



Syllabus for PHIL 251.200: Introduction to Philosophy (Honors)

Tuesday & Thursday: 12:45-2:00 (YMCA 115)

Spring 2018; Dr. Stephen H. Daniel



In **Introduction to Philosophy** students develop the critical-thinking skills for writing and speaking effectively about knowledge, freedom, identity, the mind-body relation, God, and ethics. 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.

Textbooks: (1) [*Ultimate Questions*](#) (3rd ed) by Nils Rauhut; and (2) [Readings selections](#) in the course packet.

<p><u>Jan.</u> 16 What is Philosophy? 1-13 18 Activity of Philosophy, Readings 1-7, 26-31 23 Knowledge & Skepticism 42-57 25 Huemer on Skepticism: Readings 47-57 30 Empiricism 57-65; Berkeley Readings 278-80, 290-06</p> <p><u>Feb.</u> 1 Hume 65-67 & Readings 284-90 6 Rationalism 67-76, Kant Readings 555-57 8 *Longino Feminist Epist Readings 19-35 13 Free Will/Hard Determinism 77-88 15 Strawson on freedom, <i>Readings</i> 318-27 20 Compatibilism & Libertarianism 88-103 22 Schott on Feminism & History of Philosophy, <i>Readings</i> 43-63 27 Personal identity 104-125</p> <p><u>Mar.</u> 1 Mid-semester exam (in class) 6 Mind-Body dualism, 126-39 8 Physicalist theories, 139-55</p>	<p><u>Mar.</u> 20 God: religious experiences, cosmological argument 156-69 22 Design argument 169-76; Hume's critique, <i>Readings</i> 93-99 27 Ontological/wager arguments, 176-85 29 Pascal, James, Kierkegaard, <i>Readings</i> 350-63</p> <p><u>Apr.</u> 3 Problem of evil 185-96 5 *Ethical relativism/divine command 197-211 10 Utilitarianism 211-19, <i>Readings</i> 352-65 12 Kantian/virtue ethics 220-33; <i>Readings</i> 486-99 17 Nietzsche on morality, <i>Readings</i> 378-85 19 Feminist ethics, <i>SEP</i> article 24 Rawls & Nozick on Justice, <i>Readings</i> 379-87 26 Nagel on the absurdity of life, <i>Readings</i> 825-34</p> <p><u>May</u> 3-4 Final exam (in class)</p> <p>* Essays on announced questions, due midnight of the Sunday night following the class</p>
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- The **semester grade** is based on:
 - two 500-word essays on questions (4 pts each); sent to instructor by email; due midnight Feb 11 & Apr 8
 - 24 brief daily answers on readings, starting Jan. 25, first five minutes of class (total 48 pts)
 - mid-semester exam (two questions, 10 pts each) and final exam (three questions, 10 pts each)
- There is no separate grade for attendance or participation, but both can affect your mastery of the material. [Student Rule 7](#): you are expected to attend all classes.
- If you miss the mid-semester or final exam, contact Dr. D immediately.
- Minimum grades: 90=A, 80=B, 70=C, 60=D.

Dr. Daniel office hours (YMCA 417): Tues/Thurs 12:15-12:45, 2:00-3:40. **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 believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact [Disability Services](#), Student Services at 757 West Campus Blvd or call 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. For information on cheating and plagiarism, go to <http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu/>.