

Course Description

According to its etymological roots, philosophy is understood as the intellectual love (*philos*) wisdom (*sophia*). In specific terms, philosophy is the academic discipline that asks broad questions about the nature and meaning of life, the origin of the universe, the existence of God, the sources of knowledge and similar questions. Within this class we will examine these and related questions as they occur throughout its history along with their relevance in relation to contemporary questions and problems.

Course Objectives

Students will obtain a general understanding of what philosophy is, the major subdivisions of philosophy and some of the major philosophers, philosophical arguments and movements throughout its history. Students will likewise develop critical thinking and argumentation skills through written assignments and exams.

Required Readings

The following text will be used in this class and must be purchased (available at MWSU bookstore):

The Classics of Western Philosophy, 8th edition, edited by Steven M. Cahn

Note: additional readings (e-texts) may also be assigned and made available on Moodle.

Student Evaluation

Assignment Type	%	Total%	Grade
Analysis Essays (4 total)	20	90 – 100	A
Research Paper & Presentation	30	80 – 89	B
Midterm Exam	20	70 – 79	C
Final Exam	20	60 – 69	D
Participation	10	0 – 59	F

Analysis Essays (4 total, 5% each)

At the beginning of the class students will be assigned specific days in which they will prepare ahead of time a 1-2 page analysis (~500 words) of the assigned reading for that day. Students will identify an idea, theory, argument, etc., which they will analyze and discuss. Students will read the analysis in class, after which critical discussion will follow.

Note: I do not want just a summary of the reading! Pick a theme and develop upon that.

Assessment

1. Grading for this assignment involves: (1) successful / timely completion of the essay and (2) perceived effort in terms of the attempt to understand and critically engage with the text.
2. Late Policy: Analysis Essays may be submitted up to a week late with a -20% penalty.

Research Project (1 total, 30%)

At the beginning of class, a general research topic will be assigned. Students will follow a two-step process in the writing and submission of research papers:

- A. Part 1: Presentation (10%): Students will first conduct research around a specific thesis question and then present in class a PowerPoint “research summary” that includes (1) a tentative title, (2) a ~150-word thesis and abstract of their paper, (3) a detailed outline, and (4) a list of relevant research sources (minimum of 5 sources, i.e., academic

books, journal articles, etc.) for which a short ~1 paragraph descriptive summary must be given for each.

- B. Part 2: Paper (20%): Once the research summary has been approved, students will proceed to write and submit their paper online (~3000 words), amended for any constructive criticism. Final papers should be 12 Font, Times News Roman, 1.5 spaced, justified, and include a Title, Name, Affiliation, Abstract, & Works Cited page.

Assessment

Your grade for this research project is based upon:

1. Successful completion of all criteria listed in Parts 1 and 2.
2. Defense of a clear and coherent argument.
3. A stylistically well-written paper, edited for any typos or grammatical errors.
4. Evidence of strong research along with the application of this research within the paper.
5. Late Policy: Part 1 (presentation) can only be made up with a formal excuse (doctor's notice, etc.). Part 2 (paper) may be submitted up to a week late with a -20% penalty.

Midterm & Final Exam (20% each)

Term exams consist of essay-style questions and are cumulative covering *all material* leading up to and prior to that exam. Students are expected to demonstrate a general grasp of the lecture material & readings coupled with the ability to explain the primary arguments & historical ideas learned throughout class. Grading is based upon offering an adequate answer to each question demonstrating knowledge of the subject matter coupled with a coherent argument.

Participation (10% points)

Participation is an integral part of this course. All class sessions include discussion time in which students are expected to contribute their thoughts to the particular topic at hand, having prepared the reading ahead of time. For every class session missed, students are penalized -1% to their final grade up to -10% points (= a full letter grade deduction). The penalty can only be omitted with a formal excuse (doctor's notice, etc.), which must be presented by the next class session.

Course Regulations & Policies

Make-up Policy: Missed assignments can only be made up with a formal excuse (doctor's notice, etc.).

Failure Policy: Failure in this class is warranted in the event that (1) you do not take/make-up one or both term exams and/or (2) your grade point percentage averages an F as established by grading criteria on this syllabus and/or (3) you do not comply with MWSU academic honesty guidelines as listed below.

