

Introduction to Philosophy

PHIL 11
Summer 2023



Jackson Pollock, *One: Number 31, 1950*

Day and Time: Tu Th 10:00AM-11:35AM

Location: Earth & Marine B206

Instructor: James Read

Email: japread@ucsc.edu

Office Hours: Th 1:00PM-2:00PM in the Cowell Courtyard, or by appointment.

Course Description:

This course is designed to provide an introduction to both contemporary and pre-contemporary approaches to philosophy, as well as both western and non-western philosophical traditions. Subfields of philosophy that will be explored in this course include epistemology & metaphysics, aesthetics, ethics, and social & political philosophy. Some questions we will be asking in this course are: What is philosophy? How can we know things? How can we know what's real? What is the value of art? Are there objective standards of beauty? What makes someone a good person? Are there objective standards of right and wrong? Are there better and worse ways to run a political state? How should we measure the success of a political state?

Course Schedule

Week One

Topic: Early Western Conceptions of Philosophy

Readings:

- 6/27 – Course Syllabus
- 6/29 – Plato's *Apology*.

No assignments due

Week Two

Topic: Early Non-Western Conceptions of Philosophy

Readings:

- 7/4 – Selections from Confucius' *Analects*.
- 7/6 – Huston Smith, "Hinduism" from *The World's Religions*
- 7/6 – Jay L Garfield, "Buddhist Ethics"

Writing assignment #1 due 7/7

Week Three

Topic: The Value of Philosophy and Ethics

Readings:

- 7/11 – Peter Singer, "Famine, Affluence, and Morality"
- 7/13 – Nancy Tuana, "The Speculum of Ignorance"

Writing assignment #2 due 7/14

Week Four

Topic: Ethics, cont'd

Readings:

- 7/18 – Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, sections I and II.
- 7/20 – Jeremy Bentham, "An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation," chapters 1 & 4.
- 7/20 – Ursula K. Le Guin, "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas."

Writing assignment #3 due 7/21

Week Five

Topic: Social & Political Philosophy

Readings:

- 7/25 – Selections from Plato's *Republic*, Books I & II
- 7/27 – Selections from Jacques Rousseau's *The Social Contract*

Writing assignment #4 due 7/28

Week Six

Topic: Social & Political Philosophy, cont'd

Reading:

- 8/1 & 8/3 – Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*

Writing assignment #5 due 8/4

Week Seven

Topic: Aesthetics

- 8/8 – Plato, *Republic*, Book X
- 8/8 – Selections from Plato's *Symposium*
- 8/10 – Selections from Aristotle's *Poetics*

Writing assignment #6 due 8/11

Week Eight

Topic: Aesthetics, cont'd

- 8/15 – David Hume, "Of the Standard of Taste"
- 8/15 – Arthur Danto, "Artworld"
- 8/17 – Alva Noe, selections from *Strange Tools*, chapters 8 & 9

Writing assignment #7 due 8/18

Week Nine

Topic: Epistemology & Metaphysics

- 8/22 – Rene Descartes, “Meditations on First Philosophy,” sections I, II & XI
- 8/24 – David Hume, “An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding” Sections IV and V

Writing assignment #8 due 8/25

Week Ten

Topic: Epistemology & Metaphysics, cont'd

- 8/29 – Thomas Nagel, “What is it Like to be a Bat?”
- 8/31 – Frank Jackson, “What Mary Didn’t know”
- 8/31 – Peter Carruthers, “The Problem of Other Minds”

Final Writing Project Due 9/1

Grading:

Weekly Short Writing Assignments – 50%

Due each week before section in order to prepare for discussion. Each short essay should be no more than 0.5 – 1 page long.

Attendance & Participation – 20%

Full points will be awarded to those who attend lectures/discussion sections and are engaged/active in their discussion sections. Attendance in office hours, emails to your instructor/TA, and other means of being engaged in the course will be taken into account here.

Final Project – 30%

Topics for your final project should be approved by your instructor or TA at least **two weeks** in advance of the due date.

You have a choice of the following 3 projects for the final:

- 1.) A 2-4 page academic essay in which you respond to a choice of prompts provided in the Canvas assignment module,
- 2.) A 4-8 page dialogue, worked on individually or with 1 other person, in which you respond to a choice of prompts provided on Canvas,
- 3.) A 15 minute presentation, worked on with 1-2 other people, in which you respond to a choice of prompts provided on Canvas.

