

PHIL 210-01 – Great Thinkers: East & West

Department of Philosophy
San Francisco State University
Fall 2019
9:30-1045am Tuesday & Thursday
Humanities 386

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ABOUT THE COURSE

This course will provide an introduction to several key debates in Eastern and Western philosophy. We will consider issues such as the existence of God, the possibility human knowledge, the relationship between the mind and body, the nature of moral obligation, how we can live morally, the relationship between individuals and the state. We will read historical and contemporary texts from the Eastern & Western philosophical canon, as well as some recent challenges to these works raised by feminist philosophers and philosophers of color. This course satisfies the following General Education requirement: C2 Humanities: Literature.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Use humanistic methods of inquiry, analysis, and interpretation to explore the meanings and purposes of expressive forms, cultural traditions, belief systems, or communicative practices, and to grapple with topics of enduring importance such as imagination's power to enlarge and invigorate experience, how and why cultural traditions change, the nature of what philosophers term “the good life,” and the formation of individual and group identity through social interaction.
2. Recognize what counts as textual evidence and pertinent biographical, historical, cultural, and other kinds of information to support well-reasoned claims about the discursive features, purposes, and meanings of literature.
3. Appreciate various literary forms and styles as well as literature that reflects diverse human experiences and perspectives.
4. Identify ethical themes or dilemmas that arise in literary works, which may relate to demands for social justice and which may have implications for local and/or global communities.
5. Situate works of literature in the local and/or global cultural, historical, and sociopolitical contexts in which they were produced.
6. Articulate the relevance of literature and literary studies to their lives.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Jeff McLaughlin, ed. *The Originals: Classic Readings in Western Philosophy* (BCCampus, 2017). This is an open access textbook, available free of charge. You read can it online or download it here: <https://pressbooks.bccampus.ca/classicreadings/>.

Lee Archie and John Archie, *Readings in Eastern Philosophy*,) This is an open access textbook, available free of charge. You read can it online or download it here: <https://philosophy.lander.edu/oriental/reader/reader.pdf>

Additional articles will be available on iLearn or at the links in the course schedule below.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Philosophical Essays

You will be required to write two 4-5 page essays, each consisting of a philosophical analysis of some aspect of the course material. Guidelines and paper topics will be distributed in advance. Preliminary submission information, deadlines, and policies are as follows:

- *Paper 1* – This paper will address material from Parts I-II of the course. It will be due on Tuesday, September 24th at 11:59pm.
- *Paper 2* – This paper will address material from Parts IV-V of the course. It will be due on Thursday, November 21th at 11:59pm.

All papers will be submitted via iLearn and processed by Turnitin, SFSU's plagiarism detection software. Late papers will be downgraded 5 points for each day late.

Exams

There will be two take home exams. Guidelines will be distributed in advance. Preliminary submission information, deadlines, and policies are as follows:

- *Midterm exam* – This exam will address material from Parts I-III of the course. It will be due on Thursday, Oct 22nd at 11:59pm.
- *Final exam*– This paper will address material from Parts IV-VI of the course. It will be due on Monday, December 17th at 10:45am (the end of the final exam period).

All exam will be submitted via iLearn and processed by Turnitin, SFSU's plagiarism detection software. Late exams will be downgraded 5 points for each day late.

Class Participation and Attendance

Regular attendance and active participation in discussions and classroom activities is an essential part of this course. You will be expected to attend every class and to be prepared to discuss the assigned readings. You may miss two classes without penalty; after that, each absence will lower your attendance and participation grade by 5 points. Late arrival or early departure will count as ½ an absence unless excused before the beginning of class. Role will be taken every day; however, there

are no “excused” and “unexcused” absences in this class. You do not need to email your professor when you are absent.

GRADING SCALE

Paper 1	200 points
Midterm exam	200 points
Paper 2	200 points
Final exam	200 points
Attendance & Class Participation	200 points

The course grade will be based on 1000 total points, as follows: A: 930-1000; A-: 900-929; B+: 870-899; B: 830-869; B-: 800-829; C+: 770-799; C: 730-769; C-: 700-729; D+: 670-699; D: 630-669; D-: 600-629; F: 0-599.

SLO/ASSIGNMENT LINKAGES

Assignment	SLO
Paper 1	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
Midterm Exam	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
Paper 2	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Final exam	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

ADDITIONAL COURSE POLICIES

Classroom Etiquette

It is crucial that class discussions are conducted in a respectful manner, even if heated. Toward this end, you will be expected to be considerate of other class members and their beliefs, ideas, and modes of self-expression. It is sometimes tempting to talk to those around you during a class discussion. This can be disruptive and distracting. I encourage you to refrain from private discussions in the classroom and to be patient with your thoughts until they can be addressed to the class as a whole. Please refrain from all forms of electronic communication during class, including emailing and texting.

Accessibility

Students with disabilities who need reasonable accommodations are encouraged to contact the instructor. The Disability Programs and Resource Center (DPRC) is available to facilitate the reasonable accommodations process. The DPRC is located in the Student Service Building and can be reached by telephone (voice/TTY 415-338-2472) or by email dprc@sfsu.edu.

