

**PHILOSOPHY 101**  
Introduction to Philosophy  
**Professor – Dr. Barry F. Vaughan**  
**Spring 2024, MCC**  
**Sections: 27329, 27837, 28747**

**Textbook:** Introduction to Philosophy, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (*online* - <http://barryfvaughan.org>)  
**Editor:** Barry F. Vaughan

Reading the assigned texts is ESSENTIAL for success in this class. You must therefore access the book and read all material listed in the Reading Schedule below. Part of the study of Philosophy involves an examination of, and analysis of the literature of Philosophy. If you don't like to read, this class may not be for you.

**Course Goals:**

This course is designed as an *introduction* to academic Philosophy. No previous exposure to philosophical literature is expected. We will survey some of the basic disciplines of philosophy (*e.g., Ethics, Epistemology, Metaphysics*) by reading both classical and contemporary texts. By the end of the semester the student is expected to have a working knowledge of the main issues in each of these areas and to be capable of defending personal philosophical beliefs. Since Philosophy, like all academic disciplines, uses a technical vocabulary, students are also expected to become *philosophically literate* over the course of the semester. At the end of each unit students should be able to 1) define the philosophical terms associated with that unit, 2) identify individual philosophers and their positions, 3) explain the views of the philosophers we study in your own words, 4) contrast the views of the philosophers with your own experiences, 5) analyze the philosophical arguments presented in class for validity and soundness, and 6) begin to construct a *logically coherent* world-view of your own based on the philosophers and topics we study.

As a general education requirement this course is designed primarily with non-majors in mind. However, beginning philosophy majors will find the content of the course a useful, if not necessary, foundation for more advanced courses.

Philosophy deals with controversial adult material including human sexuality, the existence of God, principles of justice, etc. Students must be prepared to engage all material as presented/assigned. Alternate assignments, readings, lectures, etc. **will not** be provided.

**Course Requirements:**

*Attendance* - students are required to attend class as scheduled. Absences are excused in the case of illness (*standard proof of illness is required*) or other college sanctioned activities (*see student handbook for details*).

*Tardiness* – I am not particularly offended by tardiness (*after all, you are paying for this course*). I understand that sometimes factors beyond our control conspire to make us late. If you are late to class, come on in and find a place to sit. However, please be courteous to your classmates and do not make a disturbance if you are late. Finally, please do not allow tardiness to become a habit.

*Grades* - will be figured on the following basis:

- 1) Four (4) Unit Exams, 100 points each. *Lowest exam score dropped.*
- 2) Ten **Quizzes**, 10 points each. Quizzes are designed to encourage you to come to class and keep up with your reading.
- 3) **Extra credit** will be available to students on exams, the pre- and post-surveys, and bonus quizzes. This credit can *only* be achieved through class participation. (*In order to be fair each student must have access to*

the same extra credit assignments.) There will be *absolutely no* outside-class extra credit or assignments for individual students (so don't bother to ask).

**Grade Tracker:** use the grade tracker below to record your grades as we go through the semester.

Quiz 1 _____	Quiz 2 _____	Quiz 3 _____
Quiz 4 _____	Quiz 5 _____	Quiz 6 _____
Quiz 7 _____	Quiz 8 _____	Quiz 9 _____
Quiz 10 _____	Bonus Quiz _____	Bonus Quiz _____
Bonus Quiz _____	Bonus Quiz _____	Bonus Quiz _____
Bonus Quiz _____	Bonus Quiz _____	Bonus Quiz _____
Bonus Quiz _____	Bonus Quiz _____	
Exam 1 _____		Pre-Survey _____
Exam 2 _____		Post-Survey _____
Exam 3 _____		
Exam 4 _____		

**Grade Scale and Symbols:** based on four hundred total points, below is the percentage scale used to determine your final course grade and an explanation of the grade symbols used.

360-400 (90%-100%)	A <i>Excellent</i>
320-359 (80%-89%)	B <i>Above Average</i>
280-319 (70%-79%)	C <i>Average</i>
240-279 (60%-69%)	D <i>Minimal Passing</i>
0-239	F <i>Failure</i>
	Y <i>Withdraw Failing</i>
	W <i>Withdraw Passing</i>
	I <i>Incomplete</i>

### **IMPORTANT NOTE ON THE CAVAS GRADEBOOK**

If you are in the habit of checking the gradebook in Canvas, please note that it does **NOT** distinguish between **required** and **bonus** assignments. DO NOT FREAK OUT if you look in Canvas and it suggests that you have a failing percentage. As noted above, your final grade is based on the *total number of points* you accumulate over the course of the semester, **not** the percentage of points out of the total possible. **IGNORE THE PERCENTAGES IN CAVAS!** It is extremely difficult to fail this course if you do all of the assignments.