Prompts will be uploaded to Canvas on Thursday, July 17th.

Grading Scale:

A+: 97-100
A: 94-96
A-: 90-93
B+: 87-89
B: 83-86
B-: 80-82
C+: 77-79
C: 73-76
C-: 70-72
D+: 67-69
D: 63-66
D-: 60-62
F: 59 or below

Policies and Resources:

- **Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course!** UC Santa Cruz is committed to creating an academic environment that supports its diverse student body. If you are a student with a disability who requires accommodations to achieve equal access in this course, please submit your [Academic Access Letter](#) from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to me privately during my office hours or by appointment, as soon as possible in the academic quarter, preferably within 1 week. I also encourage you to discuss with me ways we can ensure your full participation in this course. I encourage all students who may benefit to learn about the DRC and the UCSC accommodation process. You can visit the DRC website at drc.ucsc.edu. You can make an appointment and meet in-person with a DRC staff member. The phone number is [831-459-2089](tel:831-459-2089), or email drc@ucsc.edu.
- **Title IX** The university cherishes the free and open exchange of ideas and enlargement of knowledge. To maintain this freedom and openness requires objectivity, mutual trust, and confidence; it requires the absence of coercion, intimidation, or exploitation. The principal responsibility for maintaining these conditions must rest upon those members of the university community who exercise most authority and leadership: faculty, managers, and supervisors. The university has therefore instituted a number of measures designed to protect its community from sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, and other related prohibited conduct. Information about the Title IX Office, the online reporting link, applicable campus resources, reporting responsibilities, the UC Policy on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment, and the UC Santa Cruz Procedures for Reporting and Responding to Reports of Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment can be found at titleix.ucsc.edu. The Title IX/Sexual Harassment Office is located at 105 Kerr Hall. In addition to the online reporting option, you can contact the Title IX Office by calling 831-459-2462.
- **Student Health Center** <https://healthcenter.ucsc.edu/services/index.html> In addition to providing medical and health care, the Student Health Center provides resources and information for overall wellness and sexual health at Student Health Outreach and Promotion (SHOP). SHOP also provides a safe, confidential, and nonjudgmental space where you can talk about and get information about alcohol and other drugs. The COVE

offers a space for sober students or students questioning their relationship to alcohol and other drugs. If you're seeking more information, strategies, and opportunities to engage in honest dialogue about safer social and party experiences, visit Party Like a Slug.

- **CAPS (Counseling and Psychological Services)** <https://caps.ucsc.edu/> If you are in distress, managing heightened stress and anxiety, or want to get more support and a counselor's perspective on something you're going through, CAPS provides a variety of services for your needs—including immediate crisis support, scheduled individual appointments, group counseling, and workshops led by peer advisors.
- **Report an Incident of Hate or Bias:** The University of California, Santa Cruz is committed to maintaining an objective, civil, diverse and supportive community, free of coercion, bias, hate, intimidation, dehumanization or exploitation. The Hate/Bias Response Team is a group of administrators who support and guide students seeking assistance in determining how to handle a bias incident involving another student, a staff member, or a faculty member. To report an incident of hate or bias, please use this link: https://ucsc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report/index.php/pid625429?
- **Slug Support** <https://deanofstudents.ucsc.edu/slug-support/program/> If you are facing financial challenges, food and housing insecurity, or other concerns, and you are not sure how to find the resources you need, contact Slug Support at (831) 459-4446. You can also contact Slug Support if you are concerned about a friend or peer and they will connect with that person to help them get access to the resources they need. I can also contact Slug Support on your behalf.
- **Basic Needs** <https://basicneeds.ucsc.edu> If you are experiencing challenges related to basic needs, such as food, housing, health & wellness, or financial security, visit the Basic Needs hub for information about food pantries, accessible housing, mental health support, and financial aid options.
- **Learning Resources:** <https://keeplearning.ucsc.edu/>
- **Academic Integrity:** You are responsible for being familiar with UCSC's policies on academic misconduct (https://www.ue.ucsc.edu/academic_misconduct). Proper sourcing and good scholarship are expected. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense and will not be tolerated. Plagiarism will be handled on a case-by-case basis. If you have any questions or concerns about how to avoid plagiarism and ensure the originality of your work, please ask us.
 - UCSC's library resource page: <https://guides.library.ucsc.edu/citesources>
 - UCLA has helpful tips on avoiding plagiarism: <http://guides.library.ucla.edu/bruin-success/>