

Linn Benton Community College

**PHL 215 HISTORY OF WESTERN PHILOSOPHY (3)**

This course is delivered via Moodle

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**ON-LINE LEARNING**

In a web course, the teacher is a **resource** in the learning process, while the student takes a more active role in the process. If you are new to on-line learning, be aware that you will need to take the initiative to read all documents and materials thoroughly for your own understanding. Self-direction and self-discipline are critical. The weekly learning units, assignments, and forums are ways for me to gauge your understanding of the teaching/learning process in which you are participating.

I am here to help. You may email, post a question in the class forum or come to my office. I will respond to your assignments with feedback. It is **up to you** to determine how much assistance you would like from me. If you have carefully read course materials and still have a question, contact me or post in the forum right away! Don't delay.

**Moodle** seems to run most smoothly on Mozilla Firefox browser. If you are having delays or glitches in other browsers, I'd suggest switching to Mozilla.

**STUDENTS SUPPORT**

The below link provides you with all kinds of support information when it comes to: Child Care, Disability Services, Veterans, Counseling, Advising etc.:

<http://www.linnbenton.edu/current-students/student-support>

The website below is the website designed to help you success in your academic career. Please make sure you visit the website and use the resources available to you whenever you need the help of a tutor, advisor or other assistance: <http://www.linnbenton.edu/learning-center>

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The primary purpose of this course is to introduce students to the major philosophical theories that have been shaping the world for the past twenty five hundred years. An attempt is made to embrace a study of significant thinkers from all cultures throughout the ages. The major emphasis of the course, however, is on the philosophies of the Western World. The philosophical inquiries through out history have been substantially affecting the development of human history and that is why the historical context is very crucial. College level reading and writing skills are strongly recommended for success in this course.

**MEASURABLE STUDENT'S LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Since the subjects presented may generate many thoughts and ideas, the Moodle discussions will help you to exchange your ideas with fellow students, as well as to better understand the concepts, deepen the comprehension of the presented issues, and help you and your fellow students to learn from each other. The study questions and short reflection pieces will help to assess your comprehension of the discussed matters in written form. Tests will allow me to assess your learning progress through out the weeks.

## PERFORMANCE BASED LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

1. Use various forms of written assignments and discussion to articulate understanding of the interplay between natural or social forces and the individual.
2. Apply analytical skills to historical, social or natural phenomena.
3. Identify characteristics of a historical period when philosophy began and major changes that occurred throughout culture.
4. Identify individuals who contributed significant ideas to philosophy and place them within their historical context.
5. Identify major ideas, which gave birth to the concept of philosophy and trace their evolution to the contemporary world.
6. Thoughtfully and respectfully engage those who hold a different philosophical worldview.
7. Assess the cogency of arguments in general, and especially, of arguments in philosophy.
8. Conduct close, critical readings of difficult philosophical texts.

## EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE:

Your learning outcomes will be measured by:

10 DISCUSSIONS	10 points each = 100 points
4 REFLECTION PIECES	10 points each = 40 points
4 STUDY QUESTIONS	10 points each = 40 points
MIDTERM TEST	40 points
FINAL TEST	40 points

TOTAL of 260 points where the FINAL GRADE distribution is as follows:  
A 260-234; B 233-208; C 207-182; D 181-156, F 155 and below

## SPECIFIC ASSIGNMENTS EXPECTATIONS:

*READINGS* are due at the beginning of the week. Make sure that each week you are ready to discuss and engage the material. Weekly discussions are very essential for this course and your active participation each week is very much valued.

*DISCUSSIONS*: Participation in the weekly discussion is very crucial for this online course. Please think of it as a normal class discussion (but without the pressure of public speaking). Make sure that every week you post at least two quality\* responses to the subject and discuss the subject matter with your fellow students.

Please submit your response by Wednesday and Sundays. Firstly: you need to respond to the given question. Secondly you need to show me that you read what the fellow students have to say by posting a response or comment. **Two posts is the minimum, each post is worth max. 5 points and the maximum points per week are 10.**

\*Quality posts are those, which further the discussion, ask relevant questions, and add information to the discussion. Quality posts are not of the kind: "I agree" or "I think it is wrong". Each post will be evaluated weekly according to the below scale.

