In Introduction to Philosophy students develop the critical-thinking skills needed to write and speak effectively about God, reason, the mind-body relation, knowledge, identity, freedom, ethics, and political relations. This means being able to identify issues, present arguments, critique those arguments, and formulate replies to those criticisms. There are no prerequisites for this course.


- The semester grade is based on:
  - answers to daily reading questions at Assignments on eCampus: submitted no later than 2 a.m. the night of class, starting Jan 26 (75 pts). Each answer must refer to the page number(s) of the reading on which the answer is drawn.
  - two 500-word essays (10 pts each); due at Assignments on eCampus Sunday midnight.
  - mid-semester exam (two questions, 10 pts each) and final exam (three questions, 10 pts each)
  - total possible points: 145; minimum grades: 129=A, 114=B; 99-C, 84=D.

There is no separate grade for attendance or participation, but both will affect your mastery of the material. Student Rule 7 notes that you are expected to attend all classes.

- You should prepare answers to questions before each class; you will be asked about them. Use the questions in the reading packets as the basis for classroom discussions of central claims, arguments, and objections.

- If you miss the essays, mid-semester, or final exam, contact me immediately. My expectations of the essays rise if they are submitted past deadlines, but you should definitely still turn in assignments even after they are due (but no more than one week late) for some credit.

- The final exam (worth 30 points) draws together themes raised throughout the semester.

### Syllabus for PHIL 251.200: Introduction to Philosophy

Tuesday & Thursday: 9:35-10:50 (YMCA 113)
Spring 2016; Dr. Stephen H. Daniel

Jan. 19 **God: rational arguments** 3-15, 43-53
21 Practical rationality & belief, Pascal 54-64
26 Basic beliefs: Wm. James, Plantinga 76-96
28 Induction, Hume 133-50
Feb. 2 Causation 192-97, 223-36
4 Other minds, skepticism 237-43, 282-93
9 Knowledge of the external world 294-312
11 Contextualism, best explanation 318-35
13 **Essay 1 Saturday midnight** Is Mind Material? Descartes/Ryle 351-71
16 Mental states/computers 380-96
18 Consciousness/Nagel 397-411
23 Consciousness/Chalmers 430-39
25 Ontology & fiction 494-507
Mar. 1 Science & metaphysics 523-37
3 Mid-semester exam
8 Personal identity & Locke 538-51
10 Personal identity & Parfit 558-70
19 **Essay 2** Saturday midnight Kant on moral motivation 732-43
22 Free will 583-97
24 Freedom & Wolff 621-31
29 Objective morality 641-46, 657-67
31 Nagel on ethics 668-76
Apr. 5 Doing what is right 699-704, 711-20
7 Hume on the passions 720-31
12 Moral reasoning, J. S. Mill 744-62
14 Contractarianism 774-81
19 Intuitions in ethics 795-804
21 Rights, utilitarian basis of State 955-72
26 Value of liberty, J. S. Mill 973-78, 983-91
28 Equality 1037-56
May 3 [No class: redefined Friday class]
5 (Thurs) **Final exam 12:30-2:30 p.m.** (in class)

Office hours (YMCA 417): Tues/Thurs 11:00-12:45, 2:00-3:30. Phone: 979-324-4199 (cell); email: sdaniel@tamu.edu. Web: philosophy.tamu.edu/~sdaniel/.

Students with disabilities are guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact Disability Services, 757 West Campus Blvd, 845-1637.

Students are bound by the Aggie honor code not to lie, cheat, steal, or tolerate those who do. If you violate the code (e.g., by plagiarizing something from the Internet), you fail the course: no second chances. For information on cheating and plagiarism, go to http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu/.