



Syllabus for PHIL 251.502: Introduction to Philosophy [Revised 3/23/20]

Tuesday & Thursday: 11:00 a.m. Online

Spring 2020; 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 online readings and episodes of the YouTube “[Crash Course Philosophy](#)” series (CC) and [an online video on Nietzsche](#). There are no prerequisites for this course.

Text: Readings for the course are available online. Page numbers refer to the online version.

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| Jan. | 14 | Course Orientation | Mar. | 17 | Class cancelled: Coronavirus |
| | 16 | What is Philosophy? 1-9 [CC 1-2] | | 19 | Class cancelled: Coronavirus |
| | 21 | Plato <i>Republic</i> Allegory of Cave 10-12 [CC 4] | | 24* | Pascal, James, Kierkegaard 86-94 qu5 [CC 14] |
| | 23* | What do we know? Rauhut 13-19 | | 26* | Dualism R 126-39, S 179-87 qu 6 [CC 22] |
| | 28 | Descartes Stich 20-24 [CC 5] | | 31* | Materialism R 139-54, S 187-97 qu10 [CC 23] |
| | 30* | Rationalism Rauhut 25-29 | Apr. | 2* | Identity Theory R 104-25, S 213-35 qu 6 [CC 18, 21] |
| Feb. | 4 | Empiricism Rauhut 30-34 | | 7* | Divine Command R 208-211; S 243-49 qu 6 [CC 33] |
| | 6* | Locke-Berkeley, Stich 35-42 [CC 6] | | 9* | Relativism R 197-207, S 249-56 qu 6 [CC 32] |
| | 11 | Hume Rauhut and Stich 43-46 | | 14* | Kant/Virtue Theory R 220-32, S 298-303 qu 10 [CC 35] |
| | 13* | Knowledge theories, Stich 47-51 [CC 7] | | 16* | Utilitarian R 211-219, S 287-97 qu 7 [CC 36] |
| | 18 | Test 1 | | 21* | Nietzsche on morality qu 5, R 378-85 & video |
| | 20* | Free Rauhut & Stich 52–58 [CC 24-25] | | 23* | Nagel, Absurdity of Life qu 5 [CC 17, 46] |
| | 25 | God Cosmo Rauhut & Stich 59–66 [CC 10] | | | [24 Q-drop deadline] |
| | 27* | God Design Rauhut & Stich 67-72 [CC 11-12] | | | [28 Last day for S/U grade change] |
| Mar. | 3 | God Onto/wager Rau/Stich 73-78 [CC 9, 15] | | | Zoom Mtg # 281-851-599 at 11:00 a.m. |
| | 5* | Evil Rauhut & Stich 79-85 [CC 13] | | | |

- [Student Rule 7](#): you should attend all classes online and to have read assigned readings (at eCampus “Course Materials”) and watched online videos.
- Miss an assignment? Contact me immediately.
- Your semester grade is based on:
 - One three-question test (Feb. 18, 30 pts)
 - Answers to 73 reading questions (*) at “Start Here” on eCampus: submit **no later than 8:00 a.m. the day after class** (73 pts).
- 103 possible pts. Grades: 90=A, 80=B, 70=C, 60=D.

Office hours (YMCA 417): all contact will be by email or video conferencing. **Phone cell:** 979-324-4199. **Email:** sdaniel@tamu.edu; **Web:** people.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 Resources](#), Student Services Bldg, Suite 122, 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 <https://aggiehonor.tamu.edu>.

- 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://caps.tamu.edu/>). Students/faculty can report non-emergency behavior that causes them to be concerned at <https://tellsomebody.tamu.edu>.