

**PHI 101: INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY**  
**University of Wisconsin–Rock County**  
**Course Syllabus: Spring 2010**

Lec 001: TR, 9:00–10:15am & Lec 002: TR, 2:30–3:45pm; 3 Credits

**Professor:** Dr. Stephen E. Schmid

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**Web page:** <http://seschmid.org>

**Office Hours:**

TR: 10:30a–12:00p

or, by appt.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

*Reason and Responsibility*, 12th ed.

Feinberg/Shafer-Landau

*A Rulebook for Arguments*, 3rd ed.

Weston

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:** There are two primary objectives of this course. First, this course will examine four general topics in philosophy: arguments for the existence of god, personal identity, free will, and knowledge of the external world. By no means are these topics the only areas of concern to modern philosophers. Rather, this is a small sampling of philosophical issues.

The second objective of this course is to improve your critical thinking skills. We will exercise these skills through writing assignments, exams, and class discussion. Improving one's analytical skills not only makes one a better thinker but a better communicator. A characteristic of both is the ability to see through simplistic and fallacious arguments. The skill of effectively locating and analyzing the reasons and evidence in arguments is germane not only to philosophy, but to any discipline or aspect of life. In terms of this course, one should consider all assignments a form of argumentation; every paper or answer is an argument for some particular thesis or conclusion. I hope this course will help you write and think more effectively and persuasively.

This is not Sunday School. I will not tell you what to think based on my authority or anyone else's. I will not try to convert you to the School of Schmid. Nor will I accept beliefs unaccompanied by arguments. I will expect you to think on your own, to honestly assess your thoughts, to struggle with the difficult issues we will encounter, and to bring your own convictions and intuitions into the process. I will assess the quality of your arguments and

whether they are rationally persuasive. In the end, I hope to have provided you with the tools and necessary knowledge to continue the process of critically thinking about these and other issues.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:** There will be exams and class participation requirements.

**Exams:** There are three exams. Exams will be conducted on the Desire2Learn exam module during the class period. Each exam will test for knowledge of the readings, lectures, and class discussions covered prior to the exam. Each exam may include one or more of the following: identification questions, true and false questions, short answer questions, and extended essay questions. Exams will be timed. As a consequence, one will need to have basic computer and typing skills prior to taking the computer-based exam. Exceptions to taking tests on D2L will be provided only for those students who have a documented disability or test-taking consideration.

**Class Participation:** Class participation and discussion is an essential aspect of this course. Class participation grades are evaluated on in-class participation and completion of in-class and take-home assignments. Reading the assignments, thinking about responses to reading questions, and asking questions during class will help you meet the class participation requirement. There will be six to eight in-class or take-home assignments. If you are absent on a day an in-class assignment was given and you did not communicate your absence in advance, then you cannot make up the assignment.

**Late Assignments:** If you are going to miss an exam, you are required to inform the instructor at least 24 hours in advance of the scheduled exam. If you fail to provide prior notice of an absence during an exam, then make-ups are at the instructor's discretion. Exams or assignments completed late will have a minimum of one letter grade deducted. I will make exceptions to this rule, if you talk to me in advance or have appropriate documentation.

**Success:** For all concerned, this is a demanding course. The recipe for success is simple: do all the readings on time; come to class prepared; stay on top of the assignments and do not fall behind or wait to the last minute to complete assignments; and, work hard.

**Resources:** The class web page (<http://seschmid.org/teaching>) contains all the essential information, handouts and announcements related to this class. Moreover, certain readings and assignments may be posted to the class web page for download. In addition, there are several resources available that will ease your introduction into philosophy. These include: Weston's *Rulebook for Arguments*; the links for reading and writing philosophy papers located on the class "Links & Resources" page; and, the links to philosophy dictionaries, encyclopedias and other resources listed on the class "Links & Resources" page.

**Class Meetings:** Please attend each class prepared and on time. Please turn off mobile phones or any other devices with bells and whistles. Please be courteous and respectful to other students in the class. Please ask questions of me or other students. Please do not talk while the instructor or other students are talking. In classes of this size, distractions disrupt everyone. If someone is

distracting you personally, then politely ask that person to stop. If someone's actions are distracting the class, then that person may be asked to leave the class.

**Electronic Devices and Recording Devices:** Except for laptops and instructor-approved recording devices, all electronic devices should be turned off and stored out of sight. Following UWS Board of Regents Policy, Section 4-1 (<http://www.uwsa.edu/bor/policies/rpd/rpd4-1.htm>), students needing to record lectures must have signed agreements prior to using any recording device.

**Problems with the Course or Instructor:** Students are encouraged to discuss problems concerning the teaching of this course with me. If students wish to pursue a complaint with someone else, they should contact an advisor in Student Services.

**GRADES:** Assignments are graded on a point system.

**Assignment Values:**

Exams 1	25%
Exam 2	30%
Exam 3	35%
Class Participation	10%

**Grading Scale:**

A	93-100	C	73-76
A-	90-92	C-	70-72
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	83-86	D	63-66
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
C+	77-79	F	≤59

**IMPORTANT NOTES:** Following are important notes about the course not specifically covered already.

**Learning Support Center**

Andrews 02, 758-6565x450; MTWTh 8-6, F 8-3.

