

# Phil 10101: Introduction to Philosophy

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## Purpose of Course:

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to philosophy and to the importance of philosophical inquiry for their own lives. To this end we will examine a sampling of philosophical classics. Some recurrent themes: the nature of philosophy and of philosophical wisdom; the distinctiveness of the philosophical life; the relation between intellection and affection in the pursuit of wisdom; the existence and nature of God; the relation between intellectual virtue and truth; the relation between faith and reason; the nature of human flourishing; the role of individuality in the pursuit of human flourishing; the relation between moral virtue and happiness. The philosophers to be discussed include Plato, St. Thomas Aquinas (and through him Aristotle), St. Augustine, Descartes, Hume, Mill, and Nietzsche.

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## Texts (other editions and/or translations are acceptable):

- Plato, *Five Dialogues* (Hackett) (ISBN: 978-0872206335)
  - St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles, Book One: God* (Notre Dame) (ISBN: 978-0268016784)
  - St. Thomas Aquinas, [Treatise on Beatitude -- my translation, on line](#)
  - Rene Descartes, *Discourse on Method* (Hackett) (ISBN: 978-0872204225)
  - David Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* (Hackett) (ISBN: 978-0872204027)
  - John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (Hackett) (ISBN: 978-0915144433)
  - Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil* (Penguin) (ISBN: 978-0140449235)
  - St. Augustine, *Confessions* (Hackett) (ISBN: 978-0872208162)
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## Requirements:

- Careful reading and re-reading of all assignments and scrupulous class attendance.
  - Submission of a comment or question on the reading every third day -- [see assignments](#) -- comments due by midnight the day before (10% of grade). (I do not expect or want mini-dissertations, just straightforward and concise questions or comments.)
  - Two 5-page papers on assigned topics, due on 9/21 and 11/23, each worth 20% of grade).
  - Two exams, the first on 10/14 and the second on 12/16 (each worth 25% of grade).
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## Tentative outline with reading assignments:

### I. [Plato](#) (428 BC-348 BC)

- 8/26: *Apology*, in *Five Dialogues*, pp. 23-44 (17A-42A)
- 8/31: *Phaedo*, in *Five Dialogues*, pp. 93-106 (57A-69E)
- 9/2: *Phaedo*, in *Five Dialogues*, pp. 106-135 (69E-95E)
- 9/7: *Phaedo*, in *Five Dialogues*, pp. 135-155 (95E-end)

### II. [St. Thomas Aquinas](#) (1225-1274)

- 9/9: *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Book One: God, pp. 59-68 (chaps. 1-4)
- 9/14: *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Book One: God, pp. 69-78 (chaps. 5-9)
- 9/16: *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Book One: God, pp. 85-99 (chaps. 13-15)
- 9/21: *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Book One: God, pp. 135-149 (chaps. 28-35) ([paper due](#))
- 9/23: *Treatise on Beatitude*, ques. 1-3, [pp. 1-30 in my translation](#) (+ [How to read a question from the Treatise on Beatitude](#))
- 9/28: *Treatise on Beatitude*, ques. 4-5, [pp. 31-50 in my translation](#)

### III. [Rene Descartes](#) (1596-1650)

- 9/30: *Discourse on Method*, pp. 1-6 (Part One)
- 10/5: *Discourse on Method*, pp. 6-12 (Part Two)
- 10/7: *Discourse on Method*, pp. 12-17 (Part Three)
- 10/12: *Discourse on Method*, pp. 17-21 (Part Four)

## 10/14 Midterm Exam

### IV. [David Hume](#) (1711-1776)

- 10/26: *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, pp. 3-12 (Part I)
- 10/28: *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, pp. 13-38 (Parts II-V)
- 11/2: *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, pp. 54-76 (Parts IX-XI)
- 11/4: *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, pp. 77-89 (Part XII)

**V. [John Stuart Mill](#) (1806-1873)**

- 11/9: *On Liberty*, pp. 1-33 (chap. 1 and first part of chap. 2)
- 11/11: *On Liberty*, pp. 33-52 (last part of chap. 2)
- 11/16: *On Liberty*, pp. 53-71 (chap. 3)

**VI. [Friedrich Nietzsche](#) (1844-1900)**

- 11/18: *Beyond Good and Evil*, Preface & Part Two, #24-#44)
- 11/23: *Beyond Good and Evil*, Part Three, #45-#62 ([paper due](#))
- 11/30: *Beyond Good and Evil*, Part Five, #186-#203

**VI. [St. Augustine](#) (354-430)**

- 12/2: *Confessions*, pp. 3-47 (Bks. 1-3)
- 12/7: *Confessions*, pp. 51-125 (Bks. 4-7)
- 12/9: *Confessions*, pp. 129-170 (Bks. 8-9)

**12/16 FINAL EXAM 4:15-6:15 (WEDNESDAY)**