

Montgomery College—Rockville Campus
Introduction to Philosophy
Spring 2019

PHIL 101

Room: HUMN 126

MWF 9:00-9:50 AM

Instructor: Tülin M. Levitas

Telephone: 240-567-7430

E-mail: tulin.levitas@montgomerycollege.edu

Office: Macklin Tower 415

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays: 10:00-11:00

Thursdays: 2:00-3:30

Text: Moore and Bruder, *Philosophy: The Power of Ideas*, McGraw-Hill, Eighth Edition, 2011.

Brief Introduction

PHIL 101 is going to offer the student an overview of the different issues that philosophers have dealt with throughout history. These issues are concerned with a variety of questions having to do with: the way the world is; the way people are and how they ought to act; the nature of being, knowledge, beauty, morality; the existence of God; and the different ways in which these questions have been addressed.

PHIL 101 satisfies a General Education Humanities Distribution requirement. Montgomery College's General Education Program is designed to ensure that students have the skills, knowledge and attitudes to carry them successfully through their work and their personal lives. This course provides multiple opportunities to develop competency in **written and oral communication** and **information literacy**. For more information on the General Education Program, go to www.montgomerycollege.edu/gened.

Objectives

- To be able to critically evaluate the views of the different philosophers who have been studied.
- To develop the skills of logical and critical thinking.
- To be able to distinguish between different issues, ideas, standards, and arguments.
- To be able to distinguish between matters of fact and mere opinion.
- To be able to recognize unstated assumptions in people's views.
- To keep an open mind towards the views of others and to be able to evaluate those views on the basis of coherent and sound reasoning.

Course Outline

- I. Ethics—the branch of philosophy that concerns itself with the study of morality; it attempts to answer questions such as: What constitutes right, just, or good conduct? What are moral judgments? How do we arrive at our moral judgments? Which moral judgments are correct?

- II. Political Philosophy—the branch of philosophy that concerns itself with questions such as: whether there is a legitimate state; whether there is an ideal state; whether the state can restrict the liberty of its citizens; how the wealth of the society should be distributed; whether there are natural rights that all states must respect.
- III. Metaphysics—the branch of philosophy that concerns itself with the nature of being and reality. It addresses questions such as: What is the nature of being? What is the nature of reality? What are the essential characteristics of being?

In each of these units, we will adopt an historical approach beginning with the views of the earliest global philosophers and continuing until modern times.

Expectations

You will be expected to do the appropriate reading before you come to class so that we can have a meaningful discussion in class. To that end, there will be reading quizzes on the assigned material.

At the end of each unit, you will be asked to produce a piece of work demonstrating your comprehension and critical evaluation of the material that had been under consideration. At the end of the unit on ethics, you will be asked to write a paper. I will give you a choice of topics and you will be asked to write on one of them. At the end of the unit on political philosophy, there will be a one-hour test in class. In preparation for this test, I will give you study guide questions on which the test will be based. The unit on metaphysics will be evaluated at the final exam, which will be comprehensive, covering the work of the entire semester, but concentrating substantially on metaphysics. Again, in preparation for the final exam, I will give you study guide questions ahead of time. You must complete all the course work in order to pass the class.

Requirements

1. *Attendance Policy.*
Attendance is required at Montgomery College. Excessive absences that would be more than the number of times the class meets in one week constitute cause for dropping students from the course.
2. *Make-up Exam Policy.*
Students may make up missed exams provided that they have a doctor's report or that they make arrangements with the professor prior to the exam date.
3. *Late Paper Policy.*
Papers may be accepted late provided that students have a legitimate reason and that they have the professor's agreement prior to the due date of the paper. Late papers without such provisions will be graded down.
4. *Evaluation.*
Students will be evaluated on the basis of reading quizzes, current events news projects, one paper, one test on political philosophy, class participation, a report on a visit to a Smithsonian Institution museum, a Service Learning project, and one final exam. Papers and exams will address essay questions concerning the subjects that have been under consideration during the course.
5. *Grading Policy.*

The written assignment on ethics will constitute 15% of the course grade.
The one-hour test on political philosophy will constitute 15% of the course grade.
Class participation and the current events news projects will constitute 15% of the course grade.
The report on a visit to a Smithsonian Institution museum will constitute 15% of the course grade.
The Service Learning component will constitute 20% of the course grade.
The final exam will cover the entire semester's work and will constitute 20% of the course grade.
Students must complete all the assigned work in order to pass the class.

Additional Information

In addition to course requirements and objectives that are in this syllabus, Montgomery College has information on its web site (see link below) to assist you in having a successful experience both inside and outside of the classroom. It is important that you read and understand this information. The link below provides information and other resources to areas that pertain to the following: student behavior (student code of conduct), student e-mail, the tobacco free policy, withdraw and refund dates, disability support services, veteran services, how to access information on delayed openings and closings, how to register for the Montgomery College alert System, and finally, how closings and delays can impact your classes. If you have any questions please bring them to your professor. As rules and regulations change they will be updated and you will be able to access them through the link. If any student would like a written copy of these policies and procedures, the professor would be happy to provide them. By registering for this class and staying in this class, you are indicating that you acknowledge and accept these policies.

<http://cms.montgomerycollege.edu/mcsyllabus/>

Notes on Preparation of Written Assignments

Format

Papers should be typed, double-spaced whenever possible. Handwritten papers will be accepted, but only if done in ink, legibly written, using one side of the paper only. All papers should have wide margins to allow room for my comments.

Writing Style

Papers should be written clearly and concisely. The rules of grammar and punctuation must be observed. If your prose style is not clear, I cannot grade your paper as though it were. Clarity of writing equates to clarity of thought and understanding.

Citing Sources

Ideas that are not your own must be acknowledged. When using another's idea, either: (1) quote exactly as written, within quotation marks, and cite the source, or (2) write in your own words and cite the source.

Essay Form

The essay form requires a clearly stated and supported thesis, and a conclusion.

In developing your answers to essay questions, consider the following:

1. *Relevance to the essay question.* You must answer the question asked. Too often, students address topics unrelated to the question asked. Be sure to answer all parts.
2. *Coherent arguments.* The arguments and facts in an essay should be like the ribs on a skeleton—all clearly related to the backbone of the question. An outline is often helpful in achieving a coherent argument.

Reading Assignments

Introduction
Moore and Bruder, <i>Philosophy: The Power of Ideas</i> , pp. 1-15, Chapter 1, Powerful Ideas.
Moore and Bruder, pp. 234-243, Ethics, Plato.
Moore and Bruder, pp. 243-246, Aesara and Aristotle.
Moore and Bruder, pp. 246-250, Epicureanism and Stoicism.
Moore and Bruder, pp. 463-472, Eastern Influences—Hinduism and Buddhism.
Moore and Bruder, pp. 250-254, Augustine and Hildegard.
Moore and Bruder, pp. 254-256, Heloise and Abelard; 254-257, Aquinas.
Moore and Bruder, pp. 472-482, Taoism: Lao-Tzu, Sun-Tzu, Chuang-Tzu.
Moore and Bruder, pp. 482-491, Confucianism: Confucius, Mencius, Hsun-Tzu.
Moore and Bruder, pp. 257-261, Hume, Hobbes.
Moore and Bruder, pp. 261-264, Kant.
Moore and Bruder, pp. 264-268, The Utilitarians, Bentham, Mill.
Moore and Bruder, pp. 268-269, Nietzsche.
Moore and Bruder, pp. 520-524, Africa.
Moore and Bruder, pp. 524-530, The Americas.