**Statement on Plagiarism/Academic Misconduct** – Due to the proliferation of academic material available on the internet, **plagiarism** is on the rise in American academic institutions. Plagiarism is the use of two or more consecutive words from someone else's published/written work without proper citation, or passing off someone else's words as your own. Plagiarism includes paraphrasing someone else's work without giving proper citation of the source material. Plagiarism is **theft** of intellectual property and WILL NOT BE TOLLERATED.

**Academic misconduct** in more general terms means cheating *in any form*. Obviously, the assignments you turn in and the examinations you take should reflect YOUR OWN work, and any attempt to circumvent this process is harmful. Therefore, any plagiarized, or otherwise academically inappropriate assignment, will receive an automatic 0, and the assignment cannot be made up or replaced. If two or more assignments are plagiarized or the product of academic misconduct in the course of a semester, the offending student *may* receive an automatic F for the course.

**Academic Misconduct on Canvas:** It is essential that you understand that it is **INAPPROPRIATE** on a quiz or exam in Canvas to look up answers in another browser window and then copy/paste, or rewrite what you looked up.

A quiz or exam is designed to test what you **know** (*i.e., the understanding in your mind*), **not** your skills searching the internet.

The use of Chat GPT, or *any* AI interface, for the purposes of this course, would be considered academic misconduct. **DO YOUR OWN WORK.**

### **Student Responsibilities:**

**Responsibility for Information** - Students are responsible for knowing and understanding all information contained in this syllabus. If you do not understand some portion of this document, please contact the professor for clarification. All student rights and responsibilities are governed through the MCC Student Handbook; students should be aware of all policies contained therein.

**Students with Disabilities** – It is the policy of Mesa Community College, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, to offer reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. If you are disabled and need accommodation you should contact the MCC Student Disabilities Office (*MCC Disabilities Resources and Services Office at 480-461-7447 or email drsfrontdesk@mesacc.edu*) before any assignments are due. It is the student’s responsibility to contact the Student Disabilities Office with any request for special services. Students experiencing difficulty accessing course materials because of a disability should contact the course instructor so that a solution can be found that provides all students equal access to course materials and technology. The DRS Office now also handles pregnancy related absences. If you have a need for pregnancy related accommodations, please contact the DRS Office immediately.

**Dropping/Withdrawal** - It is part of a **student’s academic responsibility** to decide whether or not to drop or withdraw from a course once enrolled. If you find this course does not meet your needs or that you need to withdraw for other reasons you must secure a Drop/Add slip from the Registrar’s Office, fill out the appropriate information, and bring it to the professor or the Registrar’s Office. If you need to withdraw but are unable to come to campus please contact your professor via telephone or email. I will assume that all students who enroll in the course intend to finish the course and receive a grade. **I will not** automatically withdraw you from this course if you simply stop coming to class!

**Recording Lectures** – The content of course lectures, including, but not limited to, verbal, printed, “powerpoint” and other electronic communications are the copyrighted property of the professor. Recording class lectures is **prohibited** *without express written consent*. If you wish to record lectures, you *must* sign a Proprietary Information Agreement.

**Cell Phones** – All cell phones ringers should be placed in the “off, “quiet” or “do not disturb” mode. **Do not** send or answer text messages or other online media while in class. Failure to adhere to this policy may result in punitive action.

**Instructional Grievance** – Students have the right to due-process if they feel they have been treated unfairly by their professor in regard to academic procedures (*i.e., grading*). Please refer to the process articulated in your Student Handbook § 2.3.5.

**Student Code of Conduct** - <https://district.maricopa.edu/book/export/html/10426>

**Contact Information:**

**Office Hours** – feel free to log in for office hours if you wish to chat or discuss any material you do not fully understand. During office hours, my “door” is always open to you! WebEx Office:

<https://maricopa.webex.com/meet/bvaughan>

MWF 11:00 – 12:00 and TTR 9:30-10:30, or by appointment

**Phone:** Office/voicemail: 480-461-7620

**Email:** [barry.vaughan@mesacc.edu](mailto:barry.vaughan@mesacc.edu) (*the most reliable and fastest way to get in touch with me*)

**Website:** <http://barryfvaughan.org> On the course website you will find a large amount of useful information including a complete set of course notes, study guides, an electronic library of classic texts in Philosophy, an interactive dictionary, syllabi (just in case you lose this one), a forum area for your class, as well as links to other philosophy web sites.

**Alternation of Syllabus:**

The information contained in this syllabus is subject to change. Students will be notified in class of any alteration of schedule, assignment, or grading policy.

