

PHIL 1 – Introduction to Philosophy

UCSD Winter 2016

MWF 10:00-10:50, Pepper Canyon Hall 121

Instructor: Matt Evpak (mevpak@ucsd.edu), HSS 8085

Instructor Office Hours: TuTh 1pm-2pm

TA: Henry Argetsinger (hargetsi@ucsd.edu), HSS 8037

TA Office Hours: MW 11am-12pm

Final: Friday, March 18, 8am-11am

Course Description and Objectives

Western philosophy is an intellectual tradition, originating in Classical Greece, that has sought to address fundamental and purportedly universal questions about the nature of humanity and the world in which we live. In this class, we'll look critically at several historical and contemporary perspectives on the nature and scope of human knowledge (weeks 1-2), the existence of God (weeks 3-4), how we should live as individuals (weeks 5-6), how we should live as a political body (weeks 7-8), and whether we have free will (weeks 9-10).

The goal of the class is for you to be able to 1) appreciate the variety of perspectives on the issues just listed, 2) think through the motivations and implications of those various perspectives, and 3) formulate and defend your own position on their merits and drawbacks. The assigned readings and assessments (two midterms and a final exam) are designed to help you achieve this goal.

Course Materials

There's a textbook—*Thinking It Through*, by Kwame Anthony Appiah—and you'll also need to have an i-clicker which is registered to your name. You can register it on the course's TritonEd site (<https://triton.ed.ucsd.edu/>). *Be sure to bring your i-clicker to class every day, since it'll be used for the purpose of taking attendance.* The textbook and i-clicker are both available for purchase at the campus bookstore.

Coursework and Grades

Your grade is a function of:

Attendance and Participation: 15%

Midterm 1: 25%

Midterm 2: 25%

Final Exam: 35%

Attendance and Participation

Attendance and active membership in class are required. You're welcome to speak up when you find the content unclear or when you have an objection or misgiving with regard to the claim or idea under discussion.

Attendance will be measured through your i-clicker, so don't forget to bring it with you to class every day. There'll be at least one clicker question every class session (and probably always more than one), and *you'll get attendance credit for a day if you participate in at least half of that day's clicker questions*. So please arrive to class on time and stay until it's over.

Exams

All three tests will be in-class and closed-book, but for each one you'll be allowed a single sheet (front and back) of handwritten—not printed—notes. The tests will consist in a mix of short answer and essay questions, which will ask you to offer your own analysis and evaluation of the claims, arguments, and positions that we examine in class. *The purpose of the tests is for you to demonstrate your ability to think originally and justify your views with reasoned argument, not just to repeat what's been said in class.* You'll need an unmarked blue book at each test.

Schedule and Readings

All readings are from *Thinking It Through*. Reading schedule is subject to change. Please complete each day's assigned reading before coming to class that day. In most cases, the assignment will be brief (about 10-15 pages), so if you set aside at least one hour of careful, distraction-free reading before coming to class, you should be well prepared. The text is written at a fairly advanced level, so don't be discouraged if you don't understand all of it; you'll still benefit from having done it, and you're welcome to bring your questions to class.

Week 1: Intro and Epistemology

M 1/4: No reading

W 1/6: **2.1 – 2.4**

F 1/8: **2.5 – 2.7**

Week 2: Epistemology, cont.

M 1/11: **2.8 – 2.10**

W 1/13: **4.9 – 4.10**

F 1/15: **3.7 – 3.8**

Week 3: Metaphysics

M 1/18: Holiday – No class

W 1/20: **8.1 – 8.3**

F 1/22: **8.4 – 8.6**

Week 4: Metaphysics, cont.

M 1/25: **8.7 – 8.11**

W 1/27: **8.12 – 8.13**

F 1/29: **Midterm 1**

Week 5: Ethics

M 2/1: **5.1 – 5.3**

W 2/3: **5.4 – 5.5**

F 2/5: **5.6 – 5.7**

Week 6: Ethics, cont.

M 2/8: **5.8 – 5.10**

W 2/10: **5.11 – 5.13**

F 2/12: **6.1 – 6.3**

Week 7: Political Philosophy

M 2/15: Holiday – No class

W 2/17: **6.6 – 6.8**

F 2/19: **6.9 – 6.11**

Week 8: Political Philosophy, cont.

M 2/22: **6.12 – 6.14**

W 2/24: **6.15 – 6.17**

F 2/26: **Midterm 2**

Week 9: Free Will

M 2/29: **9.5 – 9.7**

W 3/2: **9.8 – 9.9**

F 3/4: **9.10**

Week 10: Free Will and Wrap-up

M 3/7: **9.11**

W 3/9: **9.12 – 9.13**
F 3/11: Final review
Policies

F 3/18: Final exam, 8am-11am

Technology

Except in cases of need as documented by the OSD, **no technology use will be permitted during class. This includes phones, laptops, tablets, and other such devices.** (But this doesn't apply to your i-clicker, of course.) You're welcome to take notes by hand. I plan to put the lecture slides on the TritonEd site, so don't worry about copying those down.

Assignments and Due Dates

Except in case of documentable emergencies, no late work will be accepted, and there'll be no make-up exams.

Email

Please use only your UCSD email address to communicate with me and Henry about this course. I'll try to respond to student emails within 24 hours, but questions about readings, grades, etc are best taken up in office hours.

Special Accommodations through the Office for Students with Disabilities

Students seeking accommodations for disability are welcome to show me a letter of Authorization for Accommodation from the OSD. Details [here](#).

Academic Integrity

You're responsible for knowing and observing the university's rules on academic integrity. As in any course, you **must** abide by UCSD's [integrity policies](#).