Religious Holidays

Students who must be absent from class in order to observe religious a holiday must inform the instructor, in writing, about such holidays during the first two weeks of the class each semester. If such holidays occur during the first two weeks of the semester, the student must notify the instructor, in writing, at least three days before the date that he/she will be absent. Students who meet these conditions will not be penalized for their absence, and will be able to make up the work missed.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a form of cheating or fraud; it occurs when a student misrepresents the work of another as his or her own. Plagiarism may consist of using the ideas, sentences, paragraphs, or the whole text of another without appropriate acknowledgment, but it also includes employing or allowing another person to write or substantially alter work that a student then submits as his or her own. All assignments will be submitted to the University's plagiarism detection software. Any assignment found to be plagiarized will be given an "F" grade. A second instance of plagiarism will result in an "F" for the course. All instances of plagiarism in the College of Humanities will be reported to the Dean of the College, and may be reported to the University Judicial Affairs Officer for further action.

Campus Safety

SF State fosters a campus free of sexual violence including sexual harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and/or any form of sex or gender discrimination. If you disclose a personal experience as an SF State student, the course instructor is required to notify the Dean of Students. To disclose any such violence confidentially, contact:

- The SAFE Place - (415) 338-2208; http://www.sfsu.edu/~safe_plc/
- Counseling and Psychological Services Center - (415) 338-2208; <http://psyservs.sfsu.edu/>

For more information on your rights and available resources: <http://titleix.sfsu.edu>

The Learning Assistance Center

The Learning Assistance Center (LAC) provides free, on-campus writing tutoring for SF State students. It offers both one-time and ongoing tutoring sessions, with some same day appointments available. The LAC is open Monday through Friday from 9am-4pm and Friday from 9am-12pm. For more information and to schedule an appointment, see <http://www.sfsu.edu/~lac/index.html>.

COURSE SCHEDULE (subject to change)

TO – *The Originals: Classic Readings in Western Philosophy*,
<https://pressbooks.bccampus.ca/classicreadings/>

<https://philosophy.lander.edu/oriental/reader/reader.pdf>

iLearn – Available on iLearn

I. Introduction and the Value of Philosophy

T Aug. 27 Course Syllabus

McLaughlin, How to Do Philosophy, read sections: How to Attend Class and How to Read Philosophy, TO

Th Aug. 29 Plato, On Defending Philosophy, from *The Apology*, TO

T Sept. 3 Russell, On the Value of Philosophy, from *The Value of Philosophy*, TO

II. Philosophy and Religion

- Th Sept. 5 Confucius, the Doctrine of the Mean *Archie*
- T Sept. 12 Aquinas, On the Five Ways to Prove God's Existence, from *Summa Theologiae*, TO
- Th Sept. 14 Zhuangzi, Equalizing Things, iLearn
- T Sept. 19 Pascal, On the Wager for God's Existence, from *Pensées*, TO

Paper 1 due

III. Epistemology

- T Sept. 24 Descartes, On Doubt and Certainty, from *Meditations on First Philosophy*, TO

Paper 1 due

- Th Sept. 26 Zhu Xi, *Genwu*, or "getting a handle on things." iLearn
- T Oct. 1 Kant, On the Sources of Knowledge, from *The Critique of Pure Reason*, TO
- Th Oct. 3 James, On Pragmatism, from *What Pragmatism Means*, TO
- T Oct. 8 Jaggar, Love and Emotion in Feminist Epistemology, iLearn

III. Philosophy of Mind

- Th Oct. 10 Chalmers, David (21 March 2019). "*Zombies and the Conceivability Argument*" iLearn
- T Oct. 15 Ryle, Descartes's Myth from the *Concept of Mind*, iLearn
- Th Oct. 17 Smart, Sensations and Brain Processes, iLearn
- T Oct. 22 **Midterm exam due**
- Th Oct. 24 Mach's *Analysis of Sensations* iLearn

IV. Ethics

- T Oct. 29 Confucius, *The Analects*, *Archie*
- Th Oct. 31 Aristotle, On Virtue, from *Nicomachean Ethics*, TO
- T Nov. 5 Bentham, On the Principle of Utility, from the *Principles of Morals and Legislation*, TO
- Th Nov. 7 Mill, On Utilitarianism, from *Utilitarianism*, TO
- T Nov. 12 Kant, On Moral Principles, from *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, TO

V. Ethics in Practice

- Th Nov. 14 Singer, Famine, Affluence, and Morality, iLearn
- T Nov. 19 The Bhagavad Gita, Part I *Archie*
- Th Nov. 21 Thomson, A Defense of Abortion, iLearn

Paper 2 due

T Nov. 26 No Class

VI. Social and Political Philosophy

T Dec 3 Hobbes, On the Social Contract, from *Leviathan*, TO

Th Dec 5 The Quran, *Ethical Principles and Philosophical Inquiry*

T Dec 10 Locke, On Property and the Formation of Societies, from *The Second Treatise on Government*, TO

Th Dec 12 Rawls, On Negotiating a Fair Contract from *Theory of Justice*,
https://archive.org/details/Sapientia_201810/page/n419

Th Dec 17

Final exam is due on December 17 at 10:45am