

# Introduction to Philosophy, Phil 01 Knowledge and Reality

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Welcome! My name is Tony Hanson ([anthanson@live.com](mailto:anthanson@live.com)) Please see my website at <http://www.deanza.edu/faculty/hansonanthony/>

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## THEMES AND OBJECTIVES

I will be presenting philosophical views and debates within the context of a certain theme. This theme is the challenge by largely modern philosophers to certain widely held and common philosophical assumptions and concepts related to God, Evil, the Soul, the Mind, the Self, Freedom and Knowledge.

The purpose of philosophy is to find good justification for beliefs about these issues, and we will be exploring and evaluating the various arguments for these beliefs.

In addition to this broad purpose the objectives of this course are:

1. To introduce philosophy as a perennial human need and activity and as an academic discipline with its own special subject matter and methodology. Humans have no choice but to philosophize. So it is good to learn how to do it well. You will be wrestling with these life questions your whole life, because they are fundamental in giving our lives meaning.
2. To challenge, develop and refine the student's own philosophical ideas through rational and critical inquiry into basic philosophical questions about reality, knowledge, moral values, human nature, God, and free will.
3. To learn and explore the answers to these questions as they are expressed in the philosophical systems of the great philosophers of the western world over the past 2500 years.
4. To develop critical thinking skills through analyzing and evaluating arguments, and to teach the application of these skills in our thinking about broad social, political and philosophical issues that are important in all our lives.
5. To develop the skill of expressing ideas clearly in written and spoken discourse.

Methodologies of the course include, lectures, class discussions (mostly) and collaborative learning

## Online Text

**You do not need to buy a text for this course! I have decided to go pure digital. We**

**will be using Dr. Philip Pecorino's 'An Introduction to Philosophy. An Online Text.' You can access it here:**

**[http://www.qcc.cuny.edu/socialsciences/ppecorino/INTRO\\_TEXT/CONTENTS.htm](http://www.qcc.cuny.edu/socialsciences/ppecorino/INTRO_TEXT/CONTENTS.htm)**

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## **ASSESSMENTS AND GRADING**

1. 12 short quizzes, at 5 points each = 50 points. (TWO LOWEST quiz scores thrown out, including zero for missed quiz). VERY IMPORTANT: ALL QUIZZES ARE POP QUIZZES! They can be given at any time, but they are usually at the end of class meetings. So it is very important to come to class every day. Pop Quizzes cannot be made up.
  2. Mid-term = 30 It is true/false, multiple choice, matching. You need a scantron
  3. Final Exam = 50 points. This is a comprehensive exam going back to day one. It is true/false, multiple choice, matching. You will need a scantron.
  4. Group Project(s) = 20 points. Allegory of the Cave, Group Study Questions.
  5. Assignments (Short papers, Study Questions, Classwork) = 50 points. You will submit all your written work to turnitin.com. **The class ID number is 12911031. The password will be given in class.**
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## **GRADE SCALE**

A = 180 - 200

A- = 170 - 179

B+ = 163 - 169

B = 156 - 162

B- = 150 - 155

C = 130 - 149

D+ = 123 - 129

D = 116 - 122

D- = 110 - 115

F = Below 110

Total possible points = 200

Notice, you only need 130 points or 65% to get a C, 75% to get a B-, 85% to get an A-. This means I am spotting you 5% or 10 extra points compared to most grading systems where 70% is required for a C. Also I will throw out your lowest quiz score. If you miss one quiz then that the 0 is your lowest score and will be thrown out. This means I am spotting you another 10 points or 5%. Since I am essentially giving you a total of 20 points or 10% boost in your grade there is NO EXTRA CREDIT in this class nor make up quizzes or tests. If you miss one quiz then you are not penalized. If you miss more than one you will lose the points but put in perspective, it is only about 5% of your grade; so it is not the end of the world.

Quizzes include objective, multiple choice, True/False fill in the blank, short essay questions.

The mid term and final exam are comprehensive, and you need to bring a scantron to class.

You will be given an incomplete or fail if you miss the final exam, depending on the circumstances. Incompletes are only given if a verifiable documented emergency prevents you from taking the final exam, and the final exam is the only thing you need to make up.

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## CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

I welcome you to our 6 week journey exploring philosophy. I hope you find it enlightening. I have high standards for performance in my classes, and do my best to help all students achieve those standards. Remember this is summer so taking this course is really like taking two courses. You need to spend at least 4 or 5 hours per week outside of class, studying the material.

While I am an educator, I am also, in a sense, a gatekeeper because when you get a passing grade in my class, it means you have done what is necessary to get my imprimatur or stamp of approval on having mastered a certain set of skills and body of information to earn credits and move ahead in your academic career. If you don't satisfy the minimum requirements I can't let you through at least in the sense of giving you a passing grade. A college degree shows, among other things, that you have what it takes to set a goal and pursue it in a consistent way even as you struggle through the day to day challenges that life throws your way. It means you come to class regularly, be on time, be prepared, do the assignments, make deadlines, work with others, and show integrity. These are the minimal and necessary (though not always sufficient) skills in any work context and you need to exercise them here.

In that regard, I will take attendance and monitor your presence and time spent in class. **If you are absent more than 6 hours (two weeks during the regular year and one during summer), I will retain the option to drop you or give you an F unless you have a very good reason and we discuss it in advance.** If you decide to drop, it is your responsibility to be aware of the drop deadlines and do the paper work to drop the class. If you have obligations that often prevent you from attending class, then you should probably take the class at another time. Please don't hesitate to talk to me if you are thinking about dropping because of any class issues (issues outside of class I cannot really address,

though the college does have support resources) to see if we can find a solution to help you be successful.

**Excessive absences, tardies, leaving class early and etiquette considerations (stuff like leaving telephones on, talking in class during lecture, failing to participate in team work, walking in and out of class, leaving early, etc.) will affect your final grade in cases where your total class points are borderline between two grades (one or two points). If I take roll and you leave class anytime afterward, you will be marked absent unless you tell me before class starts that you need to leave early.** If you come to class regularly and come on time, and exhibit basic classroom etiquette skills, I will give you the benefit of doubt and bump you up to the next highest grade when I do final grades. If you do not do these things, then I see no reason to give you the benefit of doubt and you will get the grade corresponding to your points without an added bump. Since many students at the end of class often fall on a grading borderline of 1 or 2 percent below a higher grade it is very much to your interest to get this additional bump.

**If you come late is it your responsibility to check with me after class (not during class) to change your absence to a tardy that day. Otherwise it will remain an absence. "Late" for the purpose of this class means not being here when your name is called at roll. So if you drop your stuff on your desk and leave you are still late if you miss your name.**

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## **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

**Though our textbook is digital, laptops, pads, and phones should not be out during lectures and discussions.** This may sound contradictory, but it is not. I will project all the reading material we need during lectures onto the screen. Take notes as they have been taken for hundreds of years - in hand writing. You can then transfer them to digital devices on your own time. You may use Laptop computers or electronic devices only during designated activities like group work. Exceptions will be made only for students who go through Disabled Students Services who will authorize in writing that you can only take notes digitally.

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## **ASSIGNMENTS/Questions, classwork, short papers)**

Through the class, you will be assigned reading/writing exercises. The work will be graded on completeness, accuracy, and depth of thinking and reflection. If you miss Assignment deadlines, I will accept late Assignments only in the case where it is **ONE CLASS PERIOD late, and only for half credit. No Assignments will be accepted otherwise.**

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## **EXTRA CREDIT**

There is no extra credit in this class, so it is very important to regularly keep up with the work. The twelve week quarter goes very fast and once the train starts, you need to jump on and get your work done NOW.

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## **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

Academic dishonesty contradicts the whole purpose of education, not to mention basic ethical principles. Any student who violates the academic code (see the De Anza Catalogue), can receive a final course grade of F. This rule is rigidly enforced. This includes copying other other students' work while representing it as your own, or copying work from other sources. See the link below for a detailed explanation of plagiarism.

<https://www.indiana.edu/~istd/>