Academic Dishonesty: Academic dishonesty is defined in the Student Code of Conduct as engaging in acts which include (but not limited to):

- a. Falsifying documents or academic records;
- b. Any activity that violates the University's Academic Honesty Policy including (but not limited to) any instance of plagiarism, cheating, seeking credit for another's work, using any electronic device to either improperly store information for an exam or to transmit portions of questions or answers to other students, or allowing another student to take your exam for you.

MWSU Attendance & Participation Guidelines: At the beginning of this course you will be required to take an informal quiz. Taking this quiz likewise fulfills the initial attendance requirement for this online class. Students who fail to complete this quiz and/or subsequent quizzes and assignments may be considered absent from the course, following which they will be notified of their absence via MWSU Early Alert System. Subsequent inactivity may result in an unofficial withdrawal or failure for this course.

General Studies Requirements for Bachelor Degrees: General Education at Missouri Western State University consists of a common core of curriculum offerings necessary to equip students for successful and fulfilled lives as educated and active citizens. The required general education curriculum consists of a broad range of courses that assures that all baccalaureate-seeking students acquire academic skills and knowledge necessary for understanding, communicating, and performing in a diverse and complex world. Students completing courses in the general education program will be provided the opportunity to acquire knowledge and skills to: (1) Write and speak clearly and effectively. (2) Think critically and reason analytically. (3) Locate, organize, evaluate, and synthesize information from print and electronic sources. (4) Understand and appreciate moral values and ethical choices. (5) Gain a greater awareness of the present by understanding other cultures and times. (6)

Understand and enjoy aesthetic experiences and share in related activities. (7) Develop an understanding of fundamental mathematical concepts and their applications. (8) Understand common phenomena in the physical and natural environment and understand the methods by which they are studied through lectures and the connected laboratory experience. (9) Understand and appreciate the means of gaining and maintaining mental and physical health.

ADA Accommodations: Students seeking accommodations must first provide documentation of needed accommodations to the Accessibility Resource Center (ARC) located in Eder Hall, Suite 203. Once accommodations have been approved by the ARC, students are responsible for notifying their instructors of those accommodations. This should be done within the first two weeks of classes. Accommodations are not retroactive.

Harassment, Discrimination & Sexual Misconduct: Consistent with its mission, Missouri Western seeks to assure all community members learn and work in a welcoming and inclusive environment. Title VII, Title IX, and University policy prohibit harassment, discrimination, and sexual misconduct. Missouri Western encourages anyone experiencing harassment, discrimination or sexual misconduct to talk to someone from the Campus and Local Resources list found in the University Policies and Procedures (<https://www.missouriwestern.edu/studentaffairs/wp.../handbook.pdf>) about what happened so they can get the support they need and Missouri Western can respond appropriately.

There are both confidential and non-confidential resources and reporting options available to you. Missouri Western is legally obligated to respond to reports of sexual misconduct, and therefore we cannot guarantee the confidentiality of a report, unless made to a confidential resource. Responses may vary from support services to formal investigations. As a faculty member, I am required to report incidents of sexual misconduct and thus cannot guarantee confidentiality. I must provide our Title IX coordinator with relevant details such as the names of those involved in the incident. For more information about policies and resources or reporting options, please visit the following website:

<https://www.missouriwestern.edu/titleix/sexual-misconduct-policy/>

Students have received information via email regarding training regarding Title IX. Student employees may have additional required training. Please follow the link in the email sent to your MWSU student account to complete the training. Students who do not complete the training will receive a hold on their account, prohibiting future semester enrollment until the training is complete. These training courses will ensure that all students are appropriately educated about these important regulations.

HONORS SECTIONS ONLY

Honors Program Mission Statement: The Honors Program at Missouri Western State University provides an enriched educational experience for the exceptional student. The program is designed for the student who enjoys learning, and whose personal goals emphasize the pursuit of understanding and knowledge. Ultimately, the program provides students with academic training and skills which will serve them well in both their chosen careers and their personal lives. Goals of the program are to foster the growth of intellectual inquiry, independence, and initiative in honors participants with an array of learning experiences including special courses, colloquia, and independent research and study. Each honors experience is simultaneously challenging, exciting, and enjoyable.

Honors Program Grade Requirement: Students must earn an A or B in this course to be counted for honors credit. Grades of C or D will still be considered “passing,” but will not be counted for honors credit. Students taking A/CR/U must earn an A in the course for it to be counted for honors credit.