

PHIL110  
Introduction to Philosophy

**Instructor: Alex Rausch**  
**Office Hours: MW 12:45–1:45 pm**  
**Education and Arts 1013**

**Aims of the Course**

In this course, you'll learn how to think critically about abstract topics like the nature of God, morality, personal identity, and existence. In particular, you'll evaluate arguments that attempt to answer the following questions:

1. Does God exist?
2. What should I do in my life, most generally?
3. What kind of thing am I?
4. What exists, most generally?

Unlike your grades in other courses, your grade in this course will not depend on whether you can provide the correct answers to these questions. Instead, it will mostly depend on your ability to provide and justify the answers that you take to be the most plausible in light of rigorous argumentation. This should not lead us to believe that there are no correct answers in philosophy more generally. Instead, it should lead us to believe that the correct answers are difficult to find and that disagreements are a natural consequence of this.

The first goal of this course is to introduce you to, and hopefully to incite your lifelong interest in, the practice of philosophy. The second goal of this course is to make certain intellectual tools available to you. These tools help us think more critically, independently, and fairly. The ultimate goal of this course, therefore, is not for you to learn that anything is true; it's for you to learn how to think with more clarity and confidence about any topic you might encounter whatsoever.

**Readings**

All readings will be made available online.

**Grading**

There are 1000 points possible in this course. Here is how that breaks down:

200 Quizzes (50 points x 4)  
300 Midterm  
400 Final  
100 Attendance & Participation

970-1000	A+	870-900	B+	770-800	C+	670-700	D+	below 610	F
940-970	A	840-870	B	740-770	C	640-670	D		
910-930	A-	810-830	B-	710-730	C-	610-630	D-		

## Attendance & Participation

It's practically impossible to learn the material and methods presented in this course without regular attendance. Attendance will be taken, and after the second absence 20 points will be deducted for every subsequent absence from the Attendance & Participation grade. Do contact me, however, in extenuating circumstances.

In this course, it's entirely normal and encouraged for you to—

- ask questions in the middle of lecture when you are confused.
- be dissatisfied with an explanation and ask for another.
- disagree with something and present a problem or worry for it.
- agree with something and present further justification for it.
- be unconfident about a point you'd like to make but try to make it anyway, even if you abandon the attempt halfway through.
- e-mail me, talk with me before and after class, or visit my office hours with questions, thoughts, comments, and concerns you have about the course material.

*In my experience, students who regularly do these things excel in philosophy courses*

## Course Schedule

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b>
1/11	Introduction to PHIL101	
1/13	Tools for Philosophy: Validity, Soundness, Necessary and Sufficient Conditions	- Edward Craig, <i>Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction</i> (excerpt)
1/18	No Class – MLK Holiday	
<b>Section 1: Does God Exist?</b> <i>Philosophy of Religion</i>		
1/20	<b>Practice Quiz on Validity, Soundness, and Necessary and Sufficient Conditions</b>  The Problem of Evil	- Mackie, "Evil and Omnipotence"
1/25	Free Will and Other Defenses against the Problem of Evil	- van Inwagen, "The Problem of Evil"

1/27	A Priori Arguments for God's Existence	- Aquinas' 2nd Way - Descartes, <i>Meditations</i> (excerpt)
2/1	A Posteriori Arguments for God's Existence	- Aquinas' 5th Way - Paley, <i>Natural Theology</i> (excerpt)
2/3	Euthyphro's Dilemma	- Plato, <i>Euthyphro</i> (excerpt)
<b>Section 2: What Ought I Do?</b> <i>Ethics / Morality</i>		
2/8	<b>Quiz #1 on Section 1</b> Utilitarianism	- Mill, <i>Utilitarianism II</i> (excerpt) - Thomson, "Killing, letting die, and the trolley problem"
2/10	Deontology	- Kant, <i>Groundwork</i> (selections)
2/15	Moral Relativism and Realism	- Benedict, "Anthropology and the Abnormal" (excerpt) - MacIntyre, "Moral Pluralism without Moral Relativism"
2/17	Moral Luck	- Nagel, "Moral Luck"
2/22	Responsibility, Free Will, and Determinism	- van Inwagen, "The Powers of Rational Beings: Freedom of the Will"
2/24	<b>Quiz #2 on Section 2</b> In-Class Review for Midterm	
2/29	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>	

<b>Section 3: What Kind of Thing Am I?</b> <i>Philosophy of Mind / Personal Identity</i>		
3/7	Dualism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Descartes, <i>Meditations</i> (excerpt)</li> <li>- Correspondence between Elisabeth and Descartes</li> </ul>
3/9	Materialism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- van Inwagen, "Dualism and Personal Identity" (excerpt)</li> <li>- Jackson, "What Mary Didn't Know"</li> </ul>
3/14 - 3/16 <i>No Class – Spring Break</i>		
3/21	Functionalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Anderson, "Introduction to Functionalism"</li> <li>- Cole, "The Chinese Room Argument" (excerpt)</li> </ul>
3/23	Psychologism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Locke, "Of Identity and Diversity" (excerpt)</li> <li>- Reid, "Of Mr. Locke's account of our personal identity"</li> <li>- Williams, "The Self and the Future" (excerpt)</li> </ul>
3/28	Eliminativism	Parfit, "Divided Minds and the Nature of Persons"
<b>Section 4: What Exists?</b> <i>Metaphysics</i>		
3/30	<b>Quiz #3 on Section 3</b> Wholes and Parts: Composition	- van Inwagen, <i>Material Beings</i> (excerpts)
4/4	The Statue of David: Constitution	- Sider, "Constitution"

4/6	Vagueness: Sorites' Paradox	- Galen, "On Medical Experience"
4/11	Space and Time	- Huggett, "Zeno's Paradoxes" (excerpts)
4/13	Ontological Commitment and Paraphrase: Realism vs. Nominalism	- Lewis, "Holes" - van Inwagen, "A Theory of Properties" (excerpts)
4/20	<b>Quiz #4 on Section 4</b> Flex Day	TBD
4/25	In-class Review of Sections 1 & 2	
4/27	In-class Review of Sections 3 & 4	
TBD	<b>FINAL EXAM</b>	

### **Other Important Dates**

Beginning of February: Check 'Grades' on One.IU.edu to see if I have any concerns about your performance in the course. This is a good time to come talk to me about how you are doing in the course so far.

Mid-March: Make an appointment with your advisor to plan for upcoming semester(s).

March 13: Last day to withdraw with an automatic W. After this date, students can only withdraw under exceptional circumstances and need permission from the Dean's Office and the instructor.

Beginning of April: Continuing student enrollment for Summer and Fall 16 starts. Check your Student Center in One.IU.edu for the exact date and time.

### **Accommodations for Religious Observances**

If you will require academic accommodations for a religious observance, please provide me with a written request to consider a reasonable modification for that observance by the end of the second week of the course. Contact me after class, during my office hours, or by individual appointment to discuss the issue. If after discussion we reach no consensus, either party or both should seek the advice of the Department Chair or the Dean, and if no consensus is reached, then the advice of the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs ("VCAA"). Either the instructor or the

student may appeal the VCAA's decision to the Office of Affirmative Action within ten business days of the determination.

### **Accommodations for Disabilities**

If you have a disability and need assistance, special arrangements can be made to accommodate most needs. Contact the Director of Disabled Student Services (Administration Building, room 149, telephone number 520-4832), as soon as possible to work out the details. Once the Director has provided you with a letter attesting to your needs for modification, bring the letter to me. For more information, please visit the web site for Office of Disabled Student Services [www.iusb.edu/~sbdss/services.shtml](http://www.iusb.edu/~sbdss/services.shtml).

### **IU Policy on Sexual Misconduct**

IU does not tolerate acts of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment and all forms of sexual violence. If you have experienced sexual misconduct, or know someone who has, the University can help. It is important to know that federal regulations and University policy require faculty to promptly report complaints of potential sexual misconduct known to them to the Deputy Title IX Coordinator(s) on campus to ensure that appropriate measures are taken and resources are made available.

The University will work with you to protect your privacy by sharing information with only those that need to know to ensure the University can respond and assist. If you are seeking help and would like to speak to someone confidentially, you can make an appointment with a Mental Health Counselor on campus (contact information available at <http://stopsexualviolence.iu.edu/employee/confidential.html>).

Find more information about sexual violence, including campus and community resources, at <http://stopsexualviolence.iu.edu>.