

# PHIL 4: INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY

## Foothill College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
Effective Term:	Summer 2025
Units:	4
Hours:	4 lecture per week (48 total per quarter)
Degree & Credit Status:	Degree-Applicable Credit Course
Foothill GE:	Area 3: Arts & Humanities
Transferable:	CSU/UC
Grade Type:	Letter Grade (Request for Pass/No Pass)
Repeatability:	Not Repeatable

## Student Learning Outcomes

- Identify significant theories held by major philosophers (ex. Plato, Descartes, Hume, Sartre etc.) and/or philosophic schools of thought (ex. ontological dualism, materialism idealism etc.)
- Explain and evaluate historically important philosophical arguments.

## Description

Introductory survey of writings, principles, and concerns of philosophy. Primarily examines major topics in the study of metaphysics and epistemology through reading and critical examination of the writings of major figures in the history of philosophy. Related topics of concern to include ethics, theology, and political philosophy.

## Course Objectives

The student will be able to:

- Examine beliefs critically to determine the assumptions underlying them and the logical arguments used to support them
- Analyze a wide range of philosophic topics, particularly those in the study of epistemology and metaphysics
- Evaluate theories put forward by a significant range of historical and contemporary philosophers through examination of primary sources

## Course Content

- Introduction to the nature of philosophy
  - Overview of the scope of philosophic inquiry and its fields of concern
    - Logic
    - Epistemology
    - Metaphysics
    - Axiology (ethics and aesthetics)
    - Political theory
- Epistemology: the problem of knowledge
  - Basic questions of the limits, reliability, and sources of knowledge from a historical and theoretical perspective
    - Specifically, investigation of the issues of truth, justification, and belief
  - Issues and perspectives in epistemology

- Rationalism
  - Empiricism
  - Skepticism
- Philosophy and science
- Metaphysics: the nature of reality
    - Ontology: the study of being
      - Materialism
      - Idealism
      - Dualism
      - Non-dualism and process ontology
    - Mind-body problem
      - Nature of consciousness
      - Functionalism and Identity theory
    - Free-will vs. determinism
      - Freedom and responsibility
      - Hard determinism
      - Compatibilism
    - Religion and theology
      - Theological concepts and the presuppositions concerning the nature and existence of God
      - Ontological argument
      - Cosmological argument
      - Teleological argument
      - Problem of evil
  - Ethical and political implications
    - Exploration of ethical and political implications of all above listed topics to be discussed in conjunction with each as relevant

## Lab Content

Not applicable.

## Special Facilities and/or Equipment

When taught via Foothill Global Access, on-going access to computer with email software and hardware; email address.

## Method(s) of Evaluation

Methods of Evaluation may include but are not limited to the following:

Class discussion  
Essays  
Examinations  
Oral reports

## Method(s) of Instruction

Methods of Instruction may include but are not limited to the following:

Lecture  
Discussion  
Cooperative learning exercises

## **Representative Text(s) and Other Materials**

John Perry, Michael Bratman, and John Martin Fischer. Introduction to Philosophy: Classical and Contemporary Readings, 9th ed.. 2021.

Kessler, Gary. Voices of Wisdom: A Multicultural Philosophy Reader, 9th ed.. 2016.

## **Types and/or Examples of Required Reading, Writing, and Outside of Class Assignments**

1. Reading primary sources from relevant philosophers (Plato, Descartes, Locke, Hume, etc.)
2. Argumentative essay (term paper) on issues such as logical justification for the existence or otherwise of God, existence of free-will, etc.
3. Examinations, including various testing measures, including short answer questions and essay

## **Discipline(s)**

Philosophy