Tutoring in writing, math and other academic subjects is available at no charge to enrolled students. Walk in or call to schedule an appointment. Writing assistance is also available to students through the UW Colleges OWL (Online Writing Lab) at <http://www.waukesha.uwc.edu/academics/owl/>

**Inclement Weather Cancellations**

Class and event cancellations are announced on the [UW-Rock County home page](#) and on local radio and television stations including: WJVL 99.9 FM, WCLO 1230 AM, WGEZ 1490 AM, WKPO 105.9 FM, WSJY 107.3 FM, [WISC-TV Channel 3, Madison](#), [WKOW-TV Channel 27, Madison](#), [WMTV Channel 15, Madison](#)

Classes and events will be cancelled in blocks:

- Morning classes/events that begin before noon (announced by 6 a.m.)
- Afternoon classes/events that begin between and including noon and 4p (announced by 10a)
- Evening classes/events that begin at 4:15 p.m. or later (announced by 3 p.m.)

Students: It's your responsibility to communicate with your instructors to make up missed class time.

### **Campus E-mail Policy**

All e-mail correspondence to your instructors MUST be sent through your official campus e-mail account. For safety against computer viruses and to remove SPAM email messages, your instructor **may delete without reading** any e-mail originating outside our campus e-mail system. If you use any other e-mail account to contact your instructor – you MUST ASSUME that the message WILL NOT be read. Students are encouraged to read their campus email regularly. If you need assistance in accessing your campus e-mail account, please contact Campus Network Administrator, Barb Palmer (office AH19, [barb.palmer@uwc.edu](mailto:barb.palmer@uwc.edu)), or Campus Instructional Technologist, Judy Konkel (office AH15, 758-6565x180, [judy.konkel@uwc.edu](mailto:judy.konkel@uwc.edu) ).

### **Assessment**

A UW-Colleges-wide assessment program has been put into place to enhance the quality and effectiveness of the curriculum, programs and services of the institution. The following areas of proficiency will be assessed because they are of primary importance in the education of our students: Analytical Skills, Quantitative Skills, Communication Skills, and the Aesthetic Engagement. The assessment will be part of a regular homework or in-class assignment but the assessment is not a “grade” and does not become part of your transcript. Assessment evaluations are compiled and used solely to evaluate teaching effectiveness.

### **Academic Misconduct**

Academic misconduct is an act in which a student: (a) seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation; (b) uses unauthorized materials or fabricated data in any academic exercise; (c) forges or falsifies academic documents or records; (d) intentionally impedes or damages the academic work of others; (e) engages in conduct aimed at making false representation of a student’s academic performance; or (f) assists other students in any of these acts. The above acts are subject to disciplinary action. Further information may be found in the UW Colleges Student Rights and Regulations Handbook at: <http://www.uwc.edu/students/uwc-student-rights-regulations-booklet.pdf>

### **Sexual Assault and Harassment**

Respect for human dignity is essential to an appropriate university environment. Thus, sexual harassment of students and employees is impermissible and unprofessional conduct and will not be tolerated. Conduct determined to fall within the definition of sexual harassment will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with applicable due process requirements, including, but not limited to, reprimand, temporary suspension, expulsion, or discharge of the harassing individual. Further information may be found in the UW Colleges Student Rights and Regulations Handbook at: <http://www.uwc.edu/students/uwc-student-rights-regulations-booklet.pdf>

### **Students with disabilities**

Qualified students with disabilities (those who have been admitted and can provide documentation of their disability) have the right to request accommodations from the university, as stipulated within Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1976 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students needing accommodations should provide early notice to staff in the campus Student Services Office because of the time required for arranging accommodations. Students may also contact the coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities in Madison at 608-262-2001 (voice) or 608-265-5766 (TDD/TTY) for information and assistance. More information may be found at: <http://www.uwc.edu/students/disability/>

## SCHEDULE\*

### INTRODUCTION

- 1/26 T Introduction. Arguments  
1/28 R Arguments and Fallacies. Philosophy: what it is and what it's good for  
Read: Weston, Chs. 1-6, 10

### KNOWLEDGE OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

- 2/2 T Section Introduction. Skepticism. Read: Descartes (Meds. 1-2)  
2/4 R Rationalism. Read: Descartes (Meds. 3-6)  
2/9 T Empiricism. Read: Locke  
2/11 R Problem of Induction. Read: Hume (pp. 199-213, 220-222)  
2/16 T Belief and Science. Read: Kitcher  
2/18 R Review.  
2/23 T **EXAM 1**

### FREE WILL & PERSONAL IDENTITY

- 2/25 R Section Introduction  
3/2 T Determinism. Read: Holbach  
3/4 R Compatibilism. Read: Stace  
3/9 T Libertarianism. Read: Kane  
3/11 R Psychological. Read: Locke, Reid "Of Mr. Locke's Account..."  
3/16 T Common Sense. Read: Reid, "Of Identity"  
3/18 R Skepticism about Unity. Read: Hume  
3/30 T Bundle Theory. Read: Parfit  
4/1 R Survival after Death. Read: Perry  
4/6 T Survival after Death. Review.  
4/8 R **EXAM 2**

### ARGUMENTS FOR GOD'S EXISTENCE

- 4/13 T Ontological. Read: Anselm, Rowe  
4/15 R Cosmological. Read: Aquinas, Clarke, Rowe  
4/20 T Ontological & Cosmological  
4/22 R Teleological. Read: Paley  
4/27 T Teleological  
4/29 R Reason and Faith. Read: Pascal  
5/4 T Problem of Evil. Read: Johnson  
5/6 R Problem of Evil. Read: Swinburne  
5/11 T Catch-up. Review.

### FINAL EXAM (EXAM 3)

- Lec 1 SAT., MAY 15, 8:00a**  
**Lec 2 TUES., MAY 18, 1:00p**

\* This schedule of readings and assignments is subject to change.