Philosophy 15: Introduction to Philosophy
Mount Saint Mary's University
Spring 2017

	Chalon campus	Doheny campus
Course number	PHI_015_1	PHI_015_D1
Day/Time/location	MW/1:20-2:50PM/H405B	TTh/9:40-11:10AM/Bldg. 4 207A
Office hours day/time/location	MW 4:30-5:30PM/H320	TTh 1-2PM/Bldg. 2 Rm. 204A

Course website
available on Canvas

Instructor Information
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Course Description
What are we, and how do we know? Do we have souls? Are we just animals? Are our personalities nothing more than a set of genetic traits? Are we even the kinds of beings that have access to the answers to these questions? This course seeks answers to these questions by studying some of the major philosophical traditions of the world. We will examine both secular and religious traditions as philosophers, which is to say as critical thinkers seeking to understand ways the world might be.

Learning Objectives
The main objective for this course is for each student to become "philosophically reflective"—that is, able to deepen her self-understanding by reflecting on her own experience in the light of the philosophical ideas we are studying. Another way of expressing this course objective is that each student will work on developing a coherent worldview. In order to achieve this goal, this course has the following objectives for each student:

- to understand some of the major philosophical ideas that have shaped different philosophical traditions.
- to be able to analyze the philosophical framework and presuppositions of cultural expressions of popular philosophical views.
- to develop proficiency in the skills and methods of philosophy, especially critical reading and writing.
- to be able to use what she has learned about philosophy to deepen her self-understanding and bring consistency to her worldview.

Required texts
Twelve Theories of Human Nature
> Leslie Stevenson, David L. Haberman, Peter Matthews Wright
> Oxford University Press

ISBN-13: 978-0199859030
ISBN-10: 0199859035

Film: *2001: A Space Odyssey*
It is your responsibility to find a way to view this film outside of class.

Additional reading assignments and course content will be made available on Canvas

Requirements
Exam #1 (week 6): 15%
Exam #2 (week 10): 15%
Exam #3 (finals week): 15%
Reading assignment outline 1: 5%
Reading assignment outline 2: 5%
Writing assignment #1: 15%
Writing assignment #2: 15%
Weekly quizzes: 15%

Total: 100%

Grading scale (percentage of total points)

A	93-100	B-	80-82	D	60-69
A-	90-92	C+	77-79	F	<60
B+	87-89	C	73-76		
B	83-86	C-	70-72		

Class policies
"A friend is one before whom I may think aloud" –Emerson
My fundamental policy in this class is to have a class environment of mutual respect where we help one another achieve our course objective. The course policies in this section are designed to help achieve that environment.

Cell phones, text messaging, and other distractions
Our classroom is not a suitable place for a ringing cell phone or to check your text messages. Even for a world-class multi-tasker like you, these activities are a distraction from our class activities. In addition, our classroom is not an appropriate place to work on homework for other classes or other outside projects. Here's a good rule to follow: If the instructor wouldn't do it, then a student shouldn't do it either.

Attendance & Quizzes
Success in this course highly depends on regular attendance. You will not receive points simply for showing up, but attendance is incentivized through short, relatively easy reading quizzes. (I say "relatively easy" because they will only be easy if you actually do the reading and assigned exercises.) Furthermore, if you miss a class and fail to provide official documentation (a doctor's note, etc.) you will not be given the opportunity to make up anything you missed, e.g. a quiz. I drop the lowest two quiz grades for the semester. If you miss a quiz due to *unexcused* lateness or absence, you receive a zero for that quiz. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to inquire after anything you may

have missed. <u>Six unexcused absences result in automatic failure and withdrawal from the course</u>.

Late work policy
Late work will be penalized one full letter grade per day late.

Required Readings & Viewings
You should complete the assigned reading or viewing on the course schedule *before* class meets. My personal advice is to complete the reading before class and write down questions you have or things you don't understand. After class, go back and review the reading once more.

Writing Assignments
You will write two papers for this course. The first will be 3 pages and the second will be 5 pages. The papers will be assigned 2-3 weeks in advance of their due dates. All writing assignments will be submitted electronically via Canvas. Mechanical errors (spelling, punctuation, grammar) matter and will be detrimental to your grade. If you have difficulty with grammar and writing in general, it is your responsibility to complete a draft in advance of the due date and schedule and appointment at the LRC for help with proofreading and revision. I encourage you to meet with me during office hours to discuss your paper, but I will not copy edit a draft for you. More details about each paper will be made available when they are assigned.

Exams
There will be three exams: Week 6, Week 11, and Finals Week. Exams will consist of short answer and essay questions. You must bring an exam booklet (available in the bookstore) for each exam.

Reading Assignment Outlines
Each student will sign up for 2 reading assignments to outline before they are discussed in class. You will share your outline with the rest of the class via Canvas. We will create a study guide for each exam using these outlines. More details to follow in class.

Academic difficulty
This may be your first philosophy class, and/or you may find the topic challenging and difficult. If you do have difficulties, the only way to address it is to actively seek help. Ask questions in class, see me before or after class, talk to me in my office or at the LRC, e-mail me, set up a time to meet, or all of the above. I'm here to help, but the best help comes from constant interaction. *Do not wait until the last minute to get help!*

Academic honesty
As a member of this class you are also a member of the community of scholars. As a scholar, your fundamental commitment is to truth, and academic integrity is an important part of that commitment. Academic dishonesty undermines the integrity of the educational process and cannot be tolerated. Thus, the college has developed the following "Statement On Academic Integrity" which I fully endorse.