**Early Alert (CARE REPORT):** Mesa Community College is committed to providing a personal education for each of our students, and the Care Team is a key part of this vision. When parents, faculty, or staff members are concerned about the physical, emotional, academic or personal health of a college student, the Care Team can assess the situation, offer support, and provide referrals to the breadth of resources on-campus. Explore the link:

<https://www.mesacc.edu/employees/student-affairs/care-team>

## Tentative Daily Reading Schedule

You will also notice that the reading assignments for this class are generally short. This is because Philosophy can be HARD to read. Ten pages of a philosophical essay are equivalent to fifty pages of History, or a hundred pages of a novel. You will discover that you may have to read an assignment MORE THAN ONCE to understand it. Don't be discouraged if this is the case; it is normal. Give yourself ample time to read and digest your assignments (*fifteen minuets before class is **not adequate***).

### UNIT 1 – INTRODUCTION:

#### What is Philosophy, and how do I do it?

An Overview of Philosophy	1-4
How Philosophy Began	<i>“Overview of Western Intellectual History”</i>
The Historical Background to Sokrates	<i>“Persian Wars, Peloponnesian War”</i>
Sokrates' Definition of Philosophy: <u>Apology</u>	5-22
John Locke on the Love of Truth	23-28
Bertrand Russell on the Value of Philosophy	29-32

#### Exam I

### UNIT 2 - EPISTEMOLOGY:

#### What, if anything, can I know?

Introduction to Epistemology	33
<b>Part I: Rationalism -</b>	
Overview of Plato's <u>Republic</u>	<i>“Overview of Plato's <u>Republic</u>”</i>
Plato on Knowledge (The <u>Republic</u> )	34-46
Plato on Knowledge (The <u>Meno</u> )	47-67
The Historical Background to Skepticism and the Modern Period	<i>“Renaissance parts 1-4”</i>
Descartes on Knowledge ( <u>Meditation 1</u> )	68-71
Descartes on Knowledge ( <u>Meditation 2</u> )	71-77
Descartes on Knowledge ( <u>Meditation 3</u> )	77-86
<b>Part II: Empiricism -</b>	
Locke on Knowledge	87-99
Hume on Knowledge	100-110

#### Exam II

### UNIT 3 - METAPHYSICS:

#### What kinds of things are real?

#### Part I: Philosophy of Religion

Introduction to Philosophy of Religion	111-112
	<i>“Overview of Philosophy of Rel.”</i>
St. Anslem on the Ontological Argument	113-121
St Thomas on the Cosmological Argument	122-125
William Paley on the Teleological Argument	126-128
Hume vs. The Teleological Argument	129-137

#### Part II: Philosophy of Mind

Introduction to Philosophy of Mind	<i>“Overview of Philosophy of Mind.”</i>
Descartes on Dualism	<i>reserve</i>
Jerome Shaffer	<i>reserve</i>
Paul Churchland	<i>reserve</i>

### Exam III

#### UNIT 4 - ETHICS:

#### How do I know what's right and wrong?

Introduction to Ethics

138-140

*"Overview of Metaethics 1 and 2"*

Aristotle and Virtue Ethics

141-151

I. Kant and Deontological Ethics

152-168

J.S. Mill and Teleological Ethics

169-183

#### Exam IV (Comprehensive Final)

## HOW TO SUCCEED IN COLLEGE

“How can I be successful in a college course?” This is perhaps the most important practical question you can ask yourself at this point in your life. Whether you have just finished secondary school, or whether you are returning to education after a lengthy period, it is important for you to recognize that your success in higher education depends *entirely on you*. Higher education is not like secondary school. You are NOT required to attend college, and you are not required to succeed. You are here because you have chosen to be. You will be successful in college if, and only if, you CHOOSE to be. However, desiring to be successful will not guarantee your success. YOU MUST ACT IN YOUR OWN SELF-INTEREST. The following are some helpful suggestions on what you should be doing if you wish to be successful.

**1. Read and understand your course syllabus.** Your syllabus is a learning contract and it should spell out all the requirements for the course you have enrolled in. All MCC faculty are required to provide you with a syllabus that spells out the learning objectives for the course, the method of assessment for the course (i.e., how you will be graded), and any and all class policies that are required for your successful completion of the course (these are policies that go beyond the standard policies articulated in the Student Hand Book which are common to all MCC courses). It is YOUR responsibility to know and understand the content of your course syllabus.

**2. Attend all scheduled class meetings.** Your success in a particular class is strongly correlated with your attendance. The more you attend, the more likely you are to succeed.

**3. Read all assigned materials.** Unlike secondary school, higher education requires students to become independent learners. It is YOUR responsibility to read and understand ALL assigned material whether or not it is discussed in class. Just because something is not discussed in class does not mean it is not important or that you will not be evaluated on that material. You are responsible for completing all the assigned reading in your class.

