

# PHIL 251. 200: Introduction to Philosophy (Honors)

Tuesday & Thursday: 11:30 – 12:45 Online

Spring 2021: Dr. Stephen H. Daniel

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Office hours: Tues/Thurs 10:30-11:30, 4:30-5:30

- In **Introduction to Philosophy (Honors)** students develop the critical-thinking skills for writing and speaking effectively about God and evil, knowledge, the mind-body relation, freedom, and ethics.
- Because this is an honors core-curriculum course, students learn to write and speak in ways that exceed expectations of students in regular sections of the course.
- Students learn how to present and critique arguments and to formulate replies to those criticisms.
- There are no prerequisites for the course. Required readings are linked to this syllabus.
- You must register at [Zoom.us](https://zoom.us). **Zoom ID for course and office hours: 932 700 4383.**
- Readings are from the following:
  - [Intro to Philosophy: Classical and Contemporary Readings](#), 7<sup>th</sup> ed., John Perry et al. (2016)
  - [The Cartoon Introduction to Philosophy](#) by Michael Patton et al. (2015)
  - ~~[Everyday Examples: An Introduction to Philosophy](#) by David Cunnig (2015)~~

Jan.	19	<a href="#">Introduction</a> (Perry 1-7)	Mar.	16	<a href="#">Other Minds &amp; Ryle</a> (Perry 269-79)
	21	<a href="#">Value of Philosophy, Papers</a> (Perry 14-20, Patton 3-16)		18	[Redefined day: attend your Friday classes]
	26	<a href="#">Logic</a> (Patton 18-32; Perry 8-13)		23	<a href="#">Identity &amp; Immortality</a> (Perry 322-42)
	28	<a href="#">Skepticism</a> (Patton 34-58; Cunnig 1-9)		25	<a href="#">Meaning of Life</a> (Cunnig 90-124)
Feb.	2	<a href="#">Descartes' Meditations I-III</a> (Perry 157-68)	<b>[28</b>	<b>Sunday: 3<sup>rd</sup> essay due (midnight)] #</b>	
	4	<a href="#">Hume's Enquiry</a> (Perry 211-37)		30	<a href="#">Absurdity of Life</a> (Perry 813-20)
	7	<b>[Sunday (midnight): 1<sup>st</sup> essay due] #</b>	Apr.	1	<a href="#">God</a> (Patton 112-32, Cunnig 125-39)
	9	<a href="#">Responses to Skepticism</a> (Cunnig 9-33)		6	<a href="#">Unconscious Design</a> (Cunnig 140-59)
	11	<a href="#">Evil Demons &amp; The Matrix</a> (Perry 181-88)		8	<a href="#">Belief in God: Paley/Pascal</a> (Perry 45-53)
	16	Snow Day (shorten Mill reading)		13	<a href="#">Reasoning against Religion</a> (Perry 139-51)
	18	Snow Day (drop Kant Ethics reading)		15	<a href="#">Feeling Free</a> (Patton 90-110, Cunnig 160-84)
	23	<a href="#">Morality</a> (Patton 134-62, Cunnig 34-44)	[18	<b>Sunday: 4<sup>th</sup> essay due (midnight)] #</b>	
	25	<a href="#">Moral objectivity</a> (Cunnig 44-57)		20	<a href="#">Choice and Agency</a> (Cunnig 186-208)
	28	<b>[Sunday: 2<sup>nd</sup> essay due (midnight)] #</b>		22	<a href="#">Existential responsibility</a> (Cunnig 208-224)
Mar.	2	[No class: Texas Independence Day]		27	<a href="#">Liberalism/libertarianism</a> (Cunnig 225-39)
	4	<b>Mid-semester exam (regular class time)</b>		29	<a href="#">Rawls, Nozick, and Justice</a>
	9	<a href="#">Mind-Brain</a> (Cunnig 60-71, Patton 59-88)	[30	[Last day to Q-Drop or Withdraw]	
	11	<a href="#">Immaterial thoughts</a> (Cunnig 71-89)	May	3	<b>Monday: Final exam 11:00-1:30</b>
		[Mar. 15 (Monday): mid-sem grades due]			

# See **Guidelines for Essays** on the next page  
[Samples of 600-word essays.](#)

## General Comments

- *Each class ends with a summary of points to be discussed in the next class. This helps you understand material for the next class so that you can frame questions about what you read.*
- *Student Rule 7: you are expected to attend all classes and read assigned readings. If you miss more than three unexcused classes, you lose a letter grade.*
- *If you violate the Aggie Honor Code (e.g. by plagiarizing from the Internet or sharing answers on the mid-semester or final exams), you fail the course.*
- *Students do not have to have their cameras on for class (though they can do so if they want to).*
- *Definitely turn in late work (though my expectations are higher).*

## Grading Policy

- The semester grade is based on four essays that increase in minimum length (excluding notes) and value--#1 is 600 words (10%), #2 1000 words (15%), #3 1500 words (20%), #4 2000 words (25%)—and mid-semester and final exams (15% each).
- Minimum grades: 90=A, 80=B, 70=C, 60=D.