Cheating of any kind is dishonest. This includes copying others' essays or exams,

stealing exams, buying or otherwise procuring new or used exams, paying someone else to take an exam or write an essay for which you take credit, and any other way you might receive credit for work that is not your own.

Using one essay for two different classes is also dishonest. If you have a topic appropriate for two classes, original and separate work must be done for each class.

Plagiarism is also an act of academic dishonesty. It is a serious academic offense. Plagiarism is using anyone else's ideas and representing them as your own (i.e., not giving appropriate credit). Acts of plagiarism include the following:
• Failure to document and give credit to an original source
• Paraphrasing another person's ideas without giving credit
• Using direct quotations without proper recognition of the source
• Using statistics, facts, or information from a source other than your own original research (i.e., not your own) without credit.

When in doubt, give credit. Submitting work (even work completed by a team or group) containing material not properly credited is a serious academic offense and a violation of the very principles of academic integrity. Every individual is ultimately responsible for ensuring the honesty and integrity of any academic or scholarly work bearing her name.

Academic freedom

As a member of the community of scholars, you not only have the duty of academic integrity, but the right of academic freedom—including the right to reasonably disagree with your instructors without being penalized for this disagreement. For more information on the academic freedom which is yours as a student, see the *Student Handbook.*

Disability Statement:

Mount Saint Mary's University Los Angeles, in compliance with state and federal laws and regulations, does not discriminate on the basis of disability in administration of its education related programs and activities. We have an institutional commitment to provide equal educational opportunities for disabled students who are otherwise qualified. Students with documented disabilities must see Joan L. Cashion, Interim Director of the Chalon Learning Center, (310) 954-4470, jcashion@msmu.edu OR Brandon Roberson, Director of the Doheny Learning Resource Center, to make arrangements for classroom accommodations. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain accommodation letters from the director and to make arrangements for the implementation of accommodations with faculty and/or staff in advance. Students who believe they have been subjected to discrimination on the basis of disability, or have been denied access to services or accommodations required by law, should contact the campus Disability Services Coordinator at his/her campus for resolution. For more information regarding disability grievance procedures, go to: https://welcome.msmu.edu/academics/learning-assistance-ISAE/Documents/DisabilityGrievanceProcedures.pdf

Course Schedule (subject to change at discretion of instructor)

Please note: the reading assignments begin and end at the major section headings found on the assigned pages. **"WA" = "Writing Assignment"**

1/9	Week 1.1	Course Introduction
	Week 1.2	Introduction: Rival theories and basic philosophical method (1-17)
1/16	Week 2.1	**MLK Holiday – no class Monday 1/16** Continue review of Introduction
	Week 2.2	The Bible: Humanity in relation to God (115-126)
1/23	Week 3.1	The Bible: Humanity in relation to God (126-136)
	Week 3.2	Islam: Submission to God (137-145):
1/30	Week 4.1	Islam: Submission to God (145-153)
	Week 4.2	Buddhism: In the footsteps of the Buddha (55-68)
2/6	Week 5.1	Buddhism: In the footsteps of the Buddha (68-78)
	Week 5.2	Review; **WA #1 Assigned**
2/13	Week 6.1	**Exam #1**
	Week 6.2	Plato: The Rule of Reason (79-89)
2/20	Week 7.1	**President's Day Holiday – no class Monday 2/20** Plato: The Rule of Reason (79-89)
	Week 7.2	Plato: The Rule of Reason (89-96)
2/27	Week 8.1	Aristotle: The Ideal of Human Fulfillment (97-105)
	Week 8.2	Aristotle: The Ideal of Human Fulfillment (105-114); **WA #1 due Friday March 3 @ 11:59PM on Canvas**
3/6	SPRING BREAK	**SPREAK BREAK HOLIDAY 3/6 – 3/10**
3/13	Week 9.1	Review/in-class writing tutorial
	Week 9.2	Confucianism: The Way of the Sages (18-24)
3/20	Week 10.1	Confucianism: The Way of the Sages (24-34)
	Week 10.2	Review

3/27	Week 11.1	**Exam #2**
	Week 11.2	Darwinian Theories of Human Nature (245-255)
4/3	Week 12.1	Darwinian Theories of Human Nature (256-265)
	Week 12.2	Darwinian Theories of Human Nature (266-277)
4/10	Week 13.1	Freud: the Unconscious Basis of Mind (205-214); Assigned viewing: *2001: A Space Odyssey* **WA #2 Assigned**
	Week 13.2	Freud: the Unconscious Basis of Mind (214-226) Assigned viewing: *2001: A Space Odyssey*
4/17	Week 14.1	**Easter Holiday – no class Monday 4/17** Freud: the Unconscious Basis of Mind (214-226); Film Discussion; Assigned viewing: *2001: A Space Odyssesy*
	Week 14.2	Sartre: Radical Freedom (227-235)
4/24	Week 15.1	Sartre: Radical Freedom (235-244)
	Week 15.2	Review; **WA #2 due Friday April 28 @ 11:59PM on Canvas**
5/1	Exam week	**Exam #3**