.** If students abuse the use of electronic devices in class, all use of such devices in class will be prohibited.

Class Cancellation: In the event of class being cancelled (due to campus closure or for other reasons), students should assume that any readings, assignments, or exams due on the day class is cancelled will instead be due at the next scheduled class meeting. Any necessary adjustments to the schedule will be announced at the next class meeting and posted on Canvas.

Academic Conduct: Students are responsible for reading, understanding and knowing LBCC's Student Code of Conduct which can be found at: <https://www.linnbenton.edu/faculty-and-staff/administrative-information/policies/board-policies-and-administrative-rules/7000-series-student-services/administrative-rule-no-7030-01-student-rights-respon.php>. Academic dishonesty is of the utmost importance for maintaining the integrity of the course and ensuring fairness in each student's learning experience. All cases of academic dishonesty will result in the student receiving an F on that assignment. If a student commits more than one case of academic dishonesty, that student

will receive an F as their final grade in the course. The instructor will also report all cases of academic dishonesty to the Associate Dean of Student Development and the Dean of Arts, Social Sciences & Humanities.

Disability Accommodations Statement: LBCC is committed to inclusiveness and equal access to higher education. If you have approved accommodations through the Center for Accessibility Resources (CFAR) and would like to use your accommodations in this class, please talk to your instructor as soon as possible to discuss your needs. If you believe you may need accommodations, but are not yet registered with CFAR, please go to <http://linnbenton.edu/cfar> for steps on how to apply for services or call 541-917-4789.

Drop/Withdrawal Information, and other Academic Dates: Found here: <https://www.linnbenton.edu/academiccalendar>

Class Schedule

This schedule is subject to change. Any changes will be announced in-class and on Canvas. It is your responsibility to obtain the amended schedule.

Course Introduction

9/24/18 - Introduction to course, syllabus, and classroom policies

9/26/18 - Overview of philosophy, its history and subfields; **Readings:** Plato, "The Apology"

9/28/18 - Basics of Argumentation and Logical Fallacies; **Reading:** "Logical Fallacies Handout"

10/1/18 - Logical Fallacies, continued

Ethical Theory and Practice

10/3/18 - John Stuart Mill, "What Utilitarianism Is"

10/5/18 - Onora O'Neill, "Kant's Ethics"

10/8/18 - Virginia Held, "The Ethics of Care as Moral Theory", pp. 9-15, 23-25

10/10/18 - Held, "The Ethics of Care," continued

Topics in Metaphysics: Personal Identity, Self, and World

10/12/18 - Derek Parfit (and Godfrey Vesey), "Brain Transplants and Personal Identity: A Dialogue", pp. 163-165

10/15/18 - Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble* (excerpts)

10/17/18 - Syl Ko, "Notes from the Border of the Human-Animal Divide"

Epistemology: Theories of Knowledge

10/19/18 - Rene Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*, pp. 279-83

10/22/18 - Descartes, *Meditations*, pp. 284-86

10/24/18 - David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (excerpts);

Midterm Exam and Review

10/26/18 - Review for Midterm Exam

10/29/18 - Midterm Exam

Epistemology, continued

10/31/18 - Alison Jaggar, "Love and Emotion in Feminist Epistemology"

Political Philosophy

11/2/18 - Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (excerpts)

11/5/18 - John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (excerpts)

11/7/18 - Robert Nozick, "Distributive Justice"

11/9/18 - Peggy Kornegger, "Anarchism: The Feminist Connection"

11/12/18 - Veteran's Day (no class meeting)

The Meaning of Life

11/14/18 - Richard Taylor, "The Meaning of Life"; Susan Wolf, "Meaning in Life"; **Argumentative Paper First Draft due by 11:59pm**

11/16/18 - Christine Vitano, "Meaningful Lives?"; Robert Nozick, "Philosophy and the Meaning of Life"

11/19/18 - Syl Ko, "Black Lives, Black Life"

11/21/18 - Feedback on Argumentative Paper/Tips for Final Draft

11/23/18 - Thanksgiving Holiday (no class meeting)

Topic TBA

11/26/18 - Readings TBA

11/28/18 - Readings TBA

Final Exam and Review

11/30/18 - Review for Final Exam; **Argumentative Paper Final Draft due by 11:59pm**

Final Exam: Wednesday, December 5, 10-11:50am