## Guidelines for Essays

- Essays #1-2 must include at least one **secondary source** from [the Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#) or the [Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#); essays #3-4 must include at least two sources.
- Your header: give your name, course, professor, and date **single spaced**. Papers should have one-inch margins with double-spaced lines. Font: Times New Roman, 12 pt. Title centered at top of first page (no cover sheet). Indent first line of a paragraph ½". Indent quotes longer than three lines ½" from the left margin (**single spaced; no quotation marks**). Don't begin or end a quote with an ellipsis (three periods). Single quotes go inside commas, periods, colons, semi-colons; **double quotes go outside**.
- After your title, your first paragraph should identify your issue: What basic point or argument is the philosopher is making? Then indicate steps in the argument along with problems it raises.
- Avoid generalities ("For centuries philosophers have argued," or "much still needs to be said"). No first names (e.g., David Hume) or identifications ("philosopher John Locke"). **Avoid personal opinions** ("Locke insightfully noted...")
- Don't cite book/article titles in the text (e.g. "in 'Mechanism in Locke', Downing notes"). Just refer to the point and footnote it. **Don't cite online addresses**; just give the journal entry. Footnote citations:
  - (book) Nicholas Jolley, *The Light of the Soul: Theories of Ideas in Leibniz, Malebranche, and Descartes* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 8-10. No need for "p." or "pp."
  - (journal article) Monte Cook, "The Ontological Status of Malebranchean Ideas," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 36 (1998), 538-39. **[Refer only to the page(s) you are drawing on.]**
  - (essay in book) Steven Nadler, "Intentionality in the Arnauld Debate," in *Minds, Ideas, and Objects*, ed. Philip D. Cummins (Atascadero, CA: Ridgeview Publishing Co., 1992), 78.
  - (online encyclopedia) Robert Johnson and Adam Cureton, "Kant's Moral Philosophy," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (2016), section, paragraph.
- If you cite a work more than once, give an abbreviation of it in your note when first mentioned and embed later references **in the text** in parentheses using the abbreviation. Use footnotes, not endnotes. No footnote numbers in the middle of a sentence; no **"Works Cited,"** References, or Bibliography. Use one space between sentences and no space between a punctuation mark and a footnote number. Footnote numbers go outside periods and closed quotes—e.g. "...ending."<sup>3</sup>

## University Policies

### Academic Integrity Statement and Policy

An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal, or tolerate those who do. Texas A&M University students are responsible for authenticating all work submitted to an instructor. If asked, students must be able to produce proof that the item submitted is indeed the work of that student. Students must keep appropriate records at all times. The inability to authenticate one's work, should the instructor request it, may be sufficient grounds to initiate an academic misconduct case" ([Sect. 20.1.2.3, Student Rule 20](#)). You can learn more about the Aggie Honor System Office Rules and Procedures, academic integrity, and your rights and responsibilities at [aggiehonor.tamu.edu](http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu).

### Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy

Texas A&M University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. If you experience barriers to your education due to a disability or think you may have a disability, please contact Disability Resources in the Student Services Building or at (979) 845-1637 or visit [disability.tamu.edu](http://disability.tamu.edu). Disabilities may include, but are not limited to attentional, learning, mental health, sensory, physical, or chronic health conditions. All students are encouraged to discuss their disability related needs with Disability Resources and their instructors as soon as possible.

### Title IX and Statement on Limits to Confidentiality

Texas A&M University is committed to fostering a learning environment that is safe and productive for all. University policies and federal and state laws prohibit gender-based discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, sexual exploitation, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.

With the exception of some medical and mental health providers, all university employees (including full and part-time faculty, staff, paid graduate assistants, student workers, etc.) are Mandatory Reporters and must report to the Title IX Office if the employee experiences, observes, or becomes aware of an incident that meets the following conditions (see [University Rule 08.01.01.M1](#)):

- The incident is reasonably believed to be discrimination or harassment.
- The incident is alleged to have been committed by or against a person who, at the time of the incident, was (1) a student enrolled at the University or (2) an employee of the University.

Mandatory Reporters must file a report regardless of how the information comes to their attention – including but not limited to face-to-face conversations, a written class assignment or paper, class discussion, email, text, or social media post. Although Mandatory Reporters must file a report, in most instances, a person who is subjected to the alleged conduct will be able to control how the report is handled, including whether or not to pursue a formal investigation. The University's goal is to make sure you are aware of the range of options available to you and to ensure access to the resources you need.

Students wishing to discuss concerns in a confidential setting are encouraged to make an appointment with [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (CAPS).

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Students can learn more about filing a report, accessing supportive resources, and navigating the Title IX investigation and resolution process on the University's [Title IX webpage](#).

### Statement on Mental Health and Wellness

Texas A&M University recognizes that mental health and wellness are critical factors that influence a student's academic success and overall wellbeing. Students are encouraged to engage in healthy self-care by utilizing the resources and services available from Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS). Students who need someone to talk to can call the TAMU Helpline (979-845-2700) from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. weekdays and 24 hours on weekends. 24-hour emergency help is also available through the National Suicide Prevention Hotline (800-273-8255) or at [suicidepreventionlifeline.org](https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org).