**4. Observe all due-dates.** Complete all outside-class assignments and projects *prior to* their due date. The due date of an assignment is the time at which you are required to submit your work for evaluation by your professor. It is NOT the time to turn in a first draft or a cursory reading, or an incomplete project or worksheet.

**5. Be prepared for class.** *It is expected that you will spend two (2) hours outside of class* preparing for each one (1) hour you spend in class. Obviously, the amount of time required to prepare for a particular class may vary based on subject matter and your abilities. However, it is the general expectation in higher education that you are adequately prepared for all classes. Thus, if you are enrolled in four three credit-hour courses (a twelve credit-hour load), you should expect to spend a minimum of twenty-four hours *outside of class, preparing for class*. Your total weekly time budget should therefore include thirty-six hours per week *dedicated solely to your education*. The degree of your success in college is directly correlated to the time you spend on your education both inside and outside the classroom. Do not take more courses than you your time budget will allow. If you spend more money than you make, you will be in debt. If you attempt to take more classes than you have time for, you will not succeed.

**6. ASK QUESTIONS!** In college you are expected to share responsibility for your learning. Your professor is supposed to be an expert in the content of their field. They are there to guide you in your learning. But your professor cannot learn for you. If you do not understand something in your reading, ask for it to be explained. If you do not understand something in the lecture, ask for it to be explained. Professors are content experts, not psychics. If you don't ask a question, they will likely assume you understand what is being read or discussed.

**7. Take advantage of office hours.** Your professor is required to provide academic support hours to support you. If you are having difficulty understanding your reading, if you are having difficulty with assignments, quizzes, exams, papers or projects, go to your professor's office hours and ASK FOR HELP. Your professor cannot help you if you do not ask for assistance.

**8. Do not multi-task while studying.** It is common for all of us to multi-task in our lives. We have cell phones, Facebook, Twitter, email, iPods, TV, radio and an endless list of other distractions constantly calling upon our attention. These are great tools and you should use them. **HOWEVER**, the more things you attempt to do at once, the less competent you will be at each task. I know you *think* you can multi-task well; but **you are wrong!** Our brains did not evolve to multi-task in the ways you think and we are becoming aware of the limitations of our cognitive abilities as we invent new and more complex tools. Do not experiment with your time, money, and education. ***When you study you need to be focused.*** Follow these rules for success when you study.

***Do not*** interrupt your reading/studying to:

- answer the phone or text,
- check Facebook,
- instant message,
- read or post a Tweet.

***Do not*** have the Television/radio/iPod playing when you are reading/studying. If you must have some background sound, use music (*at a low volume*) that does **NOT** have lyrics. Classical, jazz, even techno/electronica can provide background noise that allows your brain to focus on complex tasks like reading and problem solving. *Lyrics are the key.* Your brain is wired to pay attention to language. This priority has evolved over millions of years and it has not changed with the advent of micro-computing. When there is language in the background, it **WILL** lower your level of concentration and limit your ability to solve problems, read complex material, and perform difficult tasks.

Following these guidelines will not ensure that you will succeed in college, but they will help! Do yourself a favor, take this information to heart and follow these suggestions.

## COVENANT ON CLASS DECORUM

The object of this course is for the student to become familiar with academic Philosophy. This goal includes not only theory but also rhetorical practice to be carried out in the classroom. In order to foster an acceptable atmosphere of educational edification the following maxims will be agreed to by **all** participants (*including* the professor):

1. I shall refrain from making personal attacks upon fellow interlocutors; likewise, I will not mistake an attack *upon an argument* as a personal attack.
2. I reserve the right to disagree with *any* argument on *any* subject regardless of whether or not it reflects my own, or the majority opinion. In like manner, I will *not assume* that an argument presented by a classmate or the professor necessarily represents their personal opinion.
3. I hereby agree to disagree *agreeably* so as to avoid personal injury or vendettas.
4. I reserve the right to participate in class discussions and arguments, and I shall endeavor to engage ideas and opinions that differ from my own thus enhancing my academic pilgrimage.
5. I hereby agree not to pout about, or refrain from engaging arguments which seem weak or problematic. I accept as part of *my* academic responsibility the obligation to speak up whether I agree or disagree.
6. I reserve the right to take all classroom grievances to the person with whom I have the grievance, regardless of whether it is a student *or the professor* (if we cannot work out the problem there is an official grievance process which we can follow – details are in your student handbook).
7. I shall attempt to be open to, and respect, all persons in the classroom *especially* when we disagree.
8. I shall, to the best of my ability, respect and incorporate the maxims of this covenant and endeavor to uphold my end of all agreements made herein.

*If you do not feel that you can live up to the terms of this agreement, you should drop this course immediately!*