

Sabancı University
FALL 2022

PHIL 202
PROBLEMS OF PHILOSOPHY

Instructor: Elif Yavnik
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W 15.40-17.30 FASS 2023
R 13.40-14.30 FASS G052
Office hours: by appointment

*Please note that this syllabus is tentative and subject to change.

Course Description

This course aims to familiarize students with basics of philosophical thinking and with various discussions in contemporary philosophy. The readings are selected from different areas of philosophy in order to give a broader representation of the ongoing debates.

Course Requirements and Grading

Grading:

Attendance: %10

Quizzes: %15

Group Presentation: %10

Midterm: %30

Final: %35

Attendance and Participation:

Attendance is compulsory. Attendance follow-up starts at the end of the add-drop period. After 2 unexcused hours your attendance grade will fall by 1 point with every unexcused absence. (That is to say, with 3 unexcused hours you get a 9/10, with 4 you get 8/10, etc.)

Absences for medical reasons are to be documented with a doctor's report.

An absence may also count as excused in case a life situation that you need to attend arises: in such cases please email me beforehand, if possible.

In order to take a make up exam, the medical report must be submitted within 3 days after the original exam date.

Thoughtful and meaningful participation in class is expected and highly encouraged.

Outstanding contribution to the class and proof of engagement with the course material beyond course requirements may bring your final course grade up by half a letter (thus bringing it up from a B- to a B, for example), at the instructor's discretion.

Quizzes:

There will be an undetermined number of unannounced quizzes during lectures. There will be no make ups for missed quizzes. If a student is absent on the day we have a quiz but they have emailed me before class to let me know about their excuse, that quiz will not be

included in their quiz average. Anyone who is absent without an excuse will automatically get a zero on that quiz.

Group Presentations:

At the end of the semester we will have student presentations. Students will form groups and choose their own presentation project on a philosophical discussion that interests them. The groups are to submit a one-page outline of their presentations by November 24th. Everyone in the group is expected to contribute to both the preparation and the presentation stages.

- The presentations are to:
 - introduce the subject,
 - explain the prominent approaches to it,
 - focus on one or two specific questions,
 - lay out the main discussions around them,
 - talk about what the group thought and discussed about these questions, what they found enlightening, interesting, challenging, and/or confusing,
 - and finally offer two or three questions to open the topic up to discussion.
- The presentation outlines are to include:
 - the names of the group members,
 - the working title of the presentation,
 - a brief description of the subject to be presented, and
 - a preliminary list of the resources to be used.

Midterm and Final Exams:

Midterm and Final exams will be held face to face.

Point to letter grade conversion chart:

A 100-94
A- 93-90
B+ 89-87
B 86-84
B- 83-80
C+ 79-77
C 76-74
C- 73-70
D+ 69-65
D 64-60
F 59-0

Academic Integrity

Problems of Philosophy course does not tolerate dishonesty and plagiarism.

Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fraud, and any failure to cite all materials and sources in your work. Plagiarism is an ethical and academic offense. In case the instructor or the course assistant suspects that an exam is not student's original work, the student will be given an oral examination.

Papers with plagiarism issues will be graded F, and your semester grade may be F depending on the severity of the offense.

The offense may also be referred to as the University Ethics Committee.

Anti-Discrimination Policy

The classroom will be free from all discrimination based on, including but not limited to, race, ethnicity, creed, religion, language, disability, gender, and sexual orientation. The students are expected to maintain this environment.

Special Needs

It is the policy of Sabancı University to accommodate students with special needs and disabilities. To determine accommodations and/or academic adjustments, please let us know and contact the Disabled Students Support Unit of CIAD (specialneeds@sabanciuniv.edu).

Reading and Course Schedule – All readings will be made available on SUCourse.

INTRODUCTION

WEEK 1	<i>Recommended: selection from B. Russell, <i>The Value of Philosophy</i></i>
WEEK 2	<i>Introducing Arguments, in <i>Critical Thinking: A Concise Guide</i>; Language and Rhetoric, in <i>Critical Thinking: A Concise Guide</i></i>
WEEK 3	<i>Logic: Deductive Validity, in <i>Critical Thinking: A Concise Guide</i></i>
WEEK 4	<i>Pseudo-Reasoning, in <i>Critical Thinking: A Concise Guide</i></i>
WEEK 5	selections from M. Fricker, <i>Epistemic Injustice</i> <i>Recommended: L. Code, “Ignorance, Injustice and the Politics of Knowledge”</i>
WEEK 6	selection from L. Martín Alcoff, “Epistemologies of Ignorance: Three Types”
WEEK 7	C. Mills, “White Ignorance”
WEEK 8	MIDTERM
WEEK 9	Rachels, “The Debate over Free Will” H. G. Frankfurt, “Alternate possibilities and moral responsibility”
WEEK 10	selection from F. Nietzsche, <i>Genealogy of Morals</i>
WEEK 11	selection from G. Bataille, <i>The Accursed Share I</i>
WEEK 12	M. Tennison, “Moral Transhumanism: The Next Step”
WEEK 13	J. Searle, “Minds, Brains, and Programs” PRESENTATION
WEEK 14	PRESENTATIONS