1-2 point: Minimal response to the module question. No contribution to discussion.

3-4 points: Posting responds to the question but does not stimulate further class discussion.

5 points: Posting fully addresses the module question and stimulates at least one substantial follow-up posting. Add new and interesting information

Topics will be given at the beginning of each week.

If you have any questions concerning the class, please post them in the General Q&A Folder. If you feel like adding more posts to the subject, which is of interest to you, you

are welcome to do so. Please do not start new forums without consulting me (this will be my job).

**REFLECTION PIECES:** Every other week starting week 2 you will be required to submit a 500-word count reflection piece on the assigned topic. There are no other specific requirements besides that your piece is correctly written, well organized and pertains to the given topic. Each reflection is worth 10 points. The grading will be as follows: 10-9 Excellent job; 8-7 Good job; 6-5 Fair job; 4-3 Poor job; 2-1 Very poor job.

**STUDY QUESTIONS:** Every other week starting week 1 you will be asked to answer a set of 10 questions after completing the assigned reading for the given week. Each assignment is worth 10 points. The grading will be 1 point for each correctly answered question. \*Writing well is important, and the Linn-Benton Writing Center is a great free resource for all students.

**MIDTERM and FINAL:** On weeks 5 and 10 you will be asked to complete the exams. The exams will consist of a variety of questions concerning the class material. You may expect open questions, multiple-choice questions as well as matching. Each exam is worth 40 points.

### **ADDITIONAL REMARKS**

\* In order to successfully complete the course please make sure to read all of the assigned reading for the week as well as fulfill the additional assignments such as listen to a podcast, watch a brief video or formulate your own idea on paper. Please be responsible for your own learning process

\* I will do my best to make sure that I share my knowledge with you in an accessible and comprehensive manner but in order for me to know that you are actively learning you need to apply yourself through the entire process your own learning.

\* Check LBCC email regularly as it is the instructor's first point of contact. You may also want to check Instructor's website since there may be some updated information during the term.

### **LEARNING RESOURCES**

- Textbooks: Norman Melchert, *Philosophical Conversations. A Concise Historical Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Texts and articles (available on Moodle);
- Audios and videos and other resources available online.

#### **Helpful internet links:**

- Guide to Study Philosophy: <http://www.philosophypages.com/sy.htm>
- Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: <http://plato.stanford.edu/>
- The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy: <http://www.iep.utm.edu/>

## CLASS SCHEDULE

### PART I Ancient and Medieval Philosophy

- Week One:** *What is the World? Before Philosophy ...*  
Melchert: 1-38, Before Philosophy and Philosophy before Socrates  
WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS: Discussion # 1 and the Study Questions # 1
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- Week Two:** *What is the value of thinking? Socrates and the Sophists.*  
Melchert: 39-65, **Socrates** and Sophists  
Melchert: 71-89: *Apology*  
WEEKLY ASSIGNMENT: Discussion # 2 and Reflection Piece # 1
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- Week Three:** *What is reality? Plato and his cave.*  
Melchert: 94-108; **Plato:** Knowledge and Reality  
Melchert: 109-129; The Soul and The State  
WEEKLY ASSIGNMENT: Discussion # 3 Answer the Study Questions # 2
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- Week Four:** *What is a good life? Aristotle and happiness*  
Melchert: 142-167: **Aristotle** and a Good Life  
WEEKLY ASSIGNMENT: Discussion # 4 and Reflection Piece # 2
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- Week Five:** *What is God? Medieval Philosophy of St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas*  
Melchert: 181-211: **St. Augustine**  
Melchert: 215-227: **St. Aquinas**  
WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS: Discussion # 5 and **MIDTERM TEST**

### PART II Modern and Contemporary Philosophy

- Week Six:** *What is the Man? Philosophical Revolution and Descartes*  
Melchert: 228-246: Medieval to Modern Transformation  
Melchert: 248-261 and 274-276, **Descartes** and *Meditation One*  
WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS: Discussion # 6 and Reflection Piece # 3
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- Week Seven:** *What is Knowledge? British Enlightenment with David Hume and John Locke*  
Melchert: 277-294, **Locke** and Empiricism  
Melchert: 295-322, **Hume** and Skepticism  
WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS: Discussion # 7 and Study Questions # 3
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- Week Eight:** *What is the Reason? German Idealism with Kant, Hegel and Marx*  
Melchert: 323-356, **Kant** and Reason  
Melchert: 357-373, **Hegel, Marx** and History  
WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS: Discussion # 8 and Reflection Piece # 4
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- Week Nine:** *What is Freedom? Nietzsche and the Existential thought of XX century*  
Melchert: 393-420: **Nietzsche**  
Melchert: 501-523; Existentialism  
WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS: Discussion # 9 and Study Questions # 4
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- Week Ten:** *Can Philosophy be Practical?*  
Melchert: 421-437: The Utilitarians  
Melchert 438-461: The Pragmatists  
WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS: Discussion # 10 and **FINAL TEST**

\* I reserve the right to modify this schedule at any time and introduce changes in the course. It is a responsible student's obligation to be aware of the changes announced during the term.

## GETTING STARTED

- Be sure that your LBCC e-mail address or other gmail address (needed for working in google docs); a graphic/picture and an introduction are all in your profile. If you have never accessed your LBCC e-mail address, this page will let you know how to go about it.
- Review the syllabus and all other course documents.
- Post questions that you have in the class forum or Q&A section. This is the fastest and most efficient way for you to get an answer. If you have the question, it is likely someone else does too.
- Read posted announcements

As the course progresses, plan to:

- Review weekly announcements, discussions, assignments, and textbook readings.
- **Participate in weekly sessions.**
- Make on-line contact with me and other students through the Forums.
- **Submit weekly assignments by Sunday at midnight.**

## SYLLABUS/WORKLOAD

On-line courses take the place of three hours of lectures and outside class assignments required in a traditional face-to-face class. You should expect to devote about 10 hours per week on the on-line interactions and other class assignments. **On-line classes require that you are able to comprehend concepts and data primarily through reading** so if you struggle with the first week's reading you will need to consider dropping this class. If you want help with reading strategies, schedule a meeting with me and/or visit the LBCC Learning Center. I highly recommend taking notes as you read; it will help immensely when you proceed to work on your Weekly assignments.

## MY ROLE/RESPONSIBILITIES

I will plan to provide feedback on your assignments 7 days of the due date, I will grade your assignments as they come in to me and post points on larger assignments (essays, grids) within 14 days of the assignment due date. If you have questions about the grading, please let me know right away. I will do my best to respond to emails within **24 hours** most week days and occasionally on weekends.

I will enter the **Forums** to “observe” your progress and sometimes join the discussion. The forum is a good way for you to interact with others in the class and share your perspective and questions. You will enhance your learning in this class by processing your thoughts and ideas in writing and with others. This kind of sharing has the potential to move your experience and thinking to a higher level. Make good use of it!

## STUDENT CONDUCT:

Students are expected to conform to all standards in Linn-Benton CC Student Handbook. This includes practicing both personal and academic integrity. Students are to respect the rights of all people and contribute to a safe, cooperative and respectful learning atmosphere.

**Respect.** We will maintain an atmosphere of mutual respect. If a student is disruptive and/or disrespectful, the student will be removed from the course.

**Academic honesty** is an indispensable value as students acquire knowledge and develop skills in college. Students at Linn-Benton Community College are expected to practice academic honesty by not cheating, plagiarizing, or misrepresenting their coursework in any way. Students are ultimately responsible for understanding and avoiding academic dishonesty whether such incidences are intentional or unintentional. Consequences for cheating, plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty may include receiving a score of zero on an individual assignment or failing the class. If at any time you are not sure about the legitimacy of your writing, ask your instructor for clarification. Note: students may be required to turn in copies of any source they use.

This online course highly values the **virtual etiquette rules**, especially the mutual respect of each other's views and opinions. Because the issues discussed are of a fragile, sometimes personal nature, I will expect all of you to keep the academic level of communication and refrain from engaging in any sort of offensive behavior and communication.

In your on-line discussions you may choose to share personal anecdotes about your own family. Remember to speak from your own perspective. In addition, please protect the confidentiality of others in your life. Refer to them by first initial only (e.g. “T” rather than Thomas). You may also refer to “my sister”, “my uncle”, “my neighbor” or “my friend”.