

Course Title	Introduction to Philosophy	Instructor(s)	Thomas J. Spiegel
		E-mail	tspiegel@miu.ac.jp
Class Style	Lecture	Office Hours	-
Track	International Liberal Arts	Mode of Instruction	Co-teaching
Credits	2	Allocated Year	1
Active Learning	Category 1 (3) Category 4 (1,3, 9, 10)	Compulsory or Elective	Elective
Course Overview	<p>In learning and understanding these fundamental problems of thought as such, the students will acquire and further hone their critical thinking skills. No prior knowledge of philosophy is required, the course is entirely beginner friendly. In successfully completing the course, the students will have acquired a strong grasp of the main fields and problems of philosophy. The students will thereby improve their capacity for critical thought that can be applied and transferred to virtually any other scientific discipline.</p>		
Course Objectives	<p>This course introduces students to some of the most important and most fundamental issues in philosophy. This course is designed to give a systematic overview of the field of philosophy with a focus on the most important questions of philosophy:</p> <p>What is knowledge? What is truth? What is thinking? What is morality?</p> <p>In learning and understanding these fundamental problems of thought as such, the students will acquire and further hone their critical thinking skills. No prior knowledge of philosophy is required, the course is entirely beginner friendly.</p> <p>In successfully completing the course, the students will have acquired a strong grasp of the main fields and problems of philosophy. The students will thereby improve their capacity for critical thought that can be applied and transferred to virtually any other scientific discipline.</p>		
Prerequisite	No prior knowledge required, just willingness to do the assigned work, actively participate and sometimes engage in group work. Class attendance and active participation is mandatory to pass this class.		
Course Schedule	No	Contents	Homework
	1	Knowledge 1: Traditional Accounts We will learn about the so-called traditional account of knowledge first introduced by Plato.	Short Essay for a question posed at the end of class
	2	Knowledge II: Challenges We will learn about the main critique of the traditional account of knowledge by Edmund Gettier.	Short Essay for a question posed at the end of class
	3	Skepticism I: Agrippa's Trilemma We will try to understand the oldest form of skepticism, Pyrrhonic skepticism.	Short Essay for a question posed at the end of class
	4	Skepticism II: External World-Skepticism Introducing the arguably most popular form of skepticism, Cartesian external world skepticism.	Short Essay for a question posed at the end of class
	5	Origin and Idea of Metaphysics We will learn about the origin of metaphysics as a basis for the idea of truth as the mind corresponding to the world.	Short Essay for a question posed at the end of class
	6	Truth I	Short Essay for a question

		We will familiarize ourselves with the classical notion of truth as correspondence. What does it mean that a sentence or thought is true?	posed at the end of class
	7	Truth II As a contrast, we will learn about Strawson's appraisal theory of truth: What if truth is simply something like mutual agreement?	Short Essay for a question posed at the end of class
	8	Truth III Many philosophers have been critical of the idea of truth at all, here we will talk about some of these critiques. Maybe the concept of truth does us more harm than good.	Short Essay for a question posed at the end of class
		Midterm class evaluation	
	9	Midterm Exam	
	10	Consciousness and Qualia What does it mean to be conscious? What makes consciousness so special compared to other things in the world?	Short Essay for a question posed at the end of class
	11	The Mind-Body Problem The body is material, but our mind seems to be immaterial. How do we reconcile that there are two such fundamentally different things in the world?	Short Essay for a question posed at the end of class
	12	Virtue Ethics Virtue ethics is the oldest theory of ethics, first developed by Aristotle. Perhaps being moral just means developing the right kind of virtues.	Short Essay for a question posed at the end of class
	13	Deontology Deontological ethics is Kant's system of morality based on duty. Being moral perhaps just means following what one is obligated to do.	Short Essay for a question posed at the end of class
	14	Consequentialism Consequentialists think that the morality of an action depends on its consequences. How do we "count" these consequences?	Short Essay for a question posed at the end of class
	15	Final Exam	
Grading	Final Exam: 30% Midterm Exam: 30% Homework: 20% Active Participation: 20%		
Textbooks	-		
References	-		
NOTES	- Homework will be assigned at the end of class. - Homework needs to be turned in 24 hours before the next class. - Depending on the way the term develops, this syllabus may be amended. - Late submissions will generally not be accepted, unless there is a good reason. - Students are expected to be punctual and attend all lessons. Students who are late for class or leave early		

	<p>may be marked as absent. If you have a good reason to leave early or come late (e.g., an accident on the way to class), communicate with me. If you cannot participate in class, for example because you are ill, please submit an official document (e.g., a doctor's note) within 7 days; otherwise you will be marked as absent.</p> <p>- If you miss three or more classes unexcused, you may be asked to withdraw</p>
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