



Syllabus for PHIL 251.200: Introduction to Philosophy (Honors)

Tuesday & Thursday: 11:10-12:25 (HELD 118)

Spring 2019; Dr. Stephen H. Daniel



In **Introduction to Philosophy (Honors)** students develop the critical-thinking skills for writing and speaking effectively about God, knowledge, freedom, identity, the mind-body relation, and ethics. **Learning Objectives:** ability to identify issues, present arguments, critique arguments, and formulate replies to those criticisms. Topics addressed in the course are covered in the assigned textbooks, online readings, and the 46 episodes of the YouTube “Crash Course Philosophy” series (CC). There are no prerequisites for this course.

Textbooks: (1) *Philosophy: Asking Questions, Seeking Answers* by Stephen Stich & Tom Donaldson (Stich)
(2) *Writing Philosophy*, 2nd ed. by Lewis Vaughn (Vaughn)—\$5.00 if purchased with Stich.

<u>Jan.</u>	15	Philosophy? Stich 1-6; Reading Philosophy: Vaughn ix-xii, 3-42 [CC 1]	<u>Mar.</u>	7	Wm. James, “ <u>Dilemma of Determinism</u> ”
	17	Writing Philosophy: Vaughn 43-87; Stich writing/majoring 334-49 [CC 2]		19	Mind-Body 179-93 [CC 22]
	22	Fallacies, Citations, Being Effective: Vaughn 88-135		21	*Mind-Body 193-212 (Q. 1-14, p. 207) [CC 23]
	24	Philosophical Argument: Stich 7-28 [CC 3]		26	Personal Identity I: 213-33 [CC 18-19]
	29	Plato, <i>Republic</i> , <u>Allegory of the Cave</u> [CC 4]		28	Personal Identity II: 233-42 [CC 20-21]
	31	*God 29-58 (Ques 1-13, pp. 54-55) [CC 9-12, 14-15]	<u>Apr.</u>	2	*[No class, instructor out of country]: answer Discussion Questions #1-5, pp. 262-64.
<u>Feb.</u>	5	Suffering 59-76 [CC 13]		4	*[No class, instructor out of country]: answer Discussion Questions #6-9, pp. 264-65.
	7	Certainty 77-96 [CC 5]		9	Moral Objectivism 243-62 [CC 32-34]
	12	Descartes, <u>Meditations I-II</u>		11	Worth & Meaning 267-86 [CC 37-38]
	14	Sense Knowledge 97-120 [CC 6]		16	<u>Existentialism Is a Humanism</u> [CC 16]
	19	*Berkeley, <i>Principles</i> (Ques. 1-7)		18	Consequentialism & Kant 287-308 [CC 35-36]
	21	Induction 121-40 [CC 8]		23	Ethics: Starvation, Vegetarianism, Abortion 307-33 [CC 40-42, 44]
	26	Knowledge 141-60 [CC 7]		25	<u>Nagel: Absurdity of Life</u> [CC 17, 46]
	28	<u>Mid-semester exam</u> (in class)		[30]	[No class: redefined Friday class]
<u>Mar.</u>	5	Free Will 161-78 [CC 24-25]	<u>May</u>	2	(Thursday) <u>Final exam, 3-5 p.m.</u> (in class)

The **semester grade** is based on:

- 43 answers on readings with asterisks (*), one point each, starting Jan. 31.
- Mid-semester and final exams (three questions each, 10 pts per question)
- **Student Rule 7:** you are expected to attend all classes and to have read all assigned readings. Miss more than three unexcused classes and you lose a letter grade.
- Miss mid-sem/final exam? Contact me immediately.
- Minimum grades: 90=A, 80=B, 70=C, 60=D.
- Texas A&M University and the College of Liberal Arts are committed to fostering a safe and productive learning environment for all. Although class materials are generally considered confidential pursuant to student record policies and laws, University employees (including instructors) cannot maintain confidentiality when it conflicts with their responsibility to report issues that jeopardize the health and safety of our community. As the instructor, I must report (per Texas A&M System Regulation 08.01.01) the following information to other University offices if you share it with me, even if you do not want the disclosed information to be shared:

- Allegations of sexual assault, sexual discrimination, or sexual harassment when they involve TAMU students, faculty, or staff, or third parties visiting campus. These reports may trigger contact from a campus official who will want to talk with you about the incident that you have shared. In many cases, it will be your decision whether or not you wish to speak with that individual. If you would like to talk about these events in a more confidential setting, you are encouraged to make an appointment with the Student Counseling Service (<https://scs.tamu.edu/>). Students and faculty can report non-emergency behavior that causes them to be concerned at <http://tellsomebody.tamu.edu>.

Dr. Daniel office hours (YMCA 417): Tues 10-11, 12:45-2:00, Thurs 10-11&appt. **Phone cell:** 979-324-4